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ChocoAn Simulator Project Retrospective

Our group learned a lot about what working on software as a team is all about. Until this point in our school careers, many of us have only worked on coding projects individually.

Many aspects of the project were positive, and all of them greatly benefited the development of the program. Our understanding and documentation of the critical core functions of this program were pretty good overall and made envisioning the architecture of the final product much easier.

In our earlier revisions, we did have some holes in our design which were discovered and designed later. While the documentation process as a whole generally went well, we did have the occasional issue arise. The majority of these issues stemmed from the fact that the material of this class was new to us all, thus creating confusion at specific points in the process. We were able to produce solid and well-thought-out documentation that proved to be invaluable during the coding stage of the development process. While time management was an issue for our group, we were able to complete all sections of the project on time. We worked incrementally to complete the project in stages. This made working on a large project more manageable by allowing us not to become overwhelmed working on too many parts at once.

Although parts of this project went incredibly well, there were also some hardships that our group experienced along the way. All of the members of our group had vastly different schedules from one another, making scheduling group meetings that every group member was able to attend nearly impossible. This could not have been prevented, and scheduling conflicts

are a natural occurrence within most group projects. However, the fact remains that our mismatched schedules created issues in getting meetings planned, making progress with the project challenging. Another issue that arose while developing this project was related to the database. We initially set up our database to run locally, but we realized later that this could be very problematic for whoever was grading our project. Finding a remote host for our database that did not charge money was a challenging task in the last few days before the due date, but we got it set up remotely and running correctly before the deadline. This is something that we should have addressed earlier, so we were not scrambling at the last minute, but it was something that we had overlooked as being an issue. Another issue our group had trouble with was everyone getting GitHub set up properly on their machines. For most of our group members, this was our first experience coding on a project as a team and using version control. This could have been remedied by spending some more time during the beginning of the project focusing on learning how to properly use GitHub to ensure that all members of the group understand GitHub to a sufficient degree for the project. The final major issue our group experienced during the process was the division of labor. No clear roles were assigned at any point during this project. This made it difficult for individual members to work on their own. Instead, it required frequent group meetings in which work was done, and those who could not attend generally missed out on working on sections of the project. We also had one group member who went missing for the last five weeks of the class, not participating or responding to any correspondence, which ultimately placed more of a workload on other group members. As of the writing of this document, we have still not heard from him despite many attempts to reach out.

We have learned many things throughout this process that we could do better the next time. We would ensure that our database was set up remotely from the beginning, assign clear

tasks and roles to individual group members, and try to allow more work to be done individually to better work with individual schedules. Some of our group members struggled with the overall concept of what a database was, so some additional education on databases before beginning the project would have been helpful as well. Overall, this project was a very valuable experience for our members in experiencing what working on a team is like.