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**:  

*APlease 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 **Mondays @ 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

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• **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
• 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](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
    Understanding the realities of the Product Management job market
    Understanding 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