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Final Reflection On The Course Learning Outcomes

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Course: Software Project Management

Journal URL: https://github.com/prakashy003/SPM-Learning-Journal

Dates Range of activities: 16/01/2025 – 27/03/2025

Date of the journal: 29/03/2025

Overall Course Impact:

This course, *SOEN 6841 – Software Project Management*, has significantly transformed my understanding of managing software projects from inception to closure. Initially, I viewed project management as a mostly linear administrative task, but I now understand it as a dynamic and iterative discipline that demands strategic thinking, technical insight, and soft skills.

From the importance of setting SMART goals and employing estimation techniques like COCOMO and function point analysis, to the critical role of monitoring through EVM and effective risk assessment, the course has provided a holistic foundation. Chapters 9 to 14 further deepened this understanding by covering software lifecycle management, CMMI maturity models, software design, testing, and release processes—bringing together the technical and managerial aspects into one coherent framework.

Application in Professional Life:

The knowledge gained in this course is immediately applicable to real-world software development scenarios. For instance, the use of Work Breakdown Structures (WBS), Gantt charts, and risk matrices are essential in project planning and can be seamlessly integrated into tools like Jira or Microsoft Project.

As part of the course, we chose to work on the **Food Expiration Alert System**, a project where we actively implemented various project management concepts. We adopted the **Agile methodology**, designed and tracked progress using **Gantt charts**, conducted **risk assessments**, and practiced **effort estimation** to guide our scheduling. This project was a hands-on opportunity to experience the practical value of what we learned, allowing us to simulate a real-world software development lifecycle from start to finish.

Additionally, I now understand the value of applying iterative models like SCRUM in startup environments or fast-paced industries where requirements evolve rapidly. The insights on software maintenance and release planning will be invaluable when supporting deployed applications post-launch—something especially useful for roles in DevOps or software delivery.

Peer Collaboration Insights:

Collaborating with peers played a major role in reinforcing theoretical concepts with practical perspectives. Group discussions on models like waterfall vs. iterative, effort estimation strategies, and real-world scheduling issues brought diverse insights that textbooks alone couldn't provide.

The **Food Expiration Alert System project** served as a live lab where we applied classroom concepts—like Agile sprints, risk assessment matrices, and Earned Value Management—to solve real challenges. Peer feedback also helped identify blind spots in our initial estimations and scope control plans. These interactions not only strengthened my understanding but also highlighted the value of diverse thinking in successful project execution.

Personal Growth:

This course has been instrumental in my growth as both a learner and an aspiring project leader. I have improved my skills in structured thinking, estimation accuracy, risk anticipation, and time management. Earlier in the course, I struggled with the mathematical depth of models like COCOMO, but through consistent practice and peer discussions, I can now confidently apply these models in planning phases.

Moreover, working on the **Food Expiration Alert System** encouraged me to take initiative, stay organized, and maintain quality through every phase—from design and construction to closure. I now pay more attention to quality assurance, version control, and long-term maintainability—thinking beyond code to project sustainability.
