

# **F.I.M.P. Project**

Project's website: <https://github.com/hennok129/RoboticArm>

From: Hennok Tadesse, Alay Lad, and Tanav Sharma

Discipline: Computer Engineering Technology

Date: March 28, 2017

## **Declaration of Joint Authorship**

The F.I.M.P. robotic arm project consist of three group members (Hennok Tadesse, Tanav Sharma, and Alay Lad) and is a joint effort on the completion of the project. The work for the project has been divided equally among the group members. Alay Lad has worked on the hardware aspect of the project; which includes working with the flex sensors, creating the PCB's, and working with the servo motors for the robotic arm. Hennok Tadesse has worked on the design and functionality of the mobile application. Tanav Sharma has worked on the database in terms of setting it up, connecting it with the app and maintaining it. Testing and maintenance for the hardware and software has been tested by all three members equally and all project updates and changes have been checked and approved by all members.

# Approved Proposal

September, 2016

*Proposal for the development of FIMP*

Prepared by Tanav, Alay, and Hennok  
Computer Engineering Technology Student  
[github.com/hennok129/RoboticArm](https://github.com/hennok129/RoboticArm)

## Executive Summary

As a student in the Computer Engineering Technology program, I will be integrating the knowledge and skills I have learned from our program into this Internet of Things themed capstone project. This proposal requests the approval to build the software app that will connect to a hardware as well as to a mobile device application. In the app, we will have incorporated a controller that will be used to control the hardware. The database will store the coordinates of the robot arm and the angles that the motor and arms need to be when it returns to rest position. The mobile device functionality will include some very basic test functions and commands to move the arm. It will create logs and save that data, so the developer can later look it at and make improvements to the hardware or software and other users can use these logs to reproduce experiments. In the winter semester I plan to form a group with the following students (Alay Lad, Hennok Tadesse, and Tanav Sharma), who are also making similar app this term and working on the mobile application with Tanav Sharma, Alay Lad, and Hennok Tadesse. The hardware will be completed in CENG 317 Hardware Production Techniques independently and the application will be completed in CENG 319 Software Project. These will be integrated together in the subsequent term in CENG 355 Computer Systems Project as a member of a 3 student group.

## Background

This project will solve many problems. Along with solving problems it will also be very innovative. It will help gamers with better precision, and interact with games. Scientists and engineers can use this arm, for experiments where they need to have certain amount of distance clearance from the test site. The app will be saving information received from the arm, and provide logs, so the user can use it to make his/her reports and also use the information to make changes to better the app or hardware.

I have searched for prior art via Humber's IEEE subscription selecting "My Subscribed Content" and have found and read three articles which provides insight into similar efforts.

The first article is about a continuous-time decentralized neural control scheme for trajectory tracking of a two degrees of freedom direct drive vertical robotic arm. (@7762884)

The second article is about the Gesture Controlled Robot (GCR) which is a robot that can be moved according to our hand movements. (@7583873)

The third article is about the instantaneous current profile tracking control for minimizing torque ripple of switched reluctance motors. (@6527176)

In the Computer Engineering Technology program we have learned about the following topics from the respective relevant courses:

- Java Docs from CENG 212 Programming Techniques In Java,
- Construction of circuits from CENG 215 Digital And Interfacing Systems,
- Rapid application development and Gantt charts from CENG 216 Intro to Software Engineering,
- Micro computing from CENG 252 Embedded Systems,
- SQL from CENG 254 Database With Java,
- Web access of databases from CENG 256 Internet Scripting; and,
- Wireless protocols such as 802.11 from TECH152 Telecom Networks.

This knowledge and skill set will enable me to build the subsystems and integrate them together as my capstone project.

## Methodology

This proposal is assigned in the first week of class and is due at the beginning of class in the second week of the winter semester. My coursework will focus on the first two of the 3 phases of this project:

Phase 1 Hardware build.

Phase 2 System integration.

Phase 3 Demonstration to future employers.

### *Phase 1 Hardware build*

The hardware build will be completed in the fall term. It will fit within the CENG Project maximum dimensions of 12 13/16" x 6" x 2 7/8" (32.5cm x 15.25cm x 7.25cm) which represents the space below the tray in the parts kit. The highest AC voltage that will be used is 16Vrms from a wall adaptor from which +/- 15V or as high as 45 VDC can be obtained. Maximum power consumption will be 20 Watts.

### *Phase 2 System integration*

The system integration will be completed in the fall term.

### *Phase 3 Demonstration to future employers*

This project will showcase the knowledge and skills that I have learned to potential employers.

The tables below provide rough effort and non-labour estimates respectively for each phase. A Gantt chart will be added by week 3 to provide more project schedule details and a more complete budget will be added by week 4. It is important to start tasks as soon as possible to be able to meet deadlines.

Labour Estimates	Hrs	Notes
<b>Phase 1</b>		
Writing proposal.	9	Tech identification quiz.
Creating project schedule. Initial project team meeting.	9	Proposal due.
Creating budget. Status Meeting.	9	Project Schedule due.
Acquiring components and writing progress report.	9	Budget due.
Mechanical assembly and writing progress report. Status Meeting.	9	Progress Report due (components acquired milestone).
PCB fabrication.	9	Progress Report due (Mechanical Assembly milestone).
Interface wiring, Placard design, Status Meeting.	9	PCB Due (power up milestone).
Preparing for demonstration.	9	Placard due.
Writing progress report and demonstrating project.	9	Progress Report due (Demonstrations at Open House Saturday, November 7, 2015 from 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.).
Editing build video.	9	Peer grading of demonstrations due.
Incorporation of feedback from demonstration and writing progress report. Status Meeting.	9	30 second build video due.
Practice presentations	9	Progress Report due.
1st round of Presentations, Collaborators present.	9	Presentation PowerPoint file due.
2nd round of Presentations	9	Build instructions up due.
Project videos, Status Meeting.	9	30 second script due.
<b>Phase 1 Total</b>	<b>135</b>	
<b>Phase 2</b>		
Meet with collaborators	9	Status Meeting
Initial integration.	9	Progress Report
Meet with collaborators	9	Status Meeting
Testing.	9	Progress Report

Meet with collaborators	9	Status Meeting
Meet with collaborators	9	Status Meeting
Incorporation of feedback.	9	Progress Report
Meet with collaborators	9	Status Meeting
Testing.	9	Progress Report
Meet with collaborators	9	Status Meeting
Prepare for demonstration.	9	Progress Report
Complete presentation.	9	Demonstration at Open House Saturday, April 9, 2016 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.
Complete final report. 1st round of Presentations.	9	Presentation PowerPoint file due.
Write video script. 2nd round of Presentations, delivery of project.	9	Final written report including final budget and record of expenditures, covering both this semester and the previous semester.
Project videos.	9	Video script due
<b>Phase 2 Total</b>	<b>135</b>	
<b>Phase 3</b>		
Interviews	TBD	
<b>Phase 3 Total</b>	<b>TBD</b>	
<b>Material Estimates</b>	<b>Cost</b>	<b>Notes</b>
<b>Phase 1</b>		
Arduino Uno R3	>\$30.95	(Arduino) Amazon
SparkFun Transceiver Breakout - nRF24L01	>\$29.37	CanadaRobotix
Syma x12 Nano 6-Axis Gyro 4CH RC Quadcopter Drone	>\$49.37	(Tenergy Canada) Amazon
Lithium AA Batteries	>\$5.64	CanadianTire (1 pack comes with 4 AA batteries)
<b>Phase 1 Total</b>	<b>&gt;\$115.33</b>	
<b>Phase 2</b>		
Materials to improve functionality, fit, and finish of project.		
<b>Phase 2 Total</b>	<b>TBD</b>	
<b>Phase 3</b>		
Off campus colocation	<\$100.00	
<i>Shipping</i>	<i>TBD</i>	
<i>Tax</i>	<i>TBD</i>	
<i>Duty</i>	<i>TBD</i>	
<b>Phase 3 Total</b>	<b>TBD</b>	

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### Concluding remarks

This proposal presents a plan for providing an IoT solution for creating and testing solutions for complete physical tasks. This is an opportunity to integrate the knowledge and skills developed in our program to create a collaborative IoT capstone project demonstrating my ability to learn how to support projects. I request approval of this project.

## **Abstract**

The purpose of the fully innovated microprocessor (F.I.M.P.) project is to use and control robotic arm equipment from a safer environment to lower the risk of work place injuries. The technical report will go over the way the Fully Innovated Micro Processor(F.I.M.P.) robotic arm project works and the main components and features of the project. Components such as the flex sensors, mobile app, and the robotic arm will all be explained in great detail. The four flex sensors will be attached to a glove that will control the robotic arm with pressure from the user's fingers. The mobile app will also be used to control the robotic arm but with four sliding bars instead of a sensor. The mobile app will include features such as allowing the user to record logs. The robotic arm will consist of acrylic parts and four micro servo motors that move each joint of the robotic arm. The robotic arm is then connected to a Raspberry Pi 3 that will be the middle point that will control the robotic arm whether its from the flex sensors or the mobile app. These three key components are the main focus of the technical report because it will go over the basic workings of the project and give users the full understanding of this project.

# Table of Contents

Declaration of Joint Authorship

Proposal

Abstract

Illustrations or Diagrams

## 1. Introduction

1.1 Technical Problem

1.2 The Why

1.3 Problem Encounter

## 2. Project Specifications

2.1 Project Description

- 2.1.1 Mobile Application Concept
- 2.1.2 Project Schedule
- 2.1.3 Application Screen
- 2.1.4 Hardware Interfaces
- 2.1.5 Software Interfaces
- 2.1.6 Communication Interfaces

2.2 Build Instructions

- 2.2.1 Introduction
- 2.2.2 Bill of Materials/Budget
- 2.2.3 Time Commitment
- 2.2.4 Mechanical Assembly
- 2.2.5 Power Up
- 2.2.6 Unit Testing

2.3 Specific Requirements

- 2.3.1 Database
- 2.3.2 Application
- 2.3.3 Hardware

2.4 Progress Reports

2.5 Problem Encountered

- 2.5.1 Hardware Problems
- 2.5.2 Software Problems

## 3. Conclusion

## 4. Appendix

## 5. Reference

## Illustrations or Diagrams

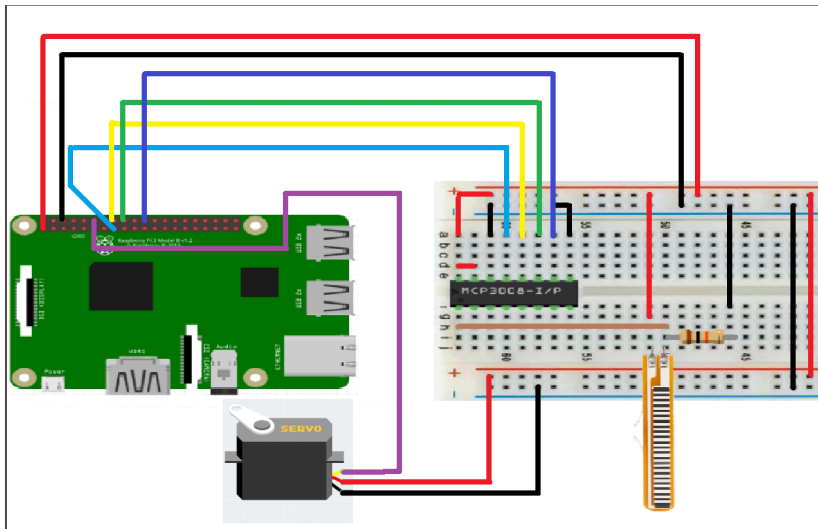


Figure 1:

- This diagram shows the correct way of connecting the servo motor and the flex sensor to the Raspberry Pi 3. Pin 2 is 5 V and pin 5 is ground to power the servo motor. When connecting the flex sensor to ground, a 10k ohm resistor is needed.

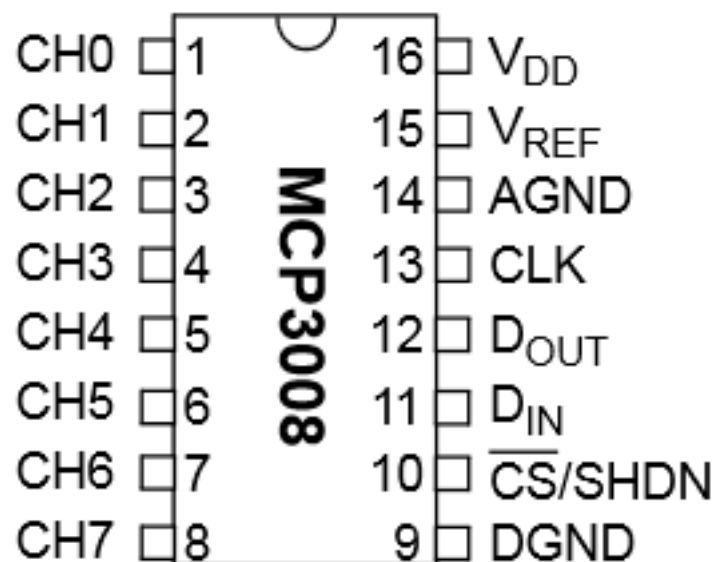


Figure 2:

- This is the MCP3008 Analog to Digital converter which is used to convert the analog signal from the flex sensor to a digital signal for the Raspberry Pi 3 to read. The MCP3008 can take up to 8 analog inputs at once.



## **1. Introduction**

### **1.1 Technical Problem**

We have innovated technology to great measures and even till this day, inventors and innovators continue to improve our lives with technology. Jobs such as an Aircraft Engineer or a Power line Technician put their lives at risk, by working up-close dangerous moving parts and high amounts of voltage. Due to these dangers, employees' are getting injured at the workplace. With the help of Robotic Arm, we aim to prevent these injuries from happening.

### **1.2 The Why**

This project was undertaken because using a robotic arm that can be controlled via mobile app or with a glove, prevents from injury/death as it allows the technicians to work from a safe distance. It also allows them to have similar precision as they would have had when they were actually there.

### **1.3 Problems Encountered**

There were many problems we encountered while working on this project. Some of these issues involved us burning our motors due to incorrect voltages applied. Our main problem came was when we attempted to connect the app and hardware. We also had issues with allowing the Raspberry Pi connect to an enterprise network, but this issue was resolved by running a simple bash program.

## **2. Project Specifications**

### **2.1 Project Description**

#### **2.1.1 Mobile Application Concept**

#### **2.1.2 Project Schedule**

##### **Phase 1**

- Creating Project Proposal  
Wednesday (9/7/16) – Thursday (9/8/16)
- Creating Budget  
Wednesday (9/14/16) – Thursday (9/15/16)
- Acquiring components, Progress Report  
Wednesday (9/21/16) – Thursday (9/22/16)
- Mechanical Assembly, Second Progress Report  
Wednesday (9/28/16) – Thursday (9/29/16)
- PCB Fabrication  
Wednesday (10/5/16) – Thursday (10/6/16)
- Interface wiring, Placard design  
Wednesday (10/12/16) – Thursday (10/13/16)
- Preparing demonstration  
Wednesday (10/19/16) – Thursday (10/20/16)
- Writing progress report/demo project  
Wednesday (10/26/16) – Thursday (10/27/16)
- Edit build video  
Wednesday (11/2/16) – Thursday (11/3/16)
- Writing progress report/status meeting  
Wednesday (11/9/16) – (11/10/16)
- Practice presentations  
Wednesday (11/16/16) – Thursday (11/17/16)
- Conduct Presentations  
Wednesday (11/23/16) – Thursday (11/24/16)
- Build instructions  
Wednesday (11/30/16) – Thursday (12/1/16)
- Project videos, Status meeting  
Wednesday (12/7/16) – Thursday (12/8/16)

##### **Phase 2**

- Group meeting  
Monday (1/9/17) – Tuesday (1/10/17)
- Initial integration

Monday (1/16/17) – Tuesday (1/17/17)

- Software Requirement Specifications(SRS)

Monday (1/23/17) – Tuesday (1/24/17)

- Progress report

Monday (1/30/17) – Tuesday (1/31/17)

- Project status

Monday (2/6/17) – Tuesday (2/7/17)

- Progress report of independent progress

Monday (2/13/17) – Tuesday (2/14/17)

- Project status

Monday (2/20/17) – Tuesday (2/21/17)

- Progress report/project integration

Monday (2/27/17) – Tuesday (2/28/17)

- Testing

Monday (3/6/17) – Tuesday (3/7/17)

- Project status

Monday (3/13/17) – Tuesday (3/14/17)

- Prepare for demonstration

Monday (3/20/17) – Tuesday (3/21/17)

- Complete presentation

Monday (3/27/17) – Tuesday (3/28/17)

- Complete final report

Monday (4/3/17) – Tuesday (4/4/17)

- Write video script

Monday (4/10/17) – Tuesday (4/11/17)

- Project videos

Monday (4/17/17) – Tuesday (4/18/17)

### **2.1.3 Application Screens**

#### **Login Screen:**

The login screen will present users with two edit text fields asking the user to enter a username and password. If the user doesn't have an account, there is an option that will allow users to create an account and store it into a database. If a user enters an incorrect username and/or password, the mobile application will present an error message on the screen.

#### **Register Screen:**

The register screen will display four edit text fields with the four fields being the user's full name, the username, the password, and the confirmation for the passwords. Once the user finishes entering the four edit text fields, all the fields will be sent to an online database and will allow the user to login into the application. The password the user enters must be more than five characters long and the password and confirmation password must be the same. If there is an issue with the registration process, there will be an error message on the screen and the entered fields will not be stored into the database.

### **Menu Screen:**

The menu screen will display the title of the project (F.I.M.P. Project) and two options for the user to choose from. One option is the controller screen which will allow the user to control the robotic arm using Bluetooth from the phone to the Raspberry Pi. The other option is user logs screen that display all the users that used the application to control the robotic arm. There is also a task bar on the top of the screen that have to option to logout of the application and will require the user to login again to use the application again.

### **Controller Screen:**

The controller screen is the main functionality of the mobile application that allows users to control the robotic arm through Bluetooth. The controller screen contains four sliding bars (seek bars) that will control the arm depending on the position of the sliding bar. Along with the sliding bars, it also contains a reset button to reset the position of the arm to its centered position and displaying the sliding bar values on the screen.

### **User Log Screen:**

The user log screen contains all the time that users have entered the controller screen to control the robotic arm with the time, day, and username. Once a user enters the controller screen, the mobile application will store the time and day the user entered the controller screen; along with the username of the user. The user logs will be displayed in a list in an organized way and will be able to track who and when a user is using the robotic arm and have it be saved all onto a database.

#### **2.1.4 Hardware Interfaces**

#### **2.1.5 Software Interfaces**

#### **2.1.6 Communication Interfaces**

## 2.2 Build Instructions

### Introduction

This project will solve many problems. Along with solving problems it will also be very innovative. It will help gamers with better precision, and interact with games. With the haptic feedback feature it will create a real life experience for the user and allow them to make better decisions. Scientists and engineers can use this arm, for experiments where they need to have certain amount of distance clearance from the test site. It can also withstand great amounts of temperature that the normal human hand or body wont be able to bear. Scientists can deal with hot object like lava rocks, or other hot surfaces. These arms can also be used in space, where the astronauts can use the arm from their space ship. With the help of the app, and the integrated camera it will allow users to interact with the environments outside of their reach, and capabilities. Also the app will be saving information received from the arm, and provide logs, so the user can use it to make his/her reports and also use the information to make changes to better the app or hardware.

### Budget

The budget was planned to be under 200\$ Canadian dollars, unfortunately I surpassed that limit and had to get a new Raspberry Pi and few other items so my budget has increased slightly.

- [New Raspberry Pi 3 kit - \\$99 CAD](#)
- [Raspberry Pi camera module - \\$25CAD](#)
- [Robot arm Kit - \\$70CAD](#)
- [Flex Sensor \(4.5"\) - \\$18.49 CAD X 4](#)
- [Adafruit 16-Channel PWM \\$34](#)

### Time Commitment

- Buying All the Parts - 1-2 Weeks
- Building Robot - 4hours
- Building PCB - 3hours
- Programming - 1 week

### Mechanical Assembly

#### STEP 1

The MeArm should be fun to build and easy to control. We've spent a lot of time putting together instructions for building and controlling the MeArm. We advise that you work out and test how to control your Servo Motors before constructing your MeArm. It will save you time and frustration, and lessen the chance that your MeArm will just be something cool to sit on your shelf.

[1 Servos](#)

[2 Servos](#)

[All Four Motors controlling with keyboard](#)

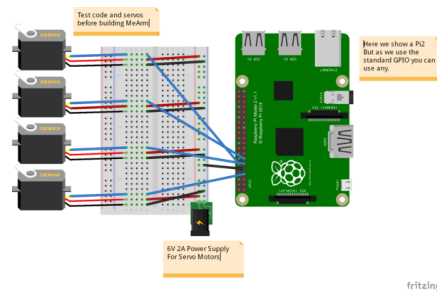


Figure 3:

## STEP 2

Click on link and follow the steps

## STEP 3

*Using A Flex sensor and Servo On The Raspberry Pi Using An MCP3008*

*MCP3008*

In order to measure the X and Y voltages I decided to use an MCP3008 10 bit Analogue to Digital Converter. These devices are cheap, easy to setup and allow 8 analogue inputs to be read by the Pi using its SPI interface. In this tutorial we will only need three of its inputs.

VDD 3.3V

VREF 3.3V

AGND GROUND

CLK GPIO11 (P1-23)

DOUT GPIO9 (P1-21)

DIN GPIO10 (P1-19)

CS GPIO8 (P1-24)

DGND GROUND

*Breadboard Circuit*

Here is the test circuit:

The MCP3008 is wired up just as it was in my previous post :

MCP3008      Pi

-----

Pin 1 (CH0) -

Pin 2 (CH1) -

Pin 3 (CH2) -

Pin 9 (DGND) Pin 6 (Ground)

Pin 10 (CS) Pin 24 (GPIO8)

Pin 11 (DIN) Pin 19 (GPIO10)



Pin 12 (DOUT) Pin 21 (GPIO9)

Pin 13 (CLK) Pin 23 (GPIO11)

Pin 14 (AGND) Pin 6 (Ground)

Pin 15 (VREF) Pin 1 (3.3V)

Pin 16 (VDD) Pin 1 (3.3V)

### **Python Test Script**

```
#!/usr/bin/env python

import time

import RPi.GPIO as GPIO

GPIO.setmode(GPIO.BCM)

GPIO.setwarnings(False)

# read SPI data from MCP3008 chip, 8 possible adc's (0 thru 7)

def readadc(adcnun, clockpin, mosipin, misopin, cspin):

    if ((adcnun > 7) or (adcnun < 0)):

        return -1

    GPIO.output(cspin, True)

    GPIO.output(clockpin, False) # start clock low

    GPIO.output(cspin, False) # bring CS low

    commandout = adcnun

    commandout |= 0x18 # start bit + single-ended bit

    commandout <= 3 # we only need to send 5 bits here

    for i in range(5):

        if (commandout & 0x80):

            GPIO.output(mosipin, True)

        else:

            GPIO.output(mosipin, False)
```



```

commandout <<= 1

GPIO.output(clockpin, True)

GPIO.output(clockpin, False)

adcout = 0

# read in one empty bit, one null bit and 10 ADC bits

for i in range(12):

    GPIO.output(clockpin, True)

    GPIO.output(clockpin, False)

    adcout <<= 1

    if (GPIO.input(misopin)):

        adcout |= 0x1

    GPIO.output(cspin, True)

    adcout >>= 1 # first bit is 'null' so drop it

return adcout

PWMOUT = 18

SPICLK = 22

SPIMISO = 23

SPIMOSI = 24

SPICS = 25

# set up the interface pins

GPIO.setup(PWMOUT, GPIO.OUT)

GPIO.setup(SPIMOSI, GPIO.OUT)

GPIO.setup(SPIMISO, GPIO.IN)

GPIO.setup(SPICLK, GPIO.OUT)

GPIO.setup(SPICS, GPIO.OUT)

# 10k trim pot connected to adc #0

```

```

potentiometer_adc = 0; pwm_freq = 50 # Set the PWM frequency to 50 Hz

last_read = 0 # this keeps track of the last potentiometer value

tolerance = 0 # to keep from being jittery we'll only change

# volume when the pot has moved more than 5 'counts'

# Configure the PWM pin

p = GPIO.PWM(PWMOUT, pwm_freq) # channel=18 frequency=50Hz

p.start(9)

try:

while True:

# we'll assume that the pot didn't move

trim_pot_changed = False

# read the analog pin

trim_pot = readadc(potentiometer_adc, SPICLK, SPIMOSI, SPIMISO, SPICS)

# how much has it changed since the last read?

pot_adjust = abs(trim_pot - last_read)

if ( pot_adjust > tolerance ):

trim_pot_changed = True

last_read = trim_pot

if ( trim_pot_changed ):

pwm_pct = round((trim_pot) / 2) # Determine current voltage percentage

pwm_pct = int(pwm_pct) # Cast the value as an integer

DC= 1./18*(pwm_pct)

print "ADC read: ", trim_pot

print "PWM percentage: ", pwm_pct

print "PWM Duty Cycle: ", DC

p.ChangeDutyCycle(DC)

```

```
# hang out and do nothing for a half second
```

```
time.sleep(0.5)
```

```
except KeyboardInterrupt:
```

```
pass
```

```
p.stop()
```

```
GPIO.cleanup()
```

#### STEP 4

Making PCB for Flex Sensor:

This is the schematic for the PCB that will contain the MCP3008 chip and the flex sensors to be connected.

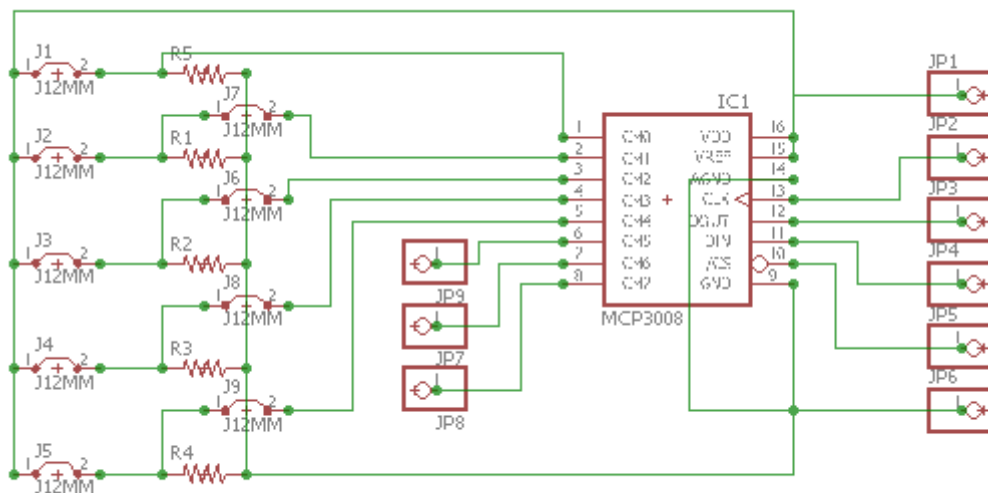


Figure 6:

This is the board which was created using the Eagle program.

#### STEP 5

Adding Adafruit\_PWM\_Servo\_Driver to Raspberry Pi 3:

#### Testing

**This can then be run using :**

```
sudo python (File name) .py
```

If everything has worked correctly you should see an output that looks something like :

#### Test 1

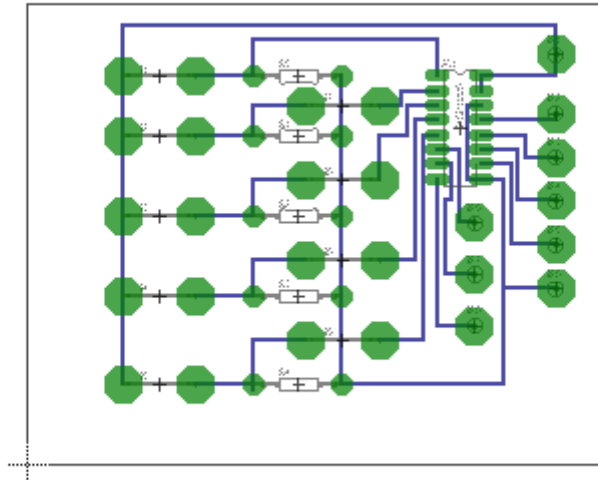


Figure 7:

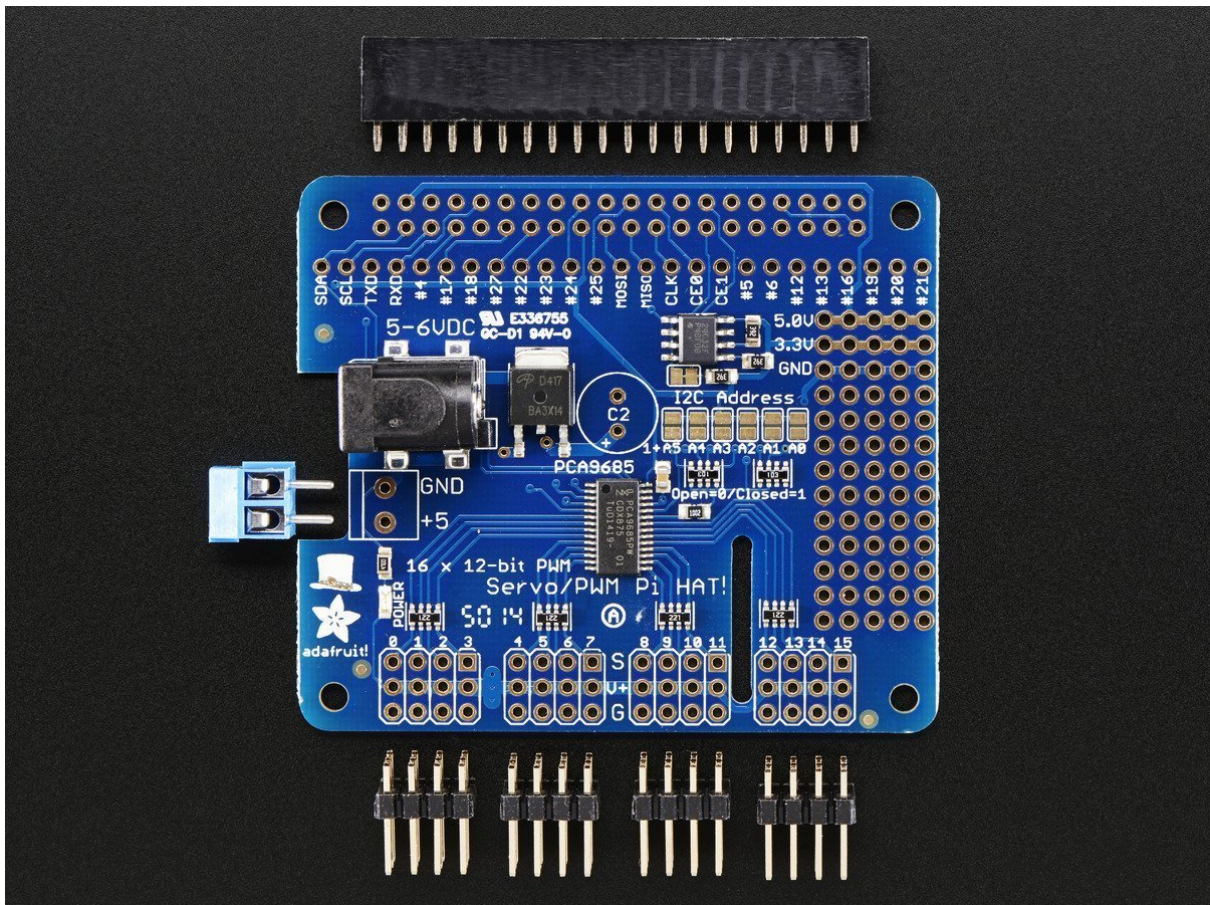


Figure 8:

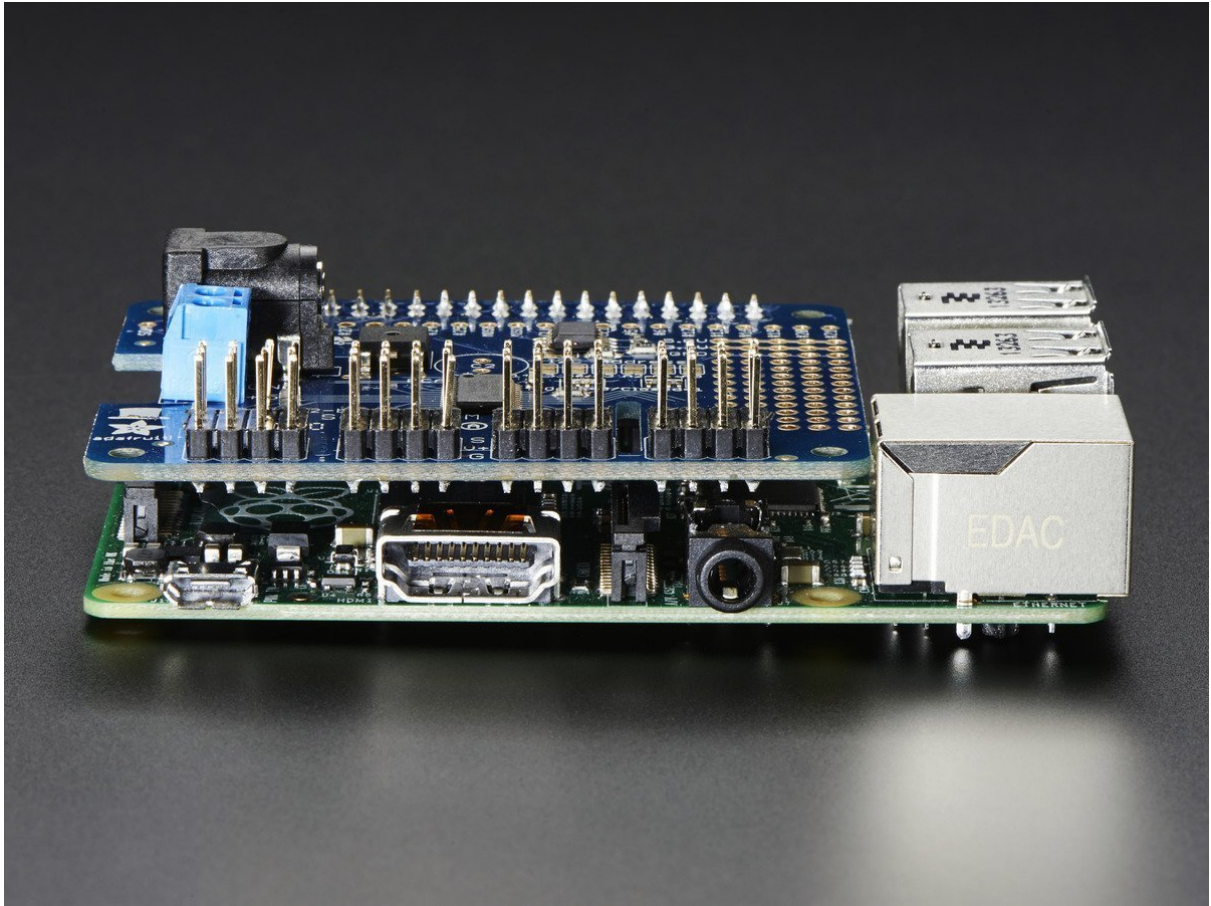


Figure 9:



```
help
PWM percentage: 223
PWM Duty Cycle: 12.3888888889
ADC read: 436
PWM percentage: 218
PWM Duty Cycle: 12.1111111111
ADC read: 428
PWM percentage: 214
PWM Duty Cycle: 11.8888888889
ADC read: 436
PWM percentage: 218
PWM Duty Cycle: 12.1111111111
ADC read: 437
PWM percentage: 218
PWM Duty Cycle: 12.1111111111
ADC read: 436
PWM percentage: 218
PWM Duty Cycle: 12.1111111111
ADC read: 432
PWM percentage: 216
PWM Duty Cycle: 12.0
ADC read: 436
PWM percentage: 218
PWM Duty Cycle: 12.1111111111
^Cpi@raspberrypi: ~/electronics/RPi-Analog $
```

Figure 10:

## 2.3 Project Breakdown

### 2.3.1 Database

There will be a Amazon Database; a service provided by Amazon. When creating an account with Amazon Web Server, I need to create a php file for the register activity. I also need to create one file for the login activity. To connect the app to the database, I created a "init.php" file. This file is in charge for establishing connection to the database. All of these files are in-charge of the backend process of the database. This database will be responsible for holding user account information, for example user credentials for the login/register function. This database will also contain many tables under the user account as the user will be able to create multiple logs with in a day and each log will be stored in its own table. The breakdown of the fields is stated below.

#### User Account

1. This table is generated when the user registers
2. It holds the users first name, last name, username as well as the password.

When registering, if an username already exists on the database, it will advise the user that "User already exists". When logging in, if the user enters wrong credentials, it will advise the user "Wrong Credentials"

#### Logs

1. This table is generated under the users account and is linked with use unique id.
2. This table is generated when user launches the controller function in the app, and is asked if they would like to start a log.
3. It creates the table with title of the current date and time on the system and stores the motors start and end coordinates for each of the four motor.
4. User will be able to create multiple logs with in a day.

The purpose of the database is mainly to allow the user to create a personal account, and to allow other users to access logs from other users. Creating a table with the date and time, under the user's unique id, will inform others whose logs are being accessed from which date and time. The administrator may choose to restrict certain logs to certain user and/or departments.

These logs can be used for research/development reasons only, which is stated in the Terms and Condition document provided with the product and also displayed to the user when launching the app.

(Developed by Tanav Sharma)

### 2.3.2 Application

The overall concept of the mobile application for the project is to control the four servo motors of the robotic arm and keep logs on the user's actions. The first screen of the application will be the login screen which will require an email and password to create and login to an account. The accounts are used to hold individual logs of the user's controller usage. When logged in, the user is presented with two options; controller and user logs.

The first option of the application is to control the motor with four sliders that will control the arms movements. When the application first begins, the sliders will be set to a default (centered) position. When exiting the application, the robotic arm will return to its default position after all created movements.

During the controller screen, the application will have logs of the user's usage and will be presented in the user log screen. The user logs will contain the log of all the users usage of the application based on

the users in the database. In conclusion, the login screen, controller screen, and user logs are the three key features of the application. The key developer of this application will be Hennok Tadesse with some help from Tanav Sharma.

(Developed by Hennok Tadesse)

### **2.3.3 Hardware**

#### **ROBOTIC ARM**

FIMP project aims to bring a simple Robot Arm well within the reach and budget of the average educator, student, parent or child. The design brief we set out with was to build a full robot arm kit with standard low cost screws, low cost servo motors and using less than 300 x 200mm (~A4) of acrylic

#### **MCP3008**

In order to measure the X and Y voltages I decided to use an MCP3008 10 bit Analogue to Digital Converter. These devices are cheap, easy to setup and allow 8 analogue inputs to be read by the Pi using its SPI interface.

#### **Adafruit 16-Channel PWM**

The Raspberry Pi is a wonderful little computer, but one thing it isn't very good at is controlling DC Servo Motors - these motors need very specific and repetitive timing pulses to set the position. Instead of asking the Pi Linux kernel to send these signals, pop on this handy HAT! It adds the capability to control 16 Servos with perfect timing. It can also do PWM up to 1.6 KHz with 12 bit precision, all completely free-running.

#### **Flex Sensor 4.5**

A simple flex sensor 4.5" in length. As the sensor is flexed, the resistance across the sensor increases. Patented technology by Spectra Symbol - they claim these sensors were used in the original Nintendo Power Glove.

The resistance of the flex sensor changes when the metal pads are on the outside of the bend.

(Developed by Alay Lad)



## 2.4 Progress Reports

### Progress report sent on January 31, 2017:

Dear Kristian Medri,

The current progress for the F.I.M.P. (robotic arm) project has been following the schedule shown in the proposal and gannet chart. The overall budget has stated the same other than buying a 650  $\mu$ f and a golf glove that Alay had already owned.

For the hardware, we have made progress on moving the all servo motors on the robotic arm with a flex sensor and was able to solder one of the flex sensor to a custom made PCB created by Alay. This will allow us to put the flex sensors into a glove. For testing this flex sensor, we are using a golf glove with the sensor on one finger to move on of the motors. We are current working on creating a smaller PCB that will placed on top of the raspberry pi on the Eagle application. Along with the PCB, are also creating a case for the raspberry pi that will fit the raspberry pi, DAC custom made PCB, and Adafruit 16-Channel PWM.

For the android phone application, we are keeping the app we created from last semester but are changing the overall design of the controller. The design of the controller is going to be 4 sliders that will control all the servo motors for the robotic arm. We created the designs for the app and are ready to implement the designs on android studio.

For the database, we are still undecided on which database to use. Firebase was the originally the database we used for the android app but we are not sure if it will be suitable for this semester. Tanav suggested that our group use Google Cloud for the projects database. Once we have decided on the current database we can start creating tables and integrating it to the android app.

In conclusion, we are on track to completing the project on its required time and will continue to update the github website with test code, design documents, and other project information. The link to the github is <https://github.com/hennok129/RoboticArm>.

Sincerely,

Hennok Tadesse

### Independent progress report sent on February 16, 2017:

Dear Kristian Medri,

My current progress for the F.I.M.P project has been on track with the schedule shown in the proposal and Gant chart. The overall budget has stayed the same with no changes from the last progress report. My main contribution with the project has been the back-end development of the application and assisting Hennok with the overall design of the app.

I originally decided to use Firebase Database as our online database platform. I ran into many problems as Firebase does not grant its user full access to its back-end system and is restricted in terms of usability and flexibility. The database that we have now decided to go for, is the Amazon Web Service RDS(Rational Database). This way I will have full access to the back-end, and it gives us more flexibility as I can create my own SQL statements to suit my needs and the application.

The application that will be used to control the hardware, needs a lot of redesigning. I have designed and will be implementing a login, register screen and a log recorder feature. The log recorder feature will be able to store the logs of the run, into a table. These tables can later be used for analysis, report making, and/or re-running the tests. To make a more user friendly interface, I have also designed and implemented a navigation drawer. This will allow the user to access the different features offered by the app, that will be getting updated regularly.

Overall my contribution to the group has been well, and works towards a successful completion of the project. Me and my team will continue to update the github website with test code, design documents, and other project information. The link to the github is <https://github.com/hennok129/RoboticArm>.

Sincerely,  
Tanav Sharma

### **Continuation of the independent progress report sent on February 19, 2017:**

Dear Kristian Medri,

This progress report is an continuation to the original independent progress report sent to you by Tanav on February 19, 2017. The continuation will discuss the independent progress that Alay and I have done.

My contribution to the project is to design and create the mobile application that controls the robotic arm. I have created and completed the design of the controller for the robotic arm which uses four sliding bars (seek bars) that will control the arm depending on the position of the sliding bar. Along with the sliding bars, I have included a reset button to reset the position of the arm to its centered position and displaying the sliding bar values on the screen. The work that needs to be done for the software portion is to figure out a way to control the arm with mobile application and will be working with Alay on moving it with Bluetooth or WIFI.

Alay's contribution to the project is to assemble and work with the hardware for the project by creating a PCB for the flex sensors and designing the glove to move the robotic arm. Alay has created a new PCB that is connected to the flex sensors. Alay had trouble with the PCB he created last week due to a capacitor on the Raspberry Pi being in the way. Alay had also created a base plate for the robotic arm to avoid the arm from falling over. The progress that needs to be done for the hardware is to solder the flex sensors to the PCB and create the glove for the flex sensors.

In conclusion, we are reaching the completion of our hardware portion of the project and are working on the communication between the mobile application and the robotic arm. Test code, design documents, and other project information will be available at this github:

<https://github.com/hennok129/RoboticArm>.

Sincerely,  
Hennok Tadesse

### **Integration progress report sent on March 7, 2017:**

Dear Dr. Kristian Medri,

This progress report will discuss the project collaboration that I, Hennok, and Tanav have done. The integration is between the MeArm robotic arm, mobile application, and the online database.

My contribution to the project is to assemble and work with the hardware for the project by creating PCBs for the flex sensors. I am still working on designing the glove to move the robotic arm. The flex sensor PCBs has been completed. I am also creating a base plate for the robotic arm for weight and balance to prevent the arm from falling over during use. The base plate approximate cost is around \$20. On that note, we have bought ribbon cable, which has cost \$3, and the Bluetooth adapter, which has cost \$15. There is currently no integration between the mobile application and hardware yet, but we are figuring out a way to control the arm with the mobile application using Bluetooth.

Hennok's contribution to the project is to design the mobile application that controls the robotic arm. He also created and completed the design of the controller for the robotic arm which uses four sliding bars (seek bars) that will control the arm depending on the position of the sliding bar. Along with the sliding bars, I have included a reset button to reset the position of the arm to its centered position and which displays the sliding bar values on the screen. Hennok worked with Tanav to integrate the online database that Tanav had made to add a login and register screen, and user logs.

Tanav's contribution to the project is to create a database and connect it with the mobile application. He has completed making the database using Amazon Web Service RDS (Rational Database) and he was

also able to connect to the database with the mobile application. Currently, he is going to work with me on connecting the robotic arm using Bluetooth to the mobile application and the Raspberry Pi.

In conclusion, we are close to completion of our hardware portion of the project and we are working on the integration between the mobile application and the robotic arm. The test code, design documents, and other project information will be available at this GitHub:<https://github.com/hennok129/RoboticArm>.

Sincerely,

Alay Lad

### **Troubleshooting status report sent on March 21, 2017:**

Dear Kristian Medri,

This progress report will go over the status of troubleshooting the overall project and issues we have come across since the last progress report. The budget has not changed from the last progress report and we are currently on schedule to completing the project on time.

We were having a lot of our problems with moving the robotic arm with the flex sensors; once Alay had finished creating the PCB for the sensors. The issue we had was that the program on the Raspberry Pi 3 was able to get the value on the sensor but the robotic arm was not able to read the values; therefore, we were having issues moving the robotic arm. We fixed this issue by checking if all the components on the PCB was working, and found out that the MCP3008 (Analogue to Digital Converter) was not being powered. Once we powered the integrated circuit, the robotic arm was working with all motors moving based on the flex sensors values.

We also had some issues with the mobile application and database with sending data to the database more than one time. The issue was sending the start and end points of the controller to the database to see if it could control the servos on the robotic arm. Tanav has come up with a solution to this problem by using JAVA threads with the mobile application to send data more than once to the database.

Overall, the main focus for the project, at the moment, is to get the mobile application and robotic arm to communicate with each other and to complete the technical report. The link to the github is <https://github.com/hennok129/RoboticArm>.

Sincerely,

Hennok Tadesse

## **2.5 Problems Encountered**

### **Hardware Problems:**

During the creation of the robotic arm, our group tested the micro servo motors to see how the servo motors move and the limits of the motors. When powering one of the servo motor, our group had put too much Amps (current) to the motor which caused the servo motor to burn out. This was an issue that all the group members have had which caused each group member to burn one or more servo motors. The solution to this problem was to always note how many Amps are being put into the servo motors (A safe amount of Voltage and Amps to put into all four servo motors is 5 V and 2 A).

When using the flex sensors to control the robotic arm, there were some issues with reading values consistently. At times, it felt as if the robotic arm would read values one time then not read values another time. The problem was with the PCB that was created to connect the flex sensors to the MCP3008 (Analogue to Digital Converter) IC. When soldering the PCB, we were not very careful with making sure every component was soldered well and the IC was not being powered leading to the readings of the flex sensor to be incorrect. The solution was to make sure the IC was soldered correctly and was powering up correctly.

### **Software Problems:**

During the integration of the mobile application and database, there were some issues with sending data to the database multiple times. The issue was noticed when trying to make two user accounts on the mobile application and when making one account, the mobile application will create and store the information into a database; But when making another account, the application will crash and must re-launch the application to create the second account. To correct this issue, our group had made JAVA threads to send multiple data to the database. This fixed issues with creating multiple users and recording the user logs to store data multiple times.

Another mobile application issue our team had come across was the connection between the mobile application and the robotic arm. Our original plan was to connect the Raspberry Pi 3 to the online database and to have the mobile application send start and end points of the seek bars position and move the robotic arm depending on the position. As the project came along, we realized that it would be very difficult to do so and would cause a lot of unneeded data on the database. Our solution to the issue was to control the arm using the Bluetooth on the Raspberry Pi 3 and the mobile device's Bluetooth.

## **3. Conclusion**

This project was aimed to create a safer work environment for engineers and technicians, and to create a fun educational experience for the general public. We wanted to reduce the rate of work place injuries, and could not have thought of a better way. This F.I.M.P Arm has one main function, to give the user the ability to perform their job/task with ease and safely. The arm consists of four motors, which is connected to the 4 flex sensors in the glove. As the user flex's their fingers, it sends the values from the sensor to the motors to mimic the motion. The arm can also be controlled via Android application, which connects to the arm via Bluetooth. The application controls the values with four sliding bars, the application allows the user to start a log and send the values of the motor to the database, which can be later viewed for report/diagnostic purposes. The final version of our project meets all the requirements that are needed to complete/rebuild this project.

#### **4. Appendix**

#### **5. Reference**