Team Portfolio Reflection

Evaluation

What went well?
- Everyone worked really hard! It was invaluable that each person on the team was invested not just in a letter grade, but in creating a final product we were all proud of.
- We were lucky to have a good range of strengths and skills, from UI to javascript to Rails, which allowed us to tackle a project in which all of those components were mission critical.
- Each person specialized in certain features, owning them and fixing them when necessary. From previous projects we learned that it was essential to have a directly responsible team member for every feature. We found that when someone was directly responsible it made collaborating on the project much more effective because everyone on the team knew who was working on what.
- We used branches heavily to try to isolate new features, and we came away with a better understanding of the why the git workflow is the way it is.
- We had frequent meetings, and everyone put in the effort to sync up and divide and conquer tasks as these meetings and throughout the project.
- Everyone did a good job of asking for help and responding to requests for help, as well as trying to load balance and re-prioritize when obstacles were encountered.
- When we were working all together in the same location we were able to collaborate more efficiently and work more effectively.

Lessons Learned
- We used Trello to track and assign tasks; this was helpful, but not as effective as it could have been because as a team we weren't good about updating it to make it reflect each person's current state. This is part of a more general difficulty, which was that when we weren't working in the same room, it was difficult to keep track of who was doing to avoid redundant and/or conflicting work
- We needed more open communication channels: it was hard to get everyone to respond to emails quickly; we weren't all always on gchat; and though we had each other's numbers in some random document, we didn't all have those numbers in our phones.
- In contrast to the point above, sometimes we were working with too many branches making it difficult to diagnose which branch was causing errors or a change in the application. We also had badly labeled branches and lost the "one feature per branch" workflow very early into the project. Having this one feature per branch coding practice correctly implemented and executed would have greatly eased our job while tying all the elements together.
- We should have started working on the main UI for the project viewing earlier. During MVP we realized that the formatting on this page didn't look too great, but we didn't start working on improving it until the last few hours.

Peer Review

Ryan

Patricia

Occasionally put too much code in one html file. Could work on moving more code to partials, and removing script tags and putting it in javascript files instead. Seemed a little shaky on jquery/javascript at first but improved rapidly.

Isabella

Left console.log calls, and commented out code in javascript. Was probably partly due to time constraints, but could work on cleaning up code before commiting/merging branches into master.

Anuhya

Sometimes had trouble getting sections to size correctly. Could work on expanding CSS knowledge in the area of positioning and sizing. Also assets she used were not high enough resolution occasionally due to viewing the project on a lower resolution screen.

Anuhya

Isabella

I think you did an incredible job throughout the project in being very open with us, taking our suggestions, and incorporating feedback from the TAs in order to make a fluid and smooth UI. You were very good about looking at websites that are currently out there and very proactive in finding new technologies and APIs we could integrate with our application. In terms of criticism I would say two main things. One, sometimes communication with you was a little difficult; and due to living off campus it was hard for you to stay and work sometimes when the whole group was together. This made it difficult to touch base and fully coordinate at times. But that said, you were very good about staying on gchat as much as possible and keeping tabs on the progress. Additionally, I think sometimes the code that you wrote was extremely hard to read and not formatted well. I think you, as well as the rest of us, could have done a lot better in commenting, formatting, and organizing the code to improve readability of code.

Ryan

I think you did an awesome job with all the image upload handling and code embedding system. The image upload worked extremely well as did the code uploading. Everything was smooth, easy to use, and you were able to diagnose and fix related problems/errors very quickly, showing that you had a great knowledge of the code base that was involved. On a technical basis, I don't have much criticism to provide other than the fact that we should have all better commented our code and split it up into sections. I also think we could have communicated more in discussing how the images and code snippets were

displaying after they uploaded and where the code was to control that. Finding the code that was formatting images and code snippets in the UI was something difficult to understand and isolate when Patricia and I were working on making the UI nicer. So working with you in that department would have made things a lot easier towards the end of the project.

Patricia

Trish, along with Isabella and Ryan, you also worked extremely hard in making the application what it is. You were such a large force in ensuring that the project edit and show page were working and that the resources and template logic was being handled properly. You had a large knowledge base of the code and knew exactly what was going on whenever I had to ask you something across a wide array of files and features. I think you could have communicated better about what changes you were implementing and how you were creating the logic for the resource handling in templates and projects. This would have been extremely helpful at the end, when we all began working on tasks across various pages. I often found it difficult to understand what was going on in certain files because I didn't fully understand how things were implemented or the logic you used to modularize things. Knowing this ahead of time would have been a lot easier in terms of us trying to help you, since towards the end of the project you were handling a lot of the important code functionality, because none of us knew exactly what was going on (which objects were passed when, etc). Also commenting code would have greatly helped in understanding and improving readability so that's definitely something you as well as the rest of us could work on. But other than that, you were a very strong force in bringing our team together and we could not have done it without you!

Patricia

I was really impressed with how our team came together in a united effort to tackle this project, and I think we were lucky to have a range of strengths and skills amongst us, which allowed each person to focus and specialize in certain features of the project. Everyone worked really hard and everyone's contributions were so valuable to the success of this project.

Isabella

It was sometimes hard to get in touch, and keeping communication channels open when you're working remotely is important (email/gchat). Though most of the code formatting was good, some of the formatting on the last bits was really crowded and lacked comments (understandably since we were working under a tight deadline).

Ryan

Oversleeping happens to everyone, but it's a problem when it happens a couple times on important coding weekends because we didn't know the current status of your tasks so we couldn't load balance accordingly.

Anuhya

I know you like to get the code functioning before making the structure of the code good, but having to restructure the code later means extra work. Know when to do one and when to do the other, because they have different costs in different situations.

Isabella

Patricia

Patricia was always organizing meetings and took on a role as a sort of informal and unspoken team leader. She had a thorough understanding of the entire project and framework so she was able to effectively delegate tasks and knew where to start tracing bugs.

Ryan

Ryan was more quiet than the other teammates. He always delivered on the features that he set out to implement. It became clear very early on that we could all rely on Ryan to complete any task that he set out to accomplish. Talk more: Keep everyone more up to date on what you have accomplished and what still needs to be done.

Anuhya

Anuhya worked incredibly hard and was very good at communicating with other teammates. In team meetings she would always keep everyone up to date with what she has accomplished and asked directed questions to make sure everyone was up to date on the current progress of the project. At times there were small UI issues with CSS formatting.