Week 3 Day 1 Research

1. What is scrum/agile?

   The agile method in software development projects is a pattern of breaking the software development into small pieces to be completed from design, development, to quality assurance. Generally this small, iterative process is completed anywhere between the duration of a week to two weeks or more to focus on and complete a small section of the software development process quickly but with precision. This method allows for the continuous evaluation, adaptation, and improvement of the overall code by focusing on small pieces of the software at a time. Scrum/agile development processes are generally called sprints (the short duration of time spent on the small part of the software).

2. What is a story point?

   A story point is a way for a software development team to estimate the amount of relative effort it will take to complete a specific piece of the overall sprint. This differs from estimating using time and dates in that using a relative effort estimate takes the smaller and perceived easier beginnings of the sprint as the beginning of a step-by-step process that demands more effort by the step. Often times the growth in relative effort for each step is denoted by a Fibonacci sequence as building off the smaller steps generally does grow much more time consuming by the step in the process. This helps remove the emotional attachments associated with dates while still motivating the team to live up to the greater challenges that will come as the sprint moves on. Story points help emphasize the importance of value and not time spent - which can often lead to subpar work. Also as the sprint gets further into the process, often times the amount of meetings and non-development activities tends to increase which puts a greater strain on time (thus the Fibonnaci growth in relative effort).

3. What is a story?

   A story in agile refers to a user story. This is a way of framing the process being worked on in a sprint from the perspective of a user. Often times the agile team will create different user personas that vary in age, gender, occupation, and technical background and then frame the sprint's goal from each of those user's perspectives. The story usually is short enough to fit on an index card and gives a brief description of the user, what they

want from the application, and why. This is a good exercise to remind the developers/designers to keep in mind specific functionality and user interface variety the user would ideally want from the application. This helps thwart developers from thinking like they're making something for a developer or tech-savvy person only. It also helps remind them that even if it were a tech-savvy user, what options would someone like that enjoy.

4. What is a daily standup?

A daily standup is a daily meeting among a scrum team in which each member of the team stands up and quickly goes through what they have been doing and what is in the way from getting it resolved. The way each person stands up and talks is generally structured by what are commonly referred to as the "Three Questions" which ask - "What have you completed since the previous day?", "What do you plan on completing by the next day's meeting?", and "What is getting in the way?". If for any reason, anyone's three questions's response sparks a discussion, this topic is designated to what is called the "parking lot" which is a way to table the discussion only for those who are affected by the topic after the meeting or at a later time. These daily standups are generally capped out to be about ten to fifteen minutes. This helps boost productivity by maximizing time, consolidates the amount of resources used discussing any one topic by tabling discussion for a smaller group meeting only with those who are affected by said topic, and helps keep everyone on the team up-to-date with one another.

5. What is a grooming session?

A grooming session, also known as a backlog grooming session, is a way to break product backlog tasks into smaller pieces and to prioritize the upcoming sprints toward the middle or end of the current sprint being worked on. These are often prioritized by considering the overall user stories for the entire project, how the current and previous sprints affect those user stories, and the overall priority of the product backlog (the parts of the product which are considered the highest priority in order from top to bottom). The main idea is to break bigger products in the backlog into smaller sprints. These sprints are then planned to be in a specific sequence. Grooming sessions are generally considered pre-planning for what is known as sprint planning which is described in the next question.

6. What is sprint planning?

Sprint planning is similar to a grooming session in that it is used to prioritize tasks and considers the future plan of the agile process. However, whereas backlog grooming considers the agile process as a whole by prioritizing and breaking large product desires into fragments to be taken care of in the future, sprint planning takes place before a sprint starts and is more focused on those smaller fragments of goals broken down in the grooming session. So while a grooming session breaks overall product goals into individual portions, sprint planning takes those individual portions and breaks those down and prioritizes those. Generally the whole team attends these whereas in grooming sessions the product owner/client, the project manager, Scrum master, the team, or a smaller combination of those are involved (generally the first three are the most involved in grooming sessions. So grooming sessions are more broad-strokes and sprint planning is concerned with breaking down small sprint stories into even smaller fragments and prioritizing those as well as designating team members to specific parts.

7. What is a sprint and how long are average sprints?

A sprint is a single iteration of the agile method. Sprints carry out the smaller goals outlined in grooming sessions and more specifically, sprint planning sessions. Sprints are generally used to accomplish a small portion of a more broad goal to provide more focus on individual functionalities and designs as opposed to focusing on the larger goals at hand, which can often lead to less valuable or functional portions of an overall project. Sprints are designed to complete one demonstrably functional piece of the product based on the user stories over the course of the duration.

8. What are demo meeting for?

The demo meeting is a meeting generally at the end of a sprint designed to bring the product owner and/or other stakeholders up to speed on what newly functional piece of the product has been created since the sprint began. These generally run from one to two hours in time. This demo is designed not only to catch the stakeholders up to speed, but also to initiate a meaningful discussion about what is liked about the sprint product and what should be improved. It also is supposed to spark contextual discussion of where the team is at in the project and the plans to go on to the next sprint as well as how those plans will build on the finished sprint product.