Course Title: Fundamentals of Product Management
Course Code: BUS 62 W
Instructor: Kunal Punjabi

Course Description:
Please see course page for full description and additional details.

Grade Options and Requirements:
Students have these grading options for this course:

- **No Grade Requested (NGR)**
  - This is the default option. No work is required; no credit shall be received; no proof of attendance can be provided. (Not suitable for those requiring proof of attendance/completion.)

- **Credit/No Credit (CR/NC)**
  - Students are required to:
    - Participate in the weekly discussions* (40% of final grade)
    - Complete the class project (60% of final grade)
    - Earn a minimum of 70% overall to receive credit

- **Letter Grade (A, B, C, D, No Pass)**
  - Letter grades will be determined by the quantity and quality of the completed requirements.
  - Students are required to:
    - Participate in the weekly discussions* (40% of final grade)
    - Complete the class project (60% of final grade)
  - Letter grades will be assigned according to these general standards:
    - A = Excellent (90-100%)
    - B = Good (80-89%)
    - C = Satisfactory (70-79%)
    - D = Minimal Pass (60-69%)

*Discussion credit will be given to responses that are reflective, thoroughly address the prompt, and show evidence of understanding the weekly course material. Posting in the General Class Comments and Question thread does not count towards credit.

Completion of the class project is highly encouraged in order to further your understanding of the topic and immediately apply the skills you have learned in a real-world setting.
**Please note that you can log into your Continuing Studies student account and change your grading status at any point before the final day of class. Keep in mind, if you require proof that you completed a course for any reason, you must choose the Letter Grade or Credit/No Credit grading option; courses taken for No Grade Requested will not appear on official transcripts nor on grade reports. Your student account is where you will also find your final grade (please allow up to three weeks after a course has ended to view your grade); official grades are not posted in Canvas.**

**Zoom Schedule***:

*Please note that the Zoom schedule is subject to change.*

A live class meeting will be held each week. As of now, the plan is for each meeting to happen on **Tuesdays @6:30pm PST** and include instructor lectures, discussions around class topics, and Q&A. Although the live class meeting is optional, I highly encourage you to attend when possible because it gives you a chance to ask questions and interact both with me and the other students. If you cannot attend, please be sure to watch the recording.

There is also an "Agenda Items for Weekly Live Sessions" discussion that is open throughout the course. You can use this to propose agenda items each week. Every request will get a response, and either be considered for an upcoming weekly live session, or for a future class, depending on the existing schedule and demand.

Please refer to the “Live Class Meeting (Zoom Session)” page each week for specific information (e.g., day and time, connection links, agenda) regarding the meeting for that particular week. The meetings are conducted using **Zoom**, a video-conference application.

**Weekly Outline:**

- **Week 1:** Introduction to Product Management
- **Week 2:** Market Research, Product Strategy and Validation
- **Week 3:** Personas, Empathy Maps, Qualitative User Research, and Customer Feedback Best Practices
- **Week 4:** Product Design
  - **Part 1:** Design Principles, Design Frameworks, Designing for Validation, Design Hacks
• **Week 5:** Product Design
  - **Part 2:** Design Techniques (Wireframing, Sketching, Prototyping, Storyboarding), Getting to a MVP, Measuring Designs, Executing Fast

• **Week 6:** Metrics, KPIs, Analytics and Communication in Product Management
  - **Part 1**

• **Week 7:** Communication in Product Management
  - **Part 2:** Crafting your Product Vision, Strategy, and Roadmap

• **Week 8:** Agile Product Development

• **Week 9:** Moving Forward on Your PM Path
  - **Part 1:** Getting a job in Product Management

• **Week 10:** Moving Forward on Your PM Path
  - **Part 2:** Getting a job in Product Management & Growing in your PM career

**Module Content:**

Each module typically includes the following components. Announcements will also be posted from time to time so consider setting your "announcement" notification preference to "notify me right away" to immediately receive the information via email.

- **Media:** Please start each module off by reviewing the required media - videos and readings. If you have time and would like to learn more about the topics addressed in a module, consider reviewing the optional resources (supplemental materials).

- **Discussions:**
  - Each weekly, graded discussion focuses on the topic(s) covered during that week. These discussions should be treated as assignments as they make up part of your overall grade.
  - The Product Design and Roadmap Project discussion is open throughout the course. Participation is optional but highly encouraged, as this is a great place to post your thoughts, questions, and progress related to the Product Design and Roadmap Project.
There is also a **General Class Comments and Questions discussion** that is open throughout the course. This is a great place to post thoughts or questions related to the course topics, that don’t seem to fit in any of the other discussions. Or, questions about the structure of the course, assignment expectations, class grading requirements, and so on.

- **Project Milestone:** Each week you will work on a milestone for your class project. Project milestones should be treated as assignments as they make up part of your overall grade. The project has been designed to give you hands-on experience in product design and product development. It probably won’t be easy, but it will surely be worth it. Even for the handful of you taking the course in the "No Grade Requested" format (which I hope you reconsider), active participation in the project is highly encouraged because it will help you either form the beginnings of a new business or build on your portfolio of projects that you can showcase to potential employers. If you’re looking for a product management job, this might end up giving you an edge over the other candidates. Remember, the more you put into it, the more you will get out of it.

- **Class Meeting/Zoom Session:** A live class meeting will be held each week via Zoom, a video-conference application. Please see the table below for the schedule. Note, days and times are subject to change, so be sure to refer to the Class Meeting/Zoom Session page each week to confirm the day and time and for other information such as the agenda, Zoom connection links, and recordings (after the meetings).

Since students live in different time zones and have various time commitments, the class meetings are not required. However, you are strongly encouraged to attend when possible and watch the session recordings when you can not. The recordings will become available shortly after the meetings.

**Weekly Routine:**

Please work through the current module each week. The expectation is that you will keep up with each week’s materials so you are prepared to take on the following lesson. This is especially important if you are enrolled for credit or a letter grade.

Here are some key days of the week:

- **Monday:** Each week officially begins on Monday. Weekly live class meeting/Zoom session at 6:30 PM (PT), unless otherwise specified.

- **Friday:** The module content for the upcoming week will be available by the afternoon.
• **Weekends:** Weekends are a great time to catch up with the current week's work. It is also a chance to get a head start on the upcoming week's work.
• **Sunday:** Each week ends Sunday at 11:59 PM (PT).

**Weekly Outline:**

**Week 1: Introduction to Product Management**

• **Overview**
  Inspiration and what you will learn in this course
  Why study Product Management
  Who is this course for?
  Meet your Instructor
  What to expect from and how to get the most out of this course

• **Introduction to Product Management**
  What is Product Management?
  What does a PM do?
  How the PM Role Varies
  A day in the life of a Product Manager
  What does it take to become a Product Manager?
  Top Myths about Product Management
  The "Ideal" PM background
  Who’s on the Team and how do you work with them?
  Product Manager versus Product Owner
  Understand how customer needs translate into features of a product
  Identify the underlying risks and assumptions associated with new features

• **The Product Development Process**
  Phases of the product life cycle (New versus mature products)
  Identify the different methods of developing a product

• **The Product Manager Toolkit**
  Intro to Tools a PM uses everyday
  Understanding apps using Mind Maps
  Build a product Roadmap using Pivotal Tracker
  Wireframing products using Balsamiq
  Issue Tracking with Jira
• Assignments
  Discussion
  Project Milestone #1

Week 2: Market Research, Product Strategy and Validation

• Market Research
  Technology Adoption Curve / Graph (Crossing the Chasm by Geoffrey Moore)
  Develop a competitive analysis of a feature or business
  Identify key differentiation between competitive offerings
  Utilize estimation and research in order to determine the opportunity size of a given product or feature

• Product Strategy
  Reasons Products Fail
  Product > Strategy > Business Model
  An Alternative to a Business Plan: Documenting Your Product/Market Fit
  Hypotheses
  The Innovator’s Dilemma (and why it’s nice to compete against a large, profitable company)
  Niche to Win
  Come for the tool, stay for the network
  What is a good product strategy?

• Validating Opportunities
  How to Design Your Customer Validation to Maximize Product/Market Fit
  Internal Validation: Validating an opportunity with your team
  External Validation: Customer Development: Talking with customers to make sure what you want to work on next is useful
  Validating with Experiments: A/B Tests, Testing with a Minimum Viable Product (MVP)

• Early Validation
  Validating the Problem
  Validating the Market
  Validating the Product
  Tools for Early Validation
  Early Validation is just the beginning

• Assignments
  Discussion
  Project Milestone #2
Week 3: Personas, Empathy Maps, Qualitative User Research, and Customer Feedback

Best Practices

• Personas & Empathy Maps
  Personas: Identify a company’s target customers
  Creating user personas
  Use empathy maps to better understand the feelings and needs of customers

• The Right Kind of Research at the Right time
  Competitor testing
  Five-Second tests
  Clickable Prototype testing
  Guerilla User tests
  Tips for Getting Feedback

• Faster User Research
  Iterate! Iterate! Iterate!
  Stay in the Building
  Unmoderated testing
  When to Survey
  Common (Stupid) Reasons for not Doing Research

• When does Qualitative Research Break down?
  a One-Variable Change
  a Multivariable or Flow Change
  Deciding What to Build next
  If You Build It, Will they Buy It?
  Continuous Product Discovery

• Customer Feedback Best Practices
  Feedback from Customer Advisory Boards
  Feedback from Customer Interviews and Focus Groups
  Feedback from Colleagues and Internal Stakeholders
  Feedback from Usability Testing
  Feedback from In-App Tools
  Feedback from Social Media
  Feedback from Surveys

• Assignments
  Discussion
  Project Milestone #3

- **Design Principles**
  - Fast Path to a Great UX - Increased Exposure Hours
  - Principles of good Design

- **Design Frameworks**
  - Stanford D.School Design Framework
  - The Google Design Sprint
  - Facebook's approach to product Design
  - The JTBD (jobs to be done) framework

- **Designing for Validation**
  - tool 1: Truly Understand the Problem
  - tool 2: Design the test First
  - tool 3: Write Some Stories
  - tool 4: talk about Possible Solutions with the team
  - tool 5: Make a Decision
  - tool 6: (In)Validate the approach
  - tool 7: Sketch a Few approaches
  - tool 8: Create Interactive Prototypes
  - tool 9: test and Iterate
  - Give the Users What they Really Want

- **Just Enough Design**
  - Design the necessary, not the neat
  - Build a Feature Stub
  - Build a Wizard of Oz Feature
  - Only Solve the Important Problems

- **Design Hacks**
  - Design Patterns
  - Competitive Research
  - User testing the Competition
  - Consistency
  - Frameworks
  - Leveraging Plug-ins
  - Don’t Design It at all
  - Getting Professional Help
  - Good artists borrow, Great artists Steal

Please contact the Stanford Continuing Studies office with any questions
365 Lasuen St., Stanford, CA 94305
continuingstudies@stanford.edu
650-725-2650
• Assignments
  Discussion
  Project Milestone #4

**Week 5: Product Design, Part 2: Design Techniques (Wireframing, Sketching, Prototyping, Storyboarding), Getting to a MVP, Measuring Designs, Executing Fast**

- **Diagrams, Sketches, Wireframes, Storyboards, and Prototypes**
  - Becoming familiar with different methods of wireframing, including sketch, lo-fi, and hi-fi
  - Why Diagram?
  - When Do You Sketch?
  - What’s a Wireframe, and Why Do You Care?
  - Storyboarding to communicate context, user flows, and interactions
  - Do You Have to Make an Interactive Prototype?
  - Which Should You Build, and Should You Make It Pretty?
  - The Case against Paper Prototypes
  - Usability Testing your Prototype

- **Getting to an MVP**
  - The Hunt for Product/Market Fit
  - Getting to Product/Market Fit
  - What is a MVP?
  - The Landing Page
  - The First Iteration
  - Subsequent Iterations (Evolving your product to reach product/market fit)
  - Determining if you've reached product/market fit
  - Building a Limited Product versus a Bad Product

- **The Right amount of Visual Design**
  - Why Is Visual Design Important in UX?

- **Measuring Design**
  - What it Entails, and Why Measure Design?
  - Common (Stupid) Reasons for not A/B Testing
  - When to A/B Test and When to do User Research
  - What Qualitative testing Does Well
  - How A/B testing and Qualitative testing Work together
  - Which Metrics Equal Happy Users
  - Common (Stupid) Reasons Made When analyzing Data

- **Ways to Execute faster**
Combine Product and UX Roles
Avoid Engineering When Possible
Shipping Products Incrementally to mitigate Risk

• Assignments
  Discussion
  Project Milestone #5

**Week 6: Metrics, KPIs, Analytics and Communication in Product Management, Part 1**

• Data and Metrics
  KPIs vs metrics
  The metrics every PM should know
  Choosing the right metrics that matter for your product
  The AARRR framework for choosing metrics for Internet Marketing & Product Management
  The HEART framework for choosing UX metrics
  https://www.dtelepathy.com/ux-metrics
  Everything a product manager needs to know about analytics
  Tools to measure metrics
  The concept of the customer conversion funnel

• What are people actually doing in your product?
  Typical Feature Audit
  Ideal Feature Usage
  What should you do after a feature audit?
  "How to improve your features & Continuous improvements"

• Strategies for Interfacing and Communicating with Stakeholders and Team members
  Collaborating with Designers
  Collaborating with Engineers
  Communicating with Project / Program Managers
  Communicating and Collaborating with Other Stakeholders (Marketing, Product Leadership, Executive Leadership, etc)
  Collaborating with other Product Managers and Product Owners
  How Do I Build Shared Understanding?
  Conflict Management Recommendations for Product Managers
  The Empathetic Product Manager
  Team Health

• Strategies for Interfacing and Communicating with clients, customers and users
When Should Recurring Feature Requests Lead to Re-evaluating Your Product Strategy?
Dealing With an Unreasonable Customer
How Product Managers Can Say No (and Still Get Invited to Lunch)
Customers and Messaging: How to create a product message to convey your product to customers
Marketing your product

- **Presenting Your Product**
  - Describe what makes a presentation effective, and how structure is used to impact the audience experience
  - Employ practical techniques, processes, and communication styles to pitch your idea to stakeholders more effectively

- **Going to Market: How to successfully launch a product**
  - Going to Market: How to successfully launch a product

- **Assignments**
  - Discussion
  - Project Milestone #6

**Week 7: Communication in Product Management, Part 2: Crafting your Product Vision, Strategy, and Roadmap**

- **Why create a Roadmap? (aka The Key Role of Product Managers)**
  - Characteristics of Successful Product Managers
  - What is a Product Roadmap, and what is it not?
  - The Purpose of Product Roadmaps
  - The Roadmap Planning and Communication Process

- **Envisioning the Product**
  - The Product Vision
  - Desirable Qualities of the Vision
  - The Minimal Marketable Product
  - Simplicity
  - Customer Needs and Product Attributes
  - The Birth of the Vision
  - Techniques for Creating the Vision
  - Visioning and the Product Road Map
  - Minimal Products and Product Variants
  - Common Mistakes
  - Reflection
• **Tying Strategy to Your Roadmap**
  - Top-Down Strategic Planning
  - Developing the Product Strategy
  - Defining Your Product Goals
  - Typical Roadmap Process Challenges
  - Using Metrics to Support Your Roadmap

• **Planning and Prioritizing Your Roadmap**
  - Making Sense of the Firehose of Ideas
  - Organizing Initiatives into Themes
  - Prioritization Techniques

• **Building Your Roadmap**
  - How Product Managers Roadmap Today
  - The Importance of a Visual Roadmap
  - The Collaborative Roadmap
  - Three Popular Roadmap Styles
  - Example Product Management Roadmaps

• **Communicating Your Roadmap (aka Communicating with Stakeholders)**
  - Continuous Communication: Communicating with Stakeholders Throughout the Process
  - Strategies for Getting Stakeholder Buy-in on Your Roadmap
  - Common Communication Pitfalls

• **Assignments**
  - Discussion:
    - Project Milestone #7

**Week 8: Agile Product Development**

• **Agile Product Development**
  - What is Agile Development? How is Agile different from Waterfall?
  - Why Agile?

• **Working with the Product Backlog**
  - The DEEP Qualities of the Product Backlog
  - Writing effective specifications and user stories
  - Grooming the Product Backlog
  - Discovering and Describing Items
  - Prioritizing the Product Backlog
  - Getting Ready for Sprint Planning
  - Sizing Items
Dealing with Nonfunctional Requirements
Scaling the Product Backlog
Common Mistakes
Reflection

• **Planning the Release**
  Time, Cost, and Functionality
  Quality Is Frozen
  Early and Frequent Releases
  Quarterly Cycles
  Velocity
  The Release Burndown
  The Release Plan
  Release Planning on Large Projects
  Common Mistakes
  Reflection

• **Collaborating in the Sprint Meetings**
  Sprint Planning
  Definition of Done
  Daily Scrum
  Sprint Backlog and Sprint Burndown
  Sprint Review
  Sprint Retrospective
  Sprint Meetings on Large Projects
  Common Mistakes
  Reflection

• **Continuous Delivery**
  What is continuous delivery
  The benefits of continuous delivery
  Foundational Principles of continuous delivery
  Tools and techniques for continuous delivery

• **Assignments**
  Discussion
  Project Milestone #8
Week 9: Moving Forward on Your PM Path, part 1: Getting a job in Product Management

- Getting a job in Product Management
  - Understand the realities of the Product Management job market
  - Understand job options across organizational types and career paths
  - The Product Management Hiring Process
  - Getting the Right Experience
  - Resumes
  - Linkedin and Online Personal Branding
  - Cover Letters
  - Interview Prep: Company Research
  - Interview Prep: Define Yourself
  - Interview Prep: Behavioral Questions
  - Interview Prep: Estimation Questions
  - Interview Prep: Product Questions
  - Interview Prep: Case Questions
  - Coding Questions
  - Top 40 PM interview questions
  - Asking Good Questions
  - The secret to getting the job: Do the job before asking for the job

- Assignments
  - Discussion
  - Project Milestone #9

Week 10: Moving Forward on Your PM Path, part 2: Growing in your PM career

- Growing in your PM career
  - The Product Management Career Path
  - Product Management Career Ladders at Top Technology Firms
  - Advancing in your Career
  - Key Responsibilities of Product Managers
  - Good versus bad Product Managers
  - The first 30 days - tips for new PMs

- Optimizing and Supporting Your Product
  - Becoming a Better Product Advocate Within Your Company
  - Are you a Thought Leader or a Follower?
  - Should Product Managers Focus More on High-Level Strategy or the Tactical Details?
  - When is it Smart to Share Your Roadmap Publicly? When Would it be a Disaster?
Making Good Decisions as a Product Manager
Avoiding the Build Trap
Seven Critical Product Habits by Hiten Shah
Lies Product Managers Tell Themselves
Can You Ever Stop Improving Your Product?

- **Making the Most of Your Time**
  Product Managers: Don’t Waste Your Time On These Six Things
  Tips for Remote Product Teams

- **Product Leadership**
  How to be a great Product Leader
  The VP of Product vs the Product Manager - Ellen Chisa
  What Product VPs at High-Growth Startups Have in Common - Mike Belsito
  How to Hire a Product Manager
  Find, Vet and Close the Best Product Managers - Todd Jackson
  The 6 types of Product Managers. Which one do you need?
  Strategies for Creating an All-Star Product Team
  How to foster a sense of purpose
  Other leadership lessons from product gurus like Ev Williams, Ben Horowitz, & Mark Suster

- **Helpful Resources for Product Managers**
  Great Podcasts for Product Managers
  Must-Read Books for Product Managers
  What Should Your Product Stack Include?
  Product Management Conferences You Should Attend

- **Assignments**
  Discussion
  Project Milestone #10