The University of Texas at Austin
School of Information

## Spring 2021

- INF 385T: Special Topics in Information Science Product and Project Management
- Unique: 28415
- Course Mode: Web-based
- Thursdays: 6:00-9:00 pm

## Instructor

Teju K V
Email address:
tejukv@austin.utexas.edu

## Office Hours

Email for appointment

## Course Description

The course introduces product and project management concepts and lays the foundations for students across multiple career pathways. Product management plays at the intersection of technology, experience and business. It involves understanding customers' pain points and needs, creating an inspiring vision and a phased roadmap, getting buy-in from executives, influencing and managing internal stakeholders, leading and inspiring those who will work on executing the product roadmap and evangelizing the product. Project management is applicable to anyone managing any type of project - at work or in personal life. Ensuring that the project is scoped correctly, budgeted, on time and at cost is critical to the success of any project. Students will learn how to apply these core concepts and skills from product & project management in their respective fields

## What will I learn?

- Be introduced to and understand fundamental concepts of product and project management. Learn the vocabulary used in these disciplines.
- Explore how these disciplines intersect with others such as user experience, engineering, marketing, etc.
- Apply product and project management methodologies, including Agile methodologies
- Reflect and engage in discussions on how product and project managers handle situations in organizations
- Learn about how organizations define these roles, how to work with product and project managers in the industry and career paths in these roles
- Hear from those in the industry
- Begin to think like a product and project manager

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## How will I learn?

Students will learn through:

- Class lectures and discussions
- Readings, case studies, textbooks and reference material
- Industry guest speakers
- Group project

This class will be an interactive format. Therefore, attendance and active participation are important for students to succeed in this course. Apart from lectures, students will be asked to participate in discussing case studies and, will have the opportunity to engage in Q&A with guest speakers from the industry. Students will also work on group projects and presentations. Students will present their group work to the rest of the class and learn from feedback.

## Required Materials:

1. Olsen, Dan. The Lean Product Playbook: How to Innovate with Minimum Viable Products and Rapid Customer Feedback (Published by Wiley and Sons Inc.) (ISBN 13: 978-1118960875)

2. Either:
   - Portny, Stanley E. Project Management for Dummies (Published by Wiley & Sons Inc.) (ISBN 13: 978-1119348900)
     Note: Buy this book to learn about Project Management. The readings for Project Management topics are from this book.

     **OR**
   - PMBOK Guide: A Guide to the Project Management Body of Knowledge – 6th Edition (Published By Project Management institute) (ISBN 13: 978-1628251845)
     Note: Alternatively, buy this book if interested in pursuing Project Management. I will provide readings for the class from this book to students who have bought this book.

3. Product and Project management Co-op Course Pack

4. Optional: Inspired: How to Create Tech Products Customers Love (by Marty Cagan) (ISBN 13: 978-1119387503
   Note: Optional book, buy only if interested in learning more about creating technology products.

## Course Outline

All instructions, assignments, readings, rubrics and essential information will be on the Canvas website at https://utexas.instructure.com. Check this site regularly and use it to ask questions about the course schedule.

**Changes** to the schedule may be made at my discretion and if circumstances require. It is your responsibility to note these changes when announced (although I will do my best to ensure that you receive the changes with as much advanced notice as possible).

| # | DATE | READ THIS BEFORE CLASS | TOPICS | ASSIGNMENTS |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Jan-21 | | a. Welcome & Introductions<br>b. Syllabus Review<br>c. Canvas Review<br>d. Assignments and Group Projects<br>e. Intro to Project & Product Management<br>f. What is a Product? What is a Project? Discuss examples<br>g. Project Management in everyday life and in Product Management | 1. Identify a pain point to solve, add it to the ideas excel<br>2. Complete intro class survey |
| 2 | Jan-28 | *Required*<br>• Course pack: "The Product Manager"<br>• Project Management for Dummies Ch 1 (p. 7 - 26)<br>• Olsen, Ch. 1, 2, 3 | a. Discussion on planning a project<br>b. Dive into various roles: Product, Project & Program Managers<br>c. Discussion on differences and intersection between Product & Project Management<br>d. Guest Speaker: Dell Sr. Product Manager | a. Familiarize yourself with Working Backwards and Lean Canvas frameworks<br>b. Watch video and read slides on "Traits of a Product Manager" |

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| 3 | Feb-4 | *Required:*<br>• Olsen, Ch. 4, 5 | a. The Lean Product Process<br>b. Product-Market Fit<br>c. Defining the Problem<br>d. Determine target customer<br>e. Market Research, Sizing & Trends<br>f. Product positioning statements<br>g. Analyzing Competitive Landscape<br>h. Common pitfalls | 1. Determine target customer<br>2. Refine the problem further<br>3. Identify ways to solve the problem, customer benefits & value proposition<br>4. Fill out boxes 1, 2 & 3 in Lean Canvas Model<br>5. Draft a PR |
| 4 | Feb-11 | *Required*<br>• Project Management for Dummies, Ch. 2, 3, 4 (p. 27-86) | a. Project Management Lifecyle<br>b. Identifying stakeholders<br>c. Project Management Plan<br>d. Project scope, goal and objectives<br>e. Project deliverables, assumptions & risks<br>f. Project charter, plan, time, budget & cost<br>g. Project funding & business case<br>h. Minimal Viable Product (MVP)<br>i. Guest Speaker: Sr. Program Manager - Microsoft | 1. Project overview for MVP creation – create project initiation documents:<br>- Stakeholder register<br>- Statement of work<br>- Project charter<br>2. Customer Discovery Interview questionnaire & identify customers / proxies you will interview for your product |
| | Feb-18 | **Cancelled due to Winter Storm URI** | | |
| 5 | Feb-25 | *Required*<br>• Course Pack: "Understand | a. Customer & user focus<br>b. Voice of the customer<br>c. Personas & customer journeys | Assignment extended due to Uri |

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| | | ing User Needs” | d. Product vision<br>e. Product & project phasing<br>f. New product introduction vs. existing product improvement<br>g. Guest Speaker: Sr. Program Manager - Dell | |
| 6 | Mar-4 | *Required*<br>• Project Management for Dummies, Ch. 5 & 6<br>• Create a Smartsheet account | a. Breaking the project into manageable chunks<br>b. Work Plan illustration with Network Diagram<br>c. Critical path & project schedule<br>d. UX & product management<br>e. Guest Speaker: Day in the Life of UX at Google | Create<br>1. WBS<br>2. Network Diagram<br>3. Gantt chart for project schedule<br>4. Continue interviewing customers & tabulating results |
| 7 | Mar-11 | *Required*<br>• Olsen, Ch. 6, 7 & 8<br>• Project Management for Dummies, Ch. 7 & 8 | a. Customer Lifetime Value<br>b. Customer perceived value of the product<br>c. MVP, MLP, MMP<br>d. Key market trends<br>e. Competitive analysis<br>f. Product positioning<br>g. Prioritizing features<br>h. Use cases & requirements<br>i. Planning for project resources & budget<br>j. Guest Speaker: Entrepreneurship and Product Management | Define:<br>1. Product vision<br>2. Phased plan for product<br>3. Define MVP<br>4. Complete the Value Proposition Grid & SWOT Analysis<br>5. Continue interviewing customers & tabulating results<br>6. Create a Jira account |
| | **Mar-18** | **Spring Break** | | |
| 8 | Mar-25 | *Required:*<br>- *Create a Jira account*<br>- *Olsen, Ch. 9,* | a. Product Roadmaps<br>b. Lean vs. Agile<br>c. Product Backlog<br>d. User stories, good/bad stories | 1. Identify & prioritize product features<br>2. Develop a product |

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| | | *10, 11 & 12*<br>- Project Management for Dummies, (4 pages: 361-365) | e. Scrum projects<br>f. Release and sprint planning<br>g. Managing teams<br>h. Daily standups<br>i. Retrospectives | roadmap<br>3. Create user stories for 3 product features in Jira in sprints<br>4. Create a prioritized product backlog<br>5. Continue interviewing customers & tabulating results |
| **10** | Apr-1 | *Required:*<br>- Course Pack: 'Product Development at OPOWER'<br>- Project Management for Dummies, Ch. 9, 10 & 11 & 14 | a. Case discussion<br>b. Project Risks and contingency plans<br>c. Project communication plan<br>d. Status updates & dependencies<br>e. Resources needed, roles & responsibilities<br>f. Stage gates | Create remainder of PMP:<br>- Project options, cost & business case<br>- Communication<br>- Risk Management<br>Consolidate into Project Management Plan (PMP) & submit |
| **11** | Apr-8 | *Required*<br>- Olsen, Ch. 13 & 14<br>- Course pack: "WebSpective Software (A) & (B)" | a. Case discussion<br>b. Measuring success with KPIs<br>c. NPS & CSAT<br>d. Optimizing your product using analytics & customer feedback<br>e. Cross-functional collaboration<br>f. Leading through influence<br>g. Evangelism and stakeholder alignment<br>h. Guest Speaker - Amazon | 1. Identify KPIs for your product<br>2. Tabulate and summarize customer interview findings |
| **12** | Apr-15 | - Project Management for Dummies, Ch. 12, 13 | a. Executing the project<br>b. Project monitoring and control<br>c. Product strategy<br>d. Organizational strategy, objectives & goals | |

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| | | | e. Strategic initiatives and program management<br>f. Guest speaker: Product strategy, product & project execution and managing up<br>g. Guest speaker: Product strategy | |
| **13** | Apr-22 | - Project Management for Dummies, Ch. 15 & 16 | a. Customer retention & customer growth<br>b. Revenue & profit<br>c. B2B vs. B2C<br>d. Sales influence on product roadmap<br>e. Product Architecture<br>f. Engineering collaboration<br>g. Engineering cost & level of effort<br>h. Engineering influence on product roadmap & design<br>i. Guest speaker: Engineering and product management | Prepare final presentations. Presentations will be as follows:<br>- 3 groups will present on Apr 29th<br>- Remaining 3 groups will present on May 6th.<br>Total 40 mins for each group: 30 mins presentation, 10 mins feedback & Q&A |
| **14** | Apr-29 | 3 groups prepare to present pitch deck. Total 40 mins for each group: 30 mins presentation, 10 mins feedback & Q&A | a. Group presentations: Pitch your product - end-to-end product & project presentations to get "executive approval & funding"<br>b. Guest speaker: Strategic thinking | |
| **15** | May-6 | Remaining 3 groups prepare to present pitch deck. Total 40 mins for each group: 30 mins presentation, | a. Group presentations: Pitch your product - end-to-end product & project presentations to get "executive approval & funding"<br>b. Product & Project Management other good | |

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| | | 10 mins feedback & Q&A | reference materials<br>c. Class recap | |

# Policies

## Classroom Policies

**Statement on Learning Success**

Your success in this class is important to me. We will all need accommodations because we all learn differently. If there are aspects of this course that prevent you from learning or exclude you, please let me know as soon as possible. Together we'll develop strategies to meet both your needs and the requirements of the course. I also encourage you to reach out to the student resources available through UT. Many are listed on this syllabus, but I am happy to connect you with a person or Center if you would like.

**Grading Policies**

As I hope you can see, flexibility is built into the assignments to support your success in this course. If you miss a smaller assignment or don't do as well on your earlier journal entries, your grade will not be impacted significantly. Consequently, the final grades are firm, and no additional curve is available.

| Grade | Cutoff | Points needed |
|---|---|---|
| A<br>A- | 94%<br>90% | 940<br>900 |
| B+<br>B<br>B- | 87%<br>84%<br>80% | 870<br>840<br>800 |
| C+<br>C<br>C- | 77%<br>74%<br>70% | 770<br>740<br>700 |
| D | 65% | 650 |
| F | <65% | <650 |

**GRACE POLICY: Time-bank options**

Sometimes we have bad days, bad weeks, and bad semesters. In an effort to accommodate any unexpected, unfortunate personal crisis, I have built "time banks" into our course. You do not have to utilize this policy, but if you find yourself struggling with unexpected personal events, I encourage you to e-mail me as soon as possible to notify me that you are using our grace policy. You may use this policy one of two ways (please choose, and let me know):

You may have a two-day grace period for one assignment, OR
You may have 2 one-day extensions for two different assignments.

**Absences**

If you are absent or unable to participate on the day that your team meets, you are responsible for providing your

team with the necessary information to compensate for your absence. *It is crucial to keep in communication with your team members; you are responsible for letting both us and your team know if you cannot make it to a class*.

*Excused Absence*: The only absences that will be considered excused are for religious holidays or extenuating circumstances due to an emergency. If you plan to miss class due to observance of a religious holiday, please let us know at least two weeks in advance. You will not be penalized for this absence, although you will still be responsible for any work you will miss on that day if applicable. Check with us for details or arrangements.

*If you have to be absent, use your resources wisely*. Ask your team and other classmates to get a run-down and notes on any lessons you miss. If you find there are topics that we covered while you were gone that raise questions, you may come by during office hours or schedule a meeting to discuss. Email specific questions you have in advance so that we can make the most of our time. "What did I miss?" is not specific enough.

## Student Rights & Responsibilities

- You have a right to a learning environment that supports mental and physical wellness.
- You have a right to respect.
- You have a right to be assessed and graded fairly.
- You have a right to freedom of opinion and expression.
- You have a right to privacy and confidentiality.
- You have a right to meaningful and equal participation, to self-organize groups to improve your learning environment.
- You have a right to learn in an environment that is welcoming to all people. No student shall be isolated, excluded or diminished in any way.

*With these rights come responsibilities:*

- You are responsible for taking care of yourself, managing your time, and communicating with the teaching team and with others if things start to feel out of control or overwhelming.
- You are responsible for acting in a way that is worthy of respect and always respectful of others.
- Your experience with this course is directly related to the quality of the energy that you bring to it, and your energy shapes the quality of your peers' experiences.
- You are responsible for creating an inclusive environment and for speaking up when someone is excluded.
- You are responsible for holding yourself accountable to these standards, holding each other to these standards, and holding the teaching team accountable as well.

**Personal Pronouns**

Professional courtesy and sensitivity are especially important with respect to individuals and topics dealing with differences of race, culture, religion, politics, sexual orientation, gender, gender variance, and nationalities. Class rosters are provided to the instructor with the student's legal name, unless they have added a "preferred name" with the Gender and Sexuality Center (http://diversity.utexas.edu/genderandsexuality/publications-and-resources/). I will gladly honor your request to address you by a name that is different from what appears on the official roster, and by the gender pronouns you use (she/he/they/ze, etc). Please advise me of any changes early in the semester so that I may make appropriate updates to my records. For instructions on how to add your pronouns to Canvas, visit https://utexas.instructure.com/courses/633028/pages/profile-pronouns.

**University Resources for Students**

***COVID-19 Update**: "Keep Learning" Resources*

This course may be offered in a format to which you are unaccustomed. If you are looking for ideas and strategies to help you feel more comfortable participating in our class, please explore the resources available here: https://onestop.utexas.edu/keep-learning/

*Services for Students with Disabilities*

The university is committed to creating an accessible and inclusive learning environment consistent with university policy and federal and state law. Please let me know if you experience any barriers to learning so I can work with you to ensure you have equal opportunity to participate fully in this course. If you are a student with a disability, or think you may have a disability, and need accommodations please contact Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD). Please refer to SSD's website for contact and more information: http://diversity.utexas.edu/disability/. If you are already registered with SSD, please deliver your Accommodation Letter to me as early as possible in the semester so we can discuss your approved accommodations and needs in this course.

*Counseling and Mental Health Center*

The Counseling and Mental Health Center serves UT's diverse campus community by providing high quality, innovative and culturally informed mental health programs and services that enhance and support students' well-being, academic and life goals. To learn more about your counseling and mental health options, call CMHC at (512) 471-3515.

If you are experiencing a mental health crisis, call the CMHC Crisis Line 24/7 at (512) 471-2255.

*The Sanger Learning Center*

Did you know that more than one-third of UT undergraduate students use the Sanger Learning Center each year to improve their academic performance? All students are welcome to take advantage of Sanger Center's classes and workshops, private learning specialist appointments, peer academic coaching, and tutoring for more than 70 courses in 15 different subject areas. For more information, please visit http://www.utexas.edu/ugs/slc or call 512-471-3614 (JES A332).

*Undergraduate Writing Center*: http://uwc.utexas.edu/
*Libraries*: http://www.lib.utexas.edu/
*ITS*: http://www.utexas.edu/its/
*Student Emergency Services*: http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/emergency/

*BeVocal*

BeVocal is a university-wide initiative to promote the idea that individual Longhorns have the power to prevent high-risk behavior and harm. At UT Austin all Longhorns have the power to intervene and reduce harm. To learn more about BeVocal and how you can help to build a culture of care on campus, go to: https://wellnessnetwork.utexas.edu/BeVocal.

## LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT

*As the flagship institution in our state university system, it is important that The University of Texas at Austin demonstrate respect for the historic and contemporary presence of Indigenous Peoples in Texas and, particularly, in the greater Austin area. To that end, it is incumbent upon The University of Texas at Austin to recognize that our campus resides on what were historically the traditional territories of Indigenous Peoples who were dispossessed of their homelands. Land Acknowledgements are an expression of gratitude and appreciation to the Indigenous Peoples, the traditional caretakers of the land, for the use of their lands on which we work, study, and learn.*

### Land Acknowledgment

I would like to acknowledge that we are meeting on Indigenous land. Moreover, I would like to acknowledge and pay our respects to the Carrizo & Comecrudo, Coahuiltecan, Caddo, Tonkawa, Comanche, Lipan Apache,

Alabama-Coushatta, Kickapoo, Tigua Pueblo, and all the American Indian and Indigenous Peoples and communities who have been or have become a part of these lands and territories in Texas, here on Turtle Island.

**Important Safety Information:**

***COVID-19 Update:*** While we will post information related to the contemporary situation on campus, you are encouraged to stay up-to-date on the latest news as related to the student experience. https://coronavirus.utexas.edu/students

If you have concerns about the safety or behavior of fellow students, TAs or Professors, call BCAL (the Behavior Concerns Advice Line): 512-232-5050. Your call can be anonymous. If something doesn't feel right – it probably isn't. Trust your instincts and share your concerns.

The following recommendations regarding emergency evacuation from the Office of Campus Safety and Security, 512-471-5767, http://www.utexas.edu/safety/

Occupants of buildings on The University of Texas at Austin campus are required to evacuate buildings when a fire alarm is activated. Alarm activation or announcement requires exiting and assembling outside.

- Familiarize yourself with all exit doors of each classroom and building you may occupy. Remember that the nearest exit door may not be the one you used when entering the building.
- Students requiring assistance in evacuation shall inform their instructor in writing during the first week of class.
- In the event of an evacuation, follow the instruction of faculty or class instructors. Do not re-enter a building unless given instructions by the following: Austin Fire Department, The University of Texas at Austin Police Department, or Fire Prevention Services office.
- Link to information regarding emergency evacuation routes and emergency procedures can be found at: www.utexas.edu/emergency

***Title IX Reporting***

Title IX is a federal law that protects against sex and gender-based discrimination, sexual harassment, sexual assault, unprofessional or inappropriate conduct of a sexual nature, dating/domestic violence and stalking at federally funded educational institutions. UT Austin is committed to fostering a learning and working environment free from discrimination in all its forms. When unprofessional or inappropriate conduct of a sexual nature occurs in our community, the university can:

1. Intervene to prevent harmful behavior from continuing or escalating.
2. Provide support and remedies to students and employees who have experienced harm or have become involved in a Title IX investigation.
3. Investigate and discipline violations of the university's relevant policies.

Beginning January 1, 2020, Texas Senate Bill 212 requires all employees of Texas universities, including faculty, report any information to the Title IX Office regarding sexual harassment, sexual assault, dating violence and stalking that is disclosed to them. Texas law requires that all employees who witness or receive any information of this type (including, but not limited to, writing assignments, class discussions, or one-on-one conversations) must be reported. **I am a Responsible Employee and must report any Title IX related incidents** that are disclosed in writing, discussion, or one-on-one. Before talking with me, or with any faculty or staff member about a Title IX related incident, be sure to ask whether they are a responsible employee. If you would like to speak with someone who can provide support or remedies without making an official report to the university, please email advocate@austin.utexas.edu. For more information about reporting options and resources, visit http://www.titleix.utexas.edu/, contact the Title IX Office via email at titleix@austin.utexas.edu, or call 512-471-0419.

Although graduate teaching and research assistants are not subject to Texas Senate Bill 212, they are still mandatory reporters under Federal Title IX laws and are required to report a wide range of behaviors we refer to as unprofessional or inappropriate conduct of a sexual nature, including the types of conduct covered under Texas Senate Bill 212. The Title IX office has developed supportive ways to respond to a survivor and compiled campus resources to support survivors.

**Emergency Evacuation Procedures**

The following recommendations regarding emergency evacuation from the Office of Campus Safety and Security, 512-471-5767, http://www.utexas.edu/safety/

## University Policies

**Academic Integrity**

Each student in the course is expected to abide by the University of Texas Honor Code: "As a student of The University of Texas at Austin, I shall abide by the core values of the University and uphold academic integrity." **Plagiarism is taken very seriously at UT.** Therefore, if you use words or ideas that are not your own (or that you have used in previous class), you must cite your sources. Otherwise you will be guilty of plagiarism and subject to academic disciplinary action, including failure of the course. You are responsible for understanding UT's Academic Honesty and the University Honor Code which can be found at the following web address: https://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/conduct/standardsofconduct.php

**Q Drop Policy**

If you want to drop a class after the 12th class day, you'll need to execute a Q drop before the Q-drop deadline, which typically occurs near the middle of the semester. Under Texas law, you are only allowed six Q drops while you are in college at any public Texas institution. For more information, see: http://www.utexas.edu/ugs/csacc/academic/adddrop/qdrop

**COVID-19 Updates: Fall 2020 Semester**

Safety and Class Participation/Masks:

For every face-to-face class experience, we will all need to make some adjustments in order to benefit from in-person classroom interactions in a safe and healthy manner. Our best protections against spreading COVID-19 on campus are masks (defined as cloth face coverings) and staying home if you are showing symptoms. Therefore, for the benefit of everyone, this is means that all students are required to follow two important rules.

- **Every student must wear a cloth face covering properly in class and in all campus buildings at all times.**
- **Every student must engage in documented daily symptom screening.** This means that each class day in which on campus activities occur, students must upload certification from the symptom tracking app and confirm that they completed their symptom screening for that day to Canvas. Students should not upload the results of that screening, just the certificate that they completed it. If the symptom tracking app recommends that the student isolate rather than coming to class, then students must not return to class until cleared by a medical professional.

If a student is not wearing a cloth face covering properly in the classroom (or any UT building), that student must leave the classroom (and building). If the student refuses to wear a cloth face covering, class will be dismissed for the remainder of the period, and the student will be subject to disciplinary action as set forth in the university's Institutional Rules/General Conduct 11-404(a)(3). Students who have a condition that precludes the wearing of a

cloth face covering must follow the procedures for obtaining an accommodation (https://orientation.utexas.edu/students-with-disabilities)

Sharing of Course Materials is Prohibited:

No materials used in this class, including, but not limited to, lecture hand-outs, videos, assessments (quizzes, exams, papers, projects, homework assignments), in-class materials, review sheets, and additional problem sets, may be shared online or with anyone outside of the class unless you have my explicit, written permission. Unauthorized sharing of materials promotes cheating. It is a violation of the University's Student Honor Code and an act of academic dishonesty. I am well aware of the sites used for sharing materials, and any materials found online that are associated with you, or any suspected unauthorized sharing of materials, will be reported to Student Conduct and Academic Integrity in the Office of the Dean of Students. These reports can result in sanctions, including failure in the course.

Class Recordings:

Class recordings are reserved only for students in this class for educational purposes and are protected under FERPA. The recordings should not be shared outside the class in any form. Violation of this restriction by a student could lead to Student Misconduct proceedings.