

CS 4390

TechX - Product Management 101 Syllabus

Spring 2024

Lecture Schedule & Instructors

	Section A	Section B	Section C
Times	Monday & Wednesday: 10:10 - 11:30 AM PST 1:10 - 2:30 PM EST	Monday & Wednesday: 10:10 - 11:30 AM PST 1:10 - 2:30 PM EST	Monday & Wednesday: 2:40 PM - 4:00 PM PST 5:40 PM - 7:00 PM EST
Co-Instructor	Neil Shah (he/him) npshah@google.com	Jaime Williams (he/him) jaimewilliams@google.com	Ilen Zazueta-Hall (she/her) ilen@google.com
Faculty Instructor	Janett Walters-Williams janett.williams@techexchange.in	Amos Johnson amosyjohnsonjr@techexchange.in	Joseph Aneke josephogo.aneke@techexchange.in
Course PgM	Jamaya Smith jamayas@techexchange.in	Anna Yoo annayoo@techexchange.in	Anna Yoo annayoo@techexchange.in

Credit Hours: 3

Office Hours: Office hours are an optional time to meet with instructors, ask any questions you may have about the course lectures, assignments, readings, PM pathways, or anything else that the instructors can support you on. You are welcome to meet with any of the instructors, not limited to only instructors from your section.

Day	Time	Instructor	Details
Monday			
Tuesday			
Wednesday			
Thursday	3:00 PM - 4:00 PM PT	Ilen Zazueta-Hall	Google Meet: meet.google.com/prp-bdec-hfq Phone Numbers (US)+1 425-333-2056

			PIN: 411 701 078# More phone numbers
Friday	9:00 AM-9:30 AM PT	Jaime Williams	Google Meet joining info Video call link: https://meet.google.com/qcb-jyuf-ygz Or dial: (US) +1 651-867-0166 PIN: 731 250 421# More phone numbers: https://tel.meet/qcb-jyuf-ygz?pin=2317340173530

1. General Course Information

Current Catalog Description:

Provides a broad introduction to product management (PM), including customer discovery, strategy, pitching, requirements definition, and defining/using metrics. Allows students to develop the skills required to obtain and execute an entry-level position in industry through individual and group assignments.

Prerequisites by Topic:

There is no prerequisite for this course.

2. Learning Resources

- Readings will be sent out weekly and posted on Google Classroom:
 - [Section A Google Classroom](#)
 - [Section B Google Classroom](#)
 - [Section C Google Classroom](#)

2.2 Department Resources

None

3. Aims, Objectives, & Program Outcomes

3.1 Course Aims

This course aims to teach students to

- Understand what a product manager (PM) does and what their role is

- Learn product skills including customer discovery, strategy, pitching, requirements definition, leveraging UX resources, and defining/using metrics
- Learn management skills such as influence without authority, negotiation, and having difficult conversations
- Develop PM interviewing skills & confidence
- Practice these skills by creating an end-to-end product plan

3.2 Learning Objectives

Upon completing this course, students will be able to:

1. Identify, understand, and articulate key user needs
2. Create hypotheses and plan user research studies
3. Work with designers to define product requirements and develop effective prototypes, including understanding of UX design process and tools
4. Write a product requirements document (PRD)
5. Learn how to interview for a PM position
6. Create a compelling product pitch
7. Understand influence and working with people as a PM
8. Define and explain success metrics
9. Understand different functions in a product org, such as UX and engineering

3.3 Relationship between Learning Objectives & Program Outcomes

- A. An ability to apply theoretical knowledge of product management to developing a product plan
- B. An ability to apply management and soft skills to deal with interpersonal situations

4. Teaching & Learning Activities

4.1 Learning Activities

- Bi-weekly lecture series - a detailed overview can be found in section 4.2
- Weekly readings, to be completed prior to each lecture
- Weekly individual and group homework assignments, to be completed after lecture - a detailed overview can be found in section 5

4.2 Major Topics Covered in the Course

Course Schedule - PM 2024				
Week of	Class	Topic	Assigned	

Jan 15	X	No Class on Mon/Tues (MLK Day)		
	1	Introduction, Community Building, Logistics	#1 Project Preferences	
Jan 22	2	Introduction to PM, Product Development Process, Group assignments	#2 Team Charter	#1 Project
	3	Communication a PM superpower: Writing, Listening and Speaking		
Jan 29	4	PM Panel, Product Vision	#3 Product Vision	#2 Team C
	5	User Discovery, Personas	#4 User Research	
Feb 5	6	UXR Guest Speaker	#5 Motivation	#3 Product
	7	Market Landscape: Competitive research, TAM	#6 Market Landscape	#4 User Re
Feb 12	8	Business Model, Challenges and Risks	#7 Business Model Challenges & Risks	#5 Motivati
	9	Design sprints (including activity)		#6 Market
Feb 19	X	President's Day Holiday (2/19)		
	10	UX Panel Sketching & Wireframing for PMs	#8 Wireframes	#7 Business Challenges
Feb 26	11	How to Pitch	#9 Product Pitch	
	12	Product Pitch Working time		#8 Wirefra
Mar 4	13	Product Strategy		
	14	Product Pitches 🤖		#9 Product
Mar 11	X	Spring Break		
Mar 18	15	Product Requirements	#10 Product Requirements	
	16	Building inclusive products, building w/in societal context	#11 Inclusive Product Requirements	
Mar 25	17	Product Metrics Part 1		#10 Product Requirements
	18	Product Metrics Part 2	#12 Product Success Metrics	#11 Inclusive Requirements

Apr 1	19	Roadmap/Release Strategy	#13 Release Strategy, Assumptions, Dependencies and Risks	
	20	APM Recruiting? or More on AI!		#12 Proc Metrics
Apr 8	21	Special topic: AI + Product Management	#14 Final Presentation	#13 Release Assumpt Depend
	22	Lightning Talks		
Apr 15	23	Final Presentation working time		
	24	Director/VP AMA		
Apr 22	25	Final Presentations		#14 Final
	26	Final Presentations, Wrap up		

NOTE: The instructors reserve the right to change the course content, omit parts of the topics listed above or introduce new material midstream to supplement the course text.

5 Assessment

5.2 Course Grading

The assignments, presentations, and class participation contribute significantly to your grade. Specifically, your final course grade will be calculated as follows:

- Assignments / presentations: 75%
- Readings and reflections: 5%
- Class / group participation: 20%

The course will be graded on a curve, with the average grade being 90%. This allows us to control for the clarity and difficulty of the assignment. E.g., if the highest assignment grade is a 5/10, 5/10 will become an A.

Students are responsible for completing their assignments with their project groups. Students are expected to contribute an equal share of time and effort to their project. Students who do not do so and do not have an approved excuse prior to the submission of the assignment, will see drops in their participation grades.

Class & group participation

Participation, both in class and within the project group, counts as 20% of students' grades. There are many ways for students to participate:

- Speaking up in class
- Posting comments in the chat in class
- Responding to in-class polls
- Filling out post-class surveys
- Proposing project ideas
- Doing mock PM interviews
- Participating in discussions with project coaches
- Contributing to the course project
- Posting questions / ideas on Classroom

This course is participation-heavy because being a PM requires engaging in discussions, asking questions, and providing feedback and critiques. We also believe the socratic learning style is most likely to benefit students' growth.

If you have connectivity issues that you're worried will impact your in-class participation, please let your instructors know.

5.1 Assessment Summary

Assessments will be a mix of individual and group work. You will be working with the same group of 3-4 students throughout the semester; groups will be assigned by Week 3. Assignments are due at the start of lecture on the due date. Dates may be subject to change, but changes will be communicated in advance.

Assignment	Task details	% of Assignments Grade
Project preferences	Complete project preferences form on areas of interest, project ideas, and collaboration styles. Grading is binary (1 if you did it, 0 if you didn't).	1%
Team charter	As a group: agree on how your team will work together this semester, set up your weekly meetings and decide how you will make sure everyone is contributing equally to group projects. Share Team Charter document with your coach.	2%
Product Vision	As a group, write a vision statement for your product and complete the Vision section of your document.	4%

User Research	<p>As a group: conduct research about the user problem your group is interested in solving.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Each group member should interview at least one potential user - Working together, create and conduct a survey with at least 30 respondents - Working together, create a user research summary - Each group member should complete the User Research Summary appendix of your doc 	6%
Motivation	<p>On your own: Based on your group's research create at least 3 personas and complete the Motivation section of your document</p>	4%
Market Landscape	<p>As a group: each group member should identify at least 1 existing solution and share it with the group.</p> <p>On your own: complete the Market Landscape section of your document.</p>	4%
Business Model, Challenges and Risks	<p>On your own: complete the Business Model section of your document</p> <p>On your own: complete the Challenges and Risks section of your document</p>	8%
Wireframes	<p>On your own: For at least 3 key user journeys, create low fidelity sketches of your product and put them into a slide deck</p>	8%
Product Pitch	<p>As a group: Prepare a 4-minute pitch of your product and present it to the class and a panel of judges</p>	15%
Product Requirements	<p>On your own: In your doc complete the Product Requirements section of your document</p>	13%
Production Inclusion & Accessibility	<p>On your own: Complete the Product Inclusion & Accessibility section of your document</p>	5%
Product Success Metrics	<p>On your own: Complete the Product Success Metrics section of your document</p>	5%
Release Strategy, Assumptions, Dependencies and Risks	<p>On your own:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Complete the Release Strategy section of your document - Complete the Assumptions, Dependencies and Risks sections of your document 	5%
Final presentation	<p>As a group: Give a final presentation as if you were presenting your product to executive leadership</p>	20%

How Data in the Course is used to Assess Program Outcomes (unless adequately covered already in the assessment discussion under Criterion 4)

We directly assess program outcomes by mapping all homework and participation to the course outcomes.

5.3 Policy on submission, late assignments, projects, and make-up exams:

- All assignments must be entered and submitted to the Classroom at the beginning of lecture on the due date.
- If you need to request an extension for exceptional circumstances, [submit this form](#).
- Regarding late submissions: **Late submissions will not be accepted unless previously agreed upon by the instructors.** We use many of these assignments during class, so having them completed by the lecture date and time is important. That said, we know the nature of the COVID-19 pandemic makes turning in assignments on time somewhat difficult (due to connectivity issues, family emergencies, etc.). Instructors will work with students to ensure that they are able to complete their work satisfactorily. In all situations, students should reach out to their instructors and their project coach. In some cases, instructors & project coaches may choose to operate on the honor system or may request additional information from the student (e.g., a doctor's note).
 - Students may submit assignments late if an emergency occurs. If possible, students should notify instructors & their project coach at least 12 hours before the deadline. Students will work with instructors and project coaches to determine an appropriate deadline for extensions.
 - Due to the nature of remote learning, students are excused from late submissions due to connectivity issues.
- No make-up presentations will be allowed unless there is a bona-fide written doctor's excuse or other emergency. In the event that such an excuse is accepted, the deadline will be extended to the number of days specified in the excuse. As always, coordinate with instructors & project coaches for extensions on presentations.
- Regrading requests must be sent within a week of the date the graded material was returned to the class. Requests for regrading or any questions regarding graded material will not be accepted after that time. Any graded material that is not picked up within two weeks after distribution will be discarded.
- No extra work requests are accepted. Grades will only be calculated based on the marking scheme.

5.4 Attendance policy:

You are expected to and should attend classes regularly and complete all assignments on time. Class attendance may be a factor in determining your participation grade. If you must miss a class, it's a good idea to let your instructor know in advance or as soon thereafter as possible. If you don't explain your absence, your instructor may assume you don't care about the class or your grade. Coming to class late three times will be counted as one class absence, later than 10 minutes will also be counted as one class absence. Students are required to attend class during

the regularly scheduled tests and the final exam unless prior arrangements have been made.

Students can use laptops and phones to participate in class, since the class is operating remotely. However, students must focus on the class and may not use laptops or phones for anything other than participating in class, unless necessary for class work or as part of the student's accommodations (see section 6 below). This does mean that students are expected to take notes on paper most of the time, where appropriate. Students are also expected to keep their camera on during class, unless they have connectivity issues or a living / family situation that does not allow them to do so. If you are unable to keep your camera on during class, please notify your instructors in advance by email, so they're aware of your situation and don't mistake your camera being off for lack of attention.

Lectures will be recorded for students with connectivity issues only.

5.5 Plagiarism Policy

All instances of plagiarism will be directed to the student's university administration, which will conduct the appropriate hearings.

5.6 Artificial Intelligence Use Policy

Students will be able to use AI tools on all assignments within the course. No penalties will be given to students who utilize AI tools.

If you choose to use an LLM to help you with writing:

- Specify which model or agent you've used (eg GPT-3.5 or Bard)
- Add the prompt you used as a comment.
- Paste in the initial version of the LLM response and make your edits to it directly in the document. This makes it easier for your coach to see where you've corrected and improved the LLM response and give you feedback.

Please remember: You are responsible for the quality of your responses, even when generated by AI tools.

6. Notices

The Americans with Disabilities Act requires institutions to accommodate the needs of persons with disabilities. If you need special arrangements such as sign language interpreters or audiotapes of lectures, please fill out [this form](#) and someone from the Tech Exchange team will contact you.