Tereza Shterenberg
Capstone Individual Final Report

Our group's project, the focus of which was analysis of student attrition of Hunter College's students enrolled between 2005-2015, was of a research nature. I came up with the idea of the project, provided the data for the analysis, the machine learning platform to be used, researched and found the relevant studies applicable to this work, provided the online lectures explaining the necessary algorithms to be used in the analysis, as well as how to navigate Weka. This work enabled my group to have a foundation necessary to start working on the project. At first, it was mutually decided to divide the workload evenly and to work on every aspect together. However, upon actually working on each detail together, this strategy quickly proved itself to be ineffective. Therefore, we changed our approach, where now each of us started focusing on bringing something unique to the table and completing separate tasks to fulfill the mission of the research analysis. Upon receiving the filtered data, I ran every algorithm and interpreted the results to my teammate, so that we could together decide, whether there are any more steps or adjustments needed in order to arrive at more accurate results. My teammate was responsible for the coding part of our project, a task, which he completed with competency and skill beyond what was expected or asked of him. His research and analysis of pertinent research papers, created an integral building block to our work. It also was in fact my teammate who was the one to come up with the hypothesis for our project.

Given, that I have worked in research labs for some time, I was able to guide my group in the right direction. I advised on which approaches to take in cleaning the data, provided clear cut goals at every step and suggested which algorithms would be useful in the project. By explaining what steps we need to take, and what results we are seeking, I was able to guide my teammate to write the necessary code in order to filter out the data.

The workload between the two of us was distributed evenly, yet each of us had a unique task at hand. This dynamic made the process interesting and enjoyable. I consider both of our contributions equally valuable to the project.

Prior to starting the course, I frankly, was terrified, due to all of the critiques and comments I've heard from my former classmates regarding the experience they had during their Capstone course. However, my experience in this class was outstanding. I appreciated the clear guidance given by the professor, as well as the fact that each given presentation and/or milestone had the underlying function of building the final version of the project in a cohesive manner. I enjoyed the class tremendously and frankly can't think of something, that I would change. I would, however, suggest having a slightly different class schedule where the class meets more frequently, but the duration of each class would be shorter.