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CS 458 Software Engineering

Reflective Essay

One of the most important things I learned in this class was how to create a full software project from the ground up. I learned about what manuals, and documentation is important to a project and how they can help not only programmers but also users. It lets them to understand the software, and to make maintaining and upgrading it easier as well. I also learned in practicality what it means to work in sprints by working on specific requirements in stages like you would as part of a real development process.

In completing this project, I ran into a couple of major challenges. The first was a lack of knowledge and experience with Node.js, and the second was being a group of 2, which became mostly a group of 1, while other groups had 3-4 members. The first challenge I overcame with a lot of research and watching videos of developers with more experience than myself. The particular issue that was most sticky was how to make the async nature of Node.js become synchronous when needed. The second challenge I overcame by working on things in a unit test style perspective. I would write a small piece of code to get the very basic functionality needed of a larger operation. And then when I knew that worked, I would increment a little further and further until I was able to tackle large functionality. Working in this way kept me making steady progress towards completion. If I hadn’t, I would not have been able to complete this project on my own. The small steady progress also helped me mentally with the grind it takes to make something on your own. Each small step allowed me to see that I was getting closer and closer despite the daunting task ahead of me.