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CECS 491A – Section 3

Prof. Hoffman

Lessons Learned

As this semester comes to a close, I’m reflecting back on how great it was and found that this software engineering course was not only the most enjoyable course but the most enlightening. I was able to get an idea of how the software industry works and the documentation that is involved in the process of building software needs for a company. Also, I learned that there are levels of detail of that goes into software documentation and that those levels are based on the recipients receiving the document. Another lesson I learned is that even a very simple and practical software project needs a lot of planning and without time management skills and teamwork, things can get sloppy. Now, I’m going to go in greater detail with all those lessons I’ve learned in this course and go over the positives and the negatives of each.

First, we were able to get an idea of what goes on in the very beginning of a software project where a company with software needs will speak to multiple software vendors to fulfill those needs. It was similar to lesson I learned from my father about who contractors are and how their service is requested by companies who need a solution to their problem. The lesson was great to hear because it somewhat introduced me to the business aspect of software and it reminded me of the bigger picture which is that essentially software is mostly built as a service to others that are in need of it. Also, it was nice to hear and learn about the software industry from someone with experience in that field. It gives me an idea of what to expect after college.

The documentation was, for the most part, very familiar as I learned about them in the introductory software engineering course. The only documents I had trouble with were the class diagram and the sequence diagram. I was having trouble with deciding whether or not to use associations or compositions in the class diagrams. I was also having trouble with knowing the differences between boundary, control, and entity objects in the sequence diagrams. I had to depend heavily on comparing my diagrams with my teammates diagrams to be able to complete my share of the documents. I was getting frustrated that I wasn’t understanding those concepts as easily as others did. Of course, in order for me to be better for next time, I would just need to study those concepts a lot more and be patient.

Possibly the most important lesson I’ve learned in this class regarding software engineering is teamwork. Without good chemistry and communication with my team members, we would not have turned in documents on time that were well thought out. I was fortunate enough to have a great team for this senior project. We were great with making decisions as a team, splitting up tasks for all the documents, managing time to complete the documents, and consistently staying on top of communication by answering text messages promptly and showing up to all the important team meetings.

Overall this course has taught me a lot of positive lessons. The eye-opening lesson of the software industry which gave me a better understanding of the business aspect of software engineering. The frustratingly difficult concepts of various documentation involved in the planning of software projects. And lastly, the importance of teamwork and communication in a software engineering team and what my team and I did to stay on top of our game when working on our project. It was a great semester and I learned a lot but I’m excited to dive in to the coding portion of the project in the spring season. I believe next semester will be even more enlightening and enjoyable.