Sam Borowsky

BUS 403

01/23/2015

First Impressions

At this point, our group has watched several tutorials that are relevant to our application, including tutorials on location tracking, new user registration, and creating user log in/log out functionality. Although we have learned a great deal from studying the source code that corresponds to these tutorials, for these first two weeks we have focused mostly on broad matters and decisions that do not involve significant coding. More specifically, we have been collaborating to create our storyboard, which is the visual layout of the application that the user interacts with. The reason we are taking this approach is to give ourselves as much structure and direction for the heavy coding, which we expect to begin this weekend. I have always been encouraged by professors to follow this approach of first defining the ultimate vision or concept for the project/application so that I there is a guide for the programming. Two matters in particular that we have been discussing are the name of the application (we are considering Scoop, Buggy, and PickUp) and how to display to the user the list of available drivers (for each driver we want to include his/her photo, an icon of five stars that indicates the driver’s rating, his/her current distance from the user’s location, and a small arrow that can be clicked to reveal user reviews of the driver).

From a programming perspective, the main difficulty I have faced so far is familiarizing myself with the Xcode environment. Initially I struggled to figure out how to navigate an Xcode project and was confused by the huge variety of programming tools available, such as the storyboard view. It has also been tough to become comfortable with/interpret the Objective-C language because in general its syntax is much different than Python’s, Java’s, and other programming languages that I usually use. However, I have resolved much of my confusion by messing around in Xcode and doing some simple research. For example, although at first I could not understand the purpose of the delegate files that are automatically created when you launch a new project, I now know that they manage the application’s behavior in several special circumstances, including when the application has entered the foreground or background. I learned from a tutorial on creating a basic to-do list that the storyboard is a very helpful and user-friendly tool. Specifically, this tutorial taught me how to customize buttons and arrange components of an application within the view. The tutorial my group followed and presented last Friday on location tracking and mapping is extremely useful because these functionalities will ultimately be the basis of our application. It is essential that we present the user with the accurate distances of all the available drivers when he or she requests a ride. I am excited for us to apply and tie together all this new knowledge to create an awesome ride service for W&L students over the next several weeks.