

SOEN 6841 – SOFTWARE PROJECT MANAGEMENT

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Key Concepts Learned

This week's study focused on Project Monitoring & Control and Project Closure, covered in Chapters 7 and 8. Project monitoring involves tracking project progress against the project plan, measuring performance through key indicators such as Earned Value Management (EVM), and ensuring that resources are efficiently utilized. Monitoring risk and identifying deviations are crucial in ensuring the project stays on track. Various project control techniques such as resource leveling, schedule optimization, and corrective actions help mitigate unforeseen issues. Additionally, status reporting plays a vital role in keeping stakeholders informed about project progress and any obstacles encountered.

Project closure, on the other hand, is a crucial phase that ensures all project work is completed, documented, and delivered according to requirements. It involves properly managing source code and project data, documenting lessons learned for future improvements, and releasing project resources. This phase also ensures that all deliverables are handed over, reducing the risk of knowledge loss. Without a structured closure process, teams may face difficulties in transitioning to future maintenance or development efforts.

Alongside these topics, I also revisited Chapters 1 to 6 in preparation for the midterms. Reviewing these earlier chapters provided a deeper understanding of fundamental project management principles, software development life cycles, effort estimation, risk management, and configuration management. This review helped reinforce the connection between project initiation, planning, execution, and closure, providing a more comprehensive view of software project management.

Application in Real Projects

Project monitoring and control is a key aspect of real-world software development, ensuring that teams maintain efficiency and alignment with project goals. For example, using performance tracking methods such as Earned Value Management allows project managers to determine if a project is on schedule and within budget. Managing risks throughout the project lifecycle also minimizes potential delays and cost overruns.

Project closure is equally important in professional settings, as it ensures that all necessary documentation, resources, and knowledge are properly handed over before a project is officially completed. Effective closure practices prevent situations where critical project data is lost, or team members are unclear about the next steps. In my coursework, applying these concepts has been beneficial in structuring my project deliverables, particularly in organizing documentation and ensuring tasks are completed within the specified timeline. This week, I worked on Project Deliverables II, applying structured project management principles to ensure a well-organized submission.

Peer Interactions

Discussions with classmates this week provided valuable insights into project monitoring and closure. One key takeaway was the importance of balancing control with flexibility. While continuous monitoring is essential, excessive control can slow down progress and lead to unnecessary delays.

SOEN 6841 – SOFTWARE PROJECT MANAGEMENT

Some peers shared their experiences using project management tools like JIRA, Trello, and Microsoft Project to track progress effectively, making it easier to identify bottlenecks early.

Another major discussion point was the challenge of project closure. Many students highlighted that teams often move directly into maintenance mode without a formal closure phase, which can create confusion and inefficiencies. Proper documentation, stakeholder approvals, and structured knowledge transfer were identified as best practices to avoid such issues. These discussions reinforced the importance of implementing structured closure processes, even in academic projects.

Challenges Faced

One of the main challenges this week was understanding how to interpret Earned Value Management (EVM) metrics effectively. The calculations involving Planned Value (PV), Earned Value (EV), and Actual Cost (AC) require a solid grasp of financial tracking in projects. Applying these metrics in real scenarios remains complex, and I aim to practice more examples to improve my understanding.

Another challenge was recognizing the significance of proper project closure. Many projects transition directly into their next phase without a formal review, making it difficult to track improvements or analyze past performance. Understanding how to document lessons learned and release resources efficiently is something I plan to explore further.

Additionally, balancing midterm preparations with ongoing coursework and project deliverables was demanding. Reviewing Chapters 1 to 6 alongside working on Project Deliverables II required effective time management to ensure that I thoroughly understood the concepts while meeting submission deadlines.

Personal Development Activities

To deepen my understanding of project monitoring and control, I watched tutorials on Earned Value Management (EVM) to see its practical applications. I also explored project management software such as Microsoft Project and JIRA to familiarise myself with tracking tools commonly used in the industry. Additionally, I read case studies on project closure to understand best practices and how different organizations handle final deliverables.

My preparation for the midterms involved revisiting key concepts from Chapters 1 to 6, focusing on project initiation, planning, risk management, and configuration management. This review helped reinforce the connection between different stages of the project lifecycle and clarified how monitoring and closure fit within the overall process.

Goals for the Next Week

Next week, I plan to improve my understanding of Earned Value Management by working on practical examples to strengthen my analytical skills. I also intend to explore more case studies on project closure to understand how organisations manage their final deliverables and ensure successful transitions. In addition, I will continue refining my approach to project documentation, focusing on best practices for maintaining clear and structured records throughout a project's lifecycle.