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| Luke Pepin Final Reflection ENGR 3195- IE4D |

My experience in the Entrepreneurship in Defense course has been incredibly rewarding. This course has provided me with some of the most practical experience I have gained during my time at UConn. My interest in applying Computer Science within the government sector has only deepened through this course, as it offered real-world interactions with government professionals and highlighted the unique problem-solving skills required in this field. The opportunity to engage with professionals who are actively working in the government has been invaluable.

The course format and the introduction to new models and methods for developing solutions have been absolutely fantastic. The structured approach to problem-solving and the emphasis on innovative thinking have been particularly beneficial. I fully intend to reuse the presentation slides for future projects. The weekly presentations have been extremely helpful in my ongoing efforts to become a better communicator. These presentations have undoubtably improved my public speaking skills from the substandard they began at during the start of the semester. Additionally, getting accustomed to touchpoints, proper email etiquette, and meeting decorum has been another significant benefit of the course. The emphasis on professional communication has prepared me for real-world interactions, ensuring that I can present myself and my ideas effectively in a professional setting. The exposure to this side of problem-solving for the government has been eye-opening and extremely exciting. It has broadened my understanding of the challenges and opportunities in the government sector, and I am now more enthusiastic than ever about pursuing a career in this field. The course has also introduced me to various tools and methodologies that are essential for developing solutions in a governmental context. Learning about these tools has been incredibly beneficial, as they have provided me with a framework for approaching complex problems systematically.

Despite the positives, the course was not without its challenges. Earlier in the semester, I noted that my groupmates relied heavily on my work and contributed very little. This issue was consistent with other projects I have been a part of. During the semester, the other groups picked up the work and actively contributed, but this group had no realization of the need to step up. This made it the worst of the three groups I participated in this semester. I was responsible for 90% of the work done for my group, which was evident in the presentations as my groupmates knew very little during our weekly presentations. The only time my group has worked during this semester is a suite of Colin Cooke’s Emails on Week 5 and each week when dividing who gets to present which of the slides I created. I wish we could have done more, such as creating touchpoints, tangible (non-document) results, and additional inclusions like a poster board for potential conferences, but the workload was too severe on me. The lack of contribution from my groupmates limited our ability to produce high-quality deliverables and fully explore the potential of our project. This experience has highlighted the importance of effective teamwork and the need for clear communication and delegation of tasks within a group. Furthermore, the heavy workload placed on me affected my ability to focus on other aspects of the course. I often found myself prioritizing the completion of tasks over the quality of the work, which impacted the overall outcome of our project. This experience has taught me the importance of balancing workload and ensuring that all group members are actively contributing to the project.

In conclusion, while the course presented significant challenges, particularly in terms of group dynamics and workload distribution, it also offered invaluable practical experience and professional growth. I have learned the importance of better communication within a team and the need to balance personal focus with meeting all course requirements. Moving forward, I aim to improve my ability to delegate tasks and ensure all group members are actively contributing. This experience has also reinforced my interest in applying Computer Science within the government sector and has provided me with the skills and knowledge necessary to pursue a career in this field. Despite the challenges, I am grateful for the opportunity to have participated in this course and look forward to applying what I have learned in future endeavors.