BCIS201

Alternative Modelling

Course evaluations from

Co-operative Education

Project 2016 s1



## Introduction

When students of the Co-operative education project were submitting their final report they were asked to analyse their previous courses with what they had learned and in relation to their project. Here we have statements the students have made about what is good about BCIS201 and any recommendations that could be made about the course content. Each statement is made by a separate student and bullet points are used to make this distinction.

## What students think is good about this course

* A lot of course content was valuable for my project especially the Agile material and what Scrum is, roles involved and how to apply it within projects
* During this course the importance of modelling a system was presented. It allows for a simplified version of the product and a focal point for discussion among interested parties. During the project we modelled the system architecture and used class diagrams to model the application’s internal classes. We were then able to discuss issues during development with each other and other interested parties.
* As an alternative to the ‘Waterfall Model’ Scrum was discussed during Alternative Modelling. Having foreknowledge of Sprints, backlogs, and Scrum teams among other aspects of Scrum, allowed us to implement and work effectively within this framework during development.
* Prior education led me to believe that there was only one correct process to carry out a project, however this course allowed me to discover the various methodologies available to suit different types of projects and environments. The content covered although basic, gave me enough understanding to visualize and choose the most appropriate methodology for the circumstances of this project and deliver the work required. In the end, I went with a close to agile approach which required very little planning so I could get on with the work and still provide high quality results, and then later switched to a RAD methodology to produce “products” at a faster rate without compromising quality.
* The content in this course was very relevant to my project at Jade. The knowledge I gained meant I could easily work in an Agile scrum environment, and pick up technologies like Jira.
* The course was appropriate and helpful for the projects to come. It helped me with our project approach. It helped our team understand what methodology was being used in the Industry and the methodology that we used in developing our project.
* The contents and the theory behind this course is sufficient for me to understand the basic lesson about methodologies and how to implement them in software development. Having taught the basics of scrum, it helped me to pick up the fast paced development that we did in our internship project.
* Alternative Modelling was the first course that introduced the topic of Methodologies. This was useful because it helped with deciding on what method to use for the project as well as writing on a method for the essay.
* It was good to learn about the different development methodologies: SCRUM (cross-functional teams, and continuous improvement); Waterfall; Spiral model. This was useful for our project management.
* It was a good exercise having to write essays. Malcolm Wieck was quite concerned about good grammar, which is important if you are wanting to write a professional report.
* This course helped me in order to write up my methodologies essay, as we were required to explain and show how we used a preferred methodology within our project.
* I learned a lot of theory about software development life cycle in Alternative Modelling, and about the most important thing: Scrum. Scrum was the methodology we used in our project.
* Excellent course, in Alternative Modelling I learnt methodologies and risk management strategies. All the learning from this course was used from this course (especially: Agile).
* Joint Application Design - The concept of including the client who takes an active role during the development phase is a basic yet powerful one. They are after all going to be the end user or have a close relationship with the end user of the product. It makes sense to utilise the knowledge they possess. During the project a McKesson employee acted in that role for us. He attended our weekly planning meetings and end of Sprint reviews as well as some of our daily stand ups. It was he who would be using the product once it had been completed. When time was short his input as to where the effort should be focused was invaluable.

## What students recommend for this course

* I would recommend that the course could include more practical Scrum material rather than so much methodology research.
* Given both the BCIS201 course and usage of a methodology was compulsory as part of the CE301 project, the one suggestion I would make is to cover other types of models relating to other fields of IT i.e. many network engineers I know we use ITIL or change management but never use or come across in this course. Any of the course covered methodologies, so such methodologies would be a welcome addition to the course.
* It may be useful to learn about domain-specific languages in an IS course, to complement programming activities.
* I recommend having further details into the management tools used within the different development approaches. It would have been beneficial to have learnt about Jira, Asana or other project tracking tools/software.
* The basic principle and idea of visualising the flow of work should also be taught to students, this method or system is called Kanban. It is a method that maximizes a team’s ability to consistently deliver high quality software by visualising workflow and limiting the work in process.
* Scrum is really useful, I like it, I suggest the tutor spend more time teaching on Scrum.