Course: Demystifying Digital Media Development
Course Length: 9 weeks
Delivery Method: Online
Instructor: Nick Wilkinson
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Acknowledgement of Coast Salish Peoples and Land
We respectfully acknowledge the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Sḵwx̱wú7mesh Úxwumixw (Squamish), səlilwətaɬ (Tsleil-Waututh) peoples on whose unceded traditional territories our campus resides.

Course Description
Digital media products are all around us. We depend on them to keep us organized, entertained, informed, and healthy. But how do digital products—the software in our airports, hospitals, banks, stores, on the web and in our pockets—actually work?

This course is for people who see themselves as "non-technical" project stakeholders who want to be more familiar with the basic building blocks that are needed to design, build, ship, and maintain digital media products. The goal of this course is not to turn students into software developers. Instead, this course will provide a comfortable understanding of the technologies, constraints, and trade-offs required to ship a digital product, and help them prepare to work effectively with technical professionals in industry.

Course Objectives
Upon completion of this course students will be able to:
- Identify the technical components of modern digital media products and how they work together.
- Understand the typical phases and roles involved in the software development process.
- Plan for what happens after a digital product has been built.
- Understand the trade-offs associated with different approaches to building digital products.
- Contribute to technical conversations at a high level.

Format of the Course
This is a 45-hour long course and will run for 9 weeks. Each week will include a combination of asynchronous work (reviewing instructor-led videos, pre-recorded interviews with industry professionals, assigned readings, and completing assignments) and one synchronous group video session with the instructor. It is expected that students will spend around 5 hours per week on the course. Students are expected to complete course requirements on their own, but the instructor is available to address questions, monitor progress, and provide formative and/or summative feedback.

Course Schedule
The course will run from April 7 – May 30, 2025, with synchronous sessions on Fridays from 4pm – 5pm. In week 2, the synchronous session will be on Thursday, April 17 due to a statutory holiday.

Class	Topic
Week 1	Welcome, Pre-Course Information, and Course Introduction **Synchronous Zoom: Friday, April 11**
Week 2	Ideation and Validation — do people need what you want to build? **Synchronous Zoom: Thursday, April 17**
Week 3	Discovery — reducing project risk through thoughtful pre-planning **Synchronous Zoom: Friday, April 25**
Week 4	Visual Design — User Experience (UX) and User Interface (UI) design **Synchronous Zoom: Friday, May 2**
Week 5	Build — contributing to effective technical communication **Synchronous Zoom: Friday, May 9**
Week 6	Test — making sure things work, and work the right way **Synchronous Zoom: Friday, May 16**
Week 7	Launch — distributing your product **Synchronous Zoom: Friday, May 23**
Week 8	Post-launch — proper feeding and care of your product **Synchronous Zoom: Friday, May 30**
Week 9	Final thoughts — estimation, and reviewing the software development lifecycle **Synchronous Zoom: Friday, June 6**

Course Assignments

This course is pass/fail (graded as Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory). Students missing a deadline and/or submitting a substandard report may not receive a passing grade.

Assignment	Details
Weekly assignment, submitted to the community forum on Canvas	Sunday of each week

Required Readings
Each week students will be assigned the required materials (videos and readings), which will be posted on Canvas.

Course Completion
Demonstrated skills and competencies of the topic, satisfactory achievement, submission of all assignments, and completion of all learning engagements are required in order to be granted completion of this course. It is expected that students participate in all asynchronous activities (including module discussions, group assignments, reflections etc.) and submit all learning engagements in a timely manner. Students who foresee challenges in submitting an assignment should communicate with the instructor before the deadline.
https://www.sfu.ca/students/enrolmentservices/policies-and-procedures/academic-concessions.html

Grading Profile
P Satisfactory performance or better (pass, ungraded)
F Unsatisfactory performance (fail)

Written & Spoken English
English is the official language of the school and all communication (written and spoken) is expected to be conducted in English. SFU and the MDM Program provide a wide range of free language support for those who need and it's up to each learner to seek that support.

Accommodations
The university accommodates students whose religious obligations conflict with attendance, submitting assignments, or completing scheduled tests and examinations. Please let your instructor know in advance, preferably the first week of class, if you will require any accommodations on these grounds. The Centre for Accessible Learning (CAL) will make every effort to assist students with disabilities so that they achieve their educational goals. https://www.sfu.ca/students/accessible-learning/establishing-accommodations/accommodation.html

Academic Integrity: Your Work, Your Success
SFU's Academic Integrity website http://www.sfu.ca/students/academicintegrity.html is filled with information on what is meant by academic dishonesty, where you can find resources to help with your studies and the consequences of cheating.
Each student is responsible for their conduct as it affects the university community. Academic dishonesty, in whatever form, is ultimately destructive of the values of the university. Furthermore, it is unfair and discouraging to the majority of students who pursue their studies honestly. Scholarly integrity is required of all members of the university. http://www.sfu.ca/policies/gazette/student/s10-01.html

Inappropriate use of technology in coursework

If you are using any technology, including generative AI, to produce or edit content that will be part of your graded work in the course, you must be transparent about the tools that you use. Undeclared use of the tool/technology will be considered a violation of the academic integrity policy. Be aware that any tool used will require you to evaluate the output for accuracies and be responsible for making the appropriate corrections.