

ENSF 609/610 – Team Design Project in Software Engineering I & II

Department of Electrical and Software Engineering

Industry Project Guidelines

Project Eligibility

An **industry-sponsored** project is typically a project that is jointly defined and scoped by the student team and industry sponsor and addresses a particular problem.

It is meant to be a short-term **internship** such that a team of students can help the sponsor solve technical challenges and receive **valuable experience** and **mentorship** from the sponsor in return.

The problem relates to the line of work of the sponsor and the product delivered by the team is expected to be directly relevant to the sponsor. There is no limitation on the nature of the business of the sponsor as long as the defined project falls within the scope of technical knowledge delivered by the electrical and computer engineering department.

The sponsor could be any company, business, or institute that provides certain services, and the sponsored projects are relevant to their business. Examples of previous sponsors include engineering companies, high-tech companies, energy, utilities, and public sectors, public institutes, and research labs. The sponsor does not have to be in Alberta, but local sponsors are preferred since it is easier to meet and communicate.

The Role of Industry Representatives

- Each industry-sponsored team must be assigned an industry sponsor representative.
- Ideally, the representative of the sponsor would be a **software engineer**, or a **data scientist**, or an **expert of related IT disciplines** to be able to provide the students with **guidance** and **mentorship**.
- The representative is the manager for the project and the project owner. All requests, evaluations, and meetings with the sponsor are arranged through the representative.
- Teams must keep the industry sponsor involved in the scoping and solution design of the project so there are no surprises later. The sponsor representative is effectively the **manager** and it is crucial to keep them satisfied. Teams should meet and consult the sponsor representative as many times as necessary while respecting their busy schedule.
- Each team must share a copy of the team's reports with the industry sponsor representative for their information, in case they need it for the evaluations.

Our experience from previous years is that the teams who had engaged the sponsor had an overall richer learning experience at the end. It is recommended for industry representatives to put a scrum process in place to help manage the team effectively.

Note that Sponsor representative evaluations are part of your assessment, and they will only be able to assess the project fairly if you keep them in the loop and consult them at every stage, as often as it is feasible. An unsatisfied sponsor is not an option. The teams must do their best to keep the sponsor informed and satisfied with the project outcomes. Any serious issues that cannot be resolved with a reasonable timeline and effort must be reported to the course instructor.