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Functional Model of Management Applied to my Life

Overview: I choose to plan out the final semester of my time at Cooper. The timeframe is very explicit (up until grades are due at the end of the semester), and this clearly fits within any larger goal of success in career and beyond (which are contingent upon graduating in a timely manner). This is a good way to lay out what I need to plan anyways for my Master's, since there's a lot going on between it and the rest of my school activities.

1. Plan.

1.1. Who/what. The benefactor of this plan, as well as the organizer of the plan, is myself. Additional benefactors include my family members, my thesis advisors, and the people (programmers) who my research groups targets, although these do not really factor much into the planning of my semester.

1.2. Objectives.

The overall objective is attaining a good degree of time management (via delegation, parallelism, and not wasting time) in order to graduate successfully and on time. This can be broken into the following subtasks:

- Meeting the graduation requirements for the undergraduate engineering degree. This mostly involves passing required classes, since all classes have been planned out by this time.
- Meeting requirements of the dual-degree (four year Master's) at Cooper. This is due to my further employment being contingent on the fact that I finish this as planned, and not any later so that I do not have to delay my start date for work.
- Pertaining to the two objectives above, there are many smaller deadlines to meet. For the undergraduate degree, this involves meeting regular deadlines for classes. For the Master's degree, there are the thesis report and presentation deadlines, as well as ensuring that the thesis project meets the minimum requirements in terms of academic rigor.
- Maintaining my other group activities not essential to the bachelor's degree or Master's, which include: the "study group" at our research group; weekly shifts at the CUCC; sporadic CS tutoring by student request; and a teaching arrangement for the MATLAB seminar.
- Maintaining good mental and physical health through other activities, such as sleep, eating, maintaining COVID precautions, etc.

1.3. Deadlines.

To better manage deadlines, especially for Master's (in which deadlines are more-or-less managed by myself, rather than in classes where deadlines are managed by the professor), a planning document has been created on Google Drive with a list of weekly goals for the thesis project. This document has been shared with all people relevant to my thesis project.

2. Organize.

2.1. What I have.

- A list of classes and group activities with a set schedule for undergraduate classes and non-essential group activities.
- The preparation from last semester for my Master's project and the ongoing senior capstone project.
- Some job security following Cooper, so I don't have to worry about job applications this semester.
- A close residence to the Cooper Union building, which minimizes transportation time and cost every day.

2.2. What I need to accomplish objectives.

I am not in need of any physical resources to achieve my goal (at the current moment). I have all the resources (time, computing power, access to research group and thesis advisors) necessary to complete my thesis and undergraduate degree, and hard work is all that's remaining to achieve it. This may change over the course of the semester, e.g., if I need access to a paywalled research report.

2.3. How I will get these things.

As mentioned previously, I am not in need of resources.

3. Staff and Direct.

Of course, the most important person in these plans is the organizer, myself. If this person is badly managed or otherwise incapacitated, everything will fall apart.

The people that will be important for the completion of the undergraduate degree mostly involve group members (e.g., for senior capstone projects) and professors. The professors will direct myself in classes, and work on group projects will be distributed between group members and myself.

The people that will be important for the completion of the graduate degree include my thesis advisors (logistical and technical advisors) and another student who is working on very similar material to me. This involves scheduling regular meetings with all of the relevant parties: mostly bi-weekly check-ins.

The people that will be very important for mental health include family members at home, who do most of the cooking and house chores.

Since all of the people that will be essential in completing the Master's already have been "hired," there is no need to appoint new people to these positions.

4. Control.

Using the document containing planning information, I will periodically check back to see if I am on track to finish the planned goals on time. If there are doubts about finishing the Master's project on time, some time may need to be reallocated away from the non-essential group activities into the Master's project.

Additional feedback from thesis advisors or the fellow student working alongside my Master's project will also be useful in reorienting my plans.

Any circumstantial changes to plans (e.g., contracting COVID-19, power outages due to poor weather, etc.) will potentially cause me to also reallocate time towards the Master's project.