

Course Number: INDENG 186

Course Title: Product Management

Units: 3

Semester: Spring 2022

Instructor(s): Ken Sandy: ksandy@berkeley.edu; Derek Chan: derekschan@berkeley.edu

GSI or Course Coordinator(s): Pedro Sanson: pedrosanson@berkeley.edu; Shreya Khandewale: shreyakhandewale@berkeley.edu

Meeting Day/Time: Thursdays, 5pm – 8pm

Meeting Location: Jacobs Hall 310

Office Hours: Can be scheduled by emailing Professors and Course Coordinators

Description

Product Managers play an increasingly critical role in modern technology companies. They are charged with ensuring an organization is laser focused on creating valuable and highly usable products and services, to address pain-points and unmet-needs for their target customers. Good Product Managers develop a deep empathy for the end-user. They identify and define solutions which will create new business opportunities. They build effective relationships across all levels in an organization. They know how to motivate cross-functional teams and manage complex development processes to deliver world-class products. They are highly data and metrics driven; to validate products, measure performance, and iterate on improvements.

In this class, you will learn essential Product Management skills by putting theory into practice, on a product or idea of your choosing. You will learn techniques to accelerate product success and avoid common mistakes. You will work in a team comprising of students from engineering, design, business and other backgrounds. This will simulate real-world cross-functional environments where people with different skills collaborate to build a successful product.

The course is recommended for any student who wants to explore life as a Product Manager, may work in a related field closely with Product Managers, or is interested in exploring a career that spans many aspects of business and technology.

Textbook/Resources

Once your enrollment is confirmed, you will be required to purchase “*The Influential Product Manager*”. Course Chapters and exercises will be assigned weekly. The Influential Product Manager can be purchased on Amazon [here](#). Reach out to instructors for a PDF copy of the text.

Communication

All course communication will occur through bCourses. We also have a class Slack Workspace for team communication, class activities, and occasional announcements.

Attendance/Participation Policy

The course is designed around teamwork and participation. Mandatory class attendance is to your benefit. If you miss three or more lectures without advanced permission from a Course Coordinator you will not pass.

Assignments and Grading

Group Assignments: 50%

(5 submissions)

Around the 3rd week, you will form groups of five and stay in these groups for the remainder of the semester. You will study a product or idea of your choosing throughout the semester. Each assignment builds upon course material and previous assignments. Prompts – including instructions, due dates, and a rubric – will be provided when the assignment is set. Assignments and their grade weighing are noted below. Feedback and grading are performed via an interactive team walk-through with an instructor.

Individual Assignment (“Stay Current”): 20%

(13 submissions)

You will complete a small amount of weekly research, self-learning, reflection, online collaboration, and surveys. Creativity is encouraged – written posts, videos, podcasts – critically analyzing what you are learning through the course. Stay Currents are graded on a scale from 0 to 3.

Participation: 30%

(active class involvement)

Your participation grade is based on quality of contribution you make each class – including active discussion, preparation for in-class exercises, asking thoughtful questions, providing other class members feedback, and overall engagement. Special class activities are noted in the syllabus below. You will receive a zero for any week you are absent without prior permission.

All assignments will be submitted digitally on bCourses. Deadlines will be outlined in assignment handouts. Late submissions receive a mark-down or may not be accepted.

Late Assignment Policy

Students can request extensions on Stay Current and group assignments, and they will be granted under most circumstances. Students can submit Stay Currents up to two weeks late for a score of 1. Late group assignments will not be accepted without an extension.

Scheduling Conflicts

Please notify the professors and course coordinators in writing as soon as possible about any known or potential extracurricular conflicts. We will try my best to help you with making accommodations but cannot guarantee them in all cases.

Weekly Schedule (tentative)

The following schedule is meant to provide a broad outline of the course material and structure. However, it is not set in stone and may be modified as the semester unfolds. Any updates will be communicated.

Jan 20: Introducing Product Management (Week 1)

Introductions. The role of Product Managers. Product Manager skills. Working in teams.

Activities: “SnapChat vs. Insta vs. Tiktok”; “Getting to Know You”; Individual Assignment: “Stay Current”

Jan 27: Product Ideas: Think Like a Product Manager (Week 2)

Four Mindsets to making ideas robust. Common pitfalls. Value Propositions and Differentiators.

Activities: “Making Ideas Robust”, “Product Proposals”

Readings Due: Chapter 1 of The Influential Product Manager

Feb 3: Understanding Your Customer (Week 3)

Target Customers. Problem Statements. Competitors and Alternatives. Risks. Team allocations.

Activity: “Five Key Questions”; *Group Assignment 1:* “Understanding Your Customer” (10% of grade)

Readings Due: Chapter 3, Appendix C

Feb 10: What WALL-E can Teach us about Product Management (Week 4)

The Product Specification. Steps to define a product solution.

Activity: “Building Wall-E”; *Group Assignment 2:* “Scoping Your Product” (5% of grade)

Readings Due: Chapter 6

Feb 17: The Product Organization (Week 5)

Guest Panel discuss their experiences. Cross-Functional Teams. Leading through Influence.

Activity: “The Situation Room”

Readings Due: Chapter 2

Feb 24: Don’t Just Build the Product Right... Build the Right Product! (Week 6)

Product discovery and validation. Mock-ups, Prototypes. In-field research and usability testing.

Activity: “Interview Questions”; *Group Assignment 3:* “Product Discovery and Customer Validation”(15%)

Readings Due: Chapter 5

Mar 3: Effective Product Development Processes (Week 7)

Iterative (Agile) Development. SCRUM roles, ceremonies, artifacts, estimation, velocity. Pitfalls.

Activities: “Practicing Agile”

Readings Due: Chapter 8, Appendix H

Mar 10: Customer Interviews “Field Trip”

No class – time for Assignment 3 customer interviews and prototypes. Attendance taken.

Mar 17: Making Scope-Time-Quality Tradeoffs (Week 8)

Scope-Time-Quality Framework. Handling scope creep. Delivery commitments. Ensuring quality.

Activity: “The Time-to-Market Game Show”; “Making Tradeoffs”

Readings Due: Chapter 9

(Mar 24: Spring Recess – no class held)

Mar 31: Mastering Product Requirements (Week 9)

User Stories and Attributes. Breaking down stories. Acceptance Criteria. The Product Backlog.

Activity: “Moon Vacations”; *Group Assignment 4:* “Build Your Product Backlog” (5% of grade)

Readings Due: Chapter 7, Appendix G

Apr 7: Three-Two-One... Launch (Week 10)

Types of Launch – deployments, betas, market. Partnering with Product Marketing.

Activities: “Stop-The-Press: PR Competition”

Readings Due: Chapter 10, Appendix J

Apr 14: Measuring Product Performance (Week 11)

Recommended metrics and tools – flows, value, LTV, funnels, NPS. Attributes of useful metrics.

Activities: Prototype Demos; “Five-key Metrics”; “Business Model Brainstorm”

Readings Due: Chapter 11, Appendix D, Appendix K

Apr 21: Product Planning and Optimization (Week 12)

Product Roadmaps. Prioritization techniques. A/B Testing.

Activities: Dry Runs for Final Presentations; “Collaborative Prioritization”

Readings Due: Chapter 4

Apr 28: Putting It All Together (Week 13)

Finals with Special Guest Judges. A team selected to represent 186 at Collider Cup.

Activities: Awards Ceremony; *Group Assignment 5: Final Presentations* (15% of grade)

Course Evaluations

At the end of the term, students will be asked to fill out an evaluation to give feedback about the course. SCET values and appreciates student responses, which are used to better understand and improve our courses. Students are strongly encouraged to submit the evaluation.

Student Code of Conduct & Academic Integrity

Berkeley honor code: Everyone in this class is expected to adhere to this code: “As a member of the UC Berkeley community, I act with honesty, integrity, and respect for others.”

Student Conduct: Ethical conduct is of utmost importance in your education and career. The instructors, the College of Engineering, and U.C. Berkeley are responsible for supporting you by enforcing all students’ compliance with the [Code of Student Conduct](#) and the policies listed in the [CoE Student Guide](#). The Center for Student Conduct is set up to support you when you have been affected by actions that may violate these community rules. This includes an organized and transparent process, student participation in the process, mechanisms for appeals, and other mechanisms to protect fairness (<https://sa.berkeley.edu/conduct>).

Academic Integrity: Any assignment submitted by you and that bears your name is presumed to be your own original work that has not previously been submitted for credit in another course unless you obtain prior written approval to do so from your instructor. In all of your assignments, you may use words or ideas written by other individuals, but only with proper attribution. To copy text or ideas from another source without appropriate reference is plagiarism and will result in a failing grade for your assignment

and usually further disciplinary action. For additional information on plagiarism, self-plagiarism, and how to avoid it, see the [Berkeley Library website](#).

If you are not clear about the expectations for completing an assignment or taking a test or examination, be sure to seek clarification from your instructor beforehand. Anyone caught committing academic misconduct will be reported to the University Office of Student Conduct. Potential consequences of cheating and academic dishonesty may include a formal discipline file, probation, dismissal from the University, or other disciplinary actions.

Inclusion: We are committed to creating a learning environment welcoming of all students. To do so, we intend to support a diversity of perspectives and experiences and respect each others' identities and backgrounds (including race/ethnicity, nationality, gender identity, socioeconomic class, sexual orientation, language, religion, ability, etc.). To help accomplish this:

- If you feel like your performance in the class is being impacted by a lack of inclusion, please contact the instructors, your ESS advisor, or the departmental Faculty Equity Advisor (list and information at: <https://diversity.berkeley.edu/faculty-equity-advisors>). An anonymous feedback form is also available at <https://engineering.berkeley.edu/about/equity-and-inclusion/feedback/>.
- If you have a name and/or set of pronouns that differ from your legal name, designate a preferred name for use in the classroom at: <https://registrar.berkeley.edu/academic-records/your-name-records-rosters>.
- If you feel like your performance in the class is being impacted by your experiences outside of class (e.g., family matters, current events), please don't hesitate to come and talk with the instructor(s). We want to be resources for you.
- We are all in the process of learning how to respect and include diverse perspectives and identities. Please take care of yourself and those around you as we work through the challenging but important learning process.
- As a participant in this class, recognize that you can be proactive about making other students feel included and respected.

Student Accommodations

We honor and respect the different learning needs of our students, and are committed to ensuring you have the resources you need to succeed in our class. If you need accommodations for any reason (e.g. religious observance, health concerns, insufficient resources, etc.) please discuss with your instructor or academic advisor how to best support you. We will respect your privacy under state and Federal laws, and you will not be asked to share more than you are comfortable sharing. The disabled student program is a related resource, listed below. UC Berkeley is committed to creating a learning environment that meets the needs of its diverse student body. If you anticipate or experience any barriers to learning in this course, please feel welcome to discuss your concerns with me.

If you have a disability, or think you may have a disability, you can work with the Disabled Students' Program (DSP) to request an official accommodation. The Disabled Students' Program (DSP) is the campus office responsible for authorizing disability-related academic accommodations, in cooperation with the students themselves and their instructors. You can find more information about DSP, including contact information and the application process here: dsp.berkeley.edu. If you have already been approved for accommodations through DSP, please meet with me so we can develop an implementation plan together.

Prevention of Harassment and Discrimination

The University is committed to creating and maintaining a community dedicated to the advancement, application and transmission of knowledge and creative endeavors through academic excellence, where all individuals who participate in University programs and activities can work and learn together in an atmosphere free of discrimination, harassment, exploitation, or intimidation. For more information on related policies, resources and how to report an incident, see the [Office for the Prevention of Harassment and Discrimination \(OPHD\) website](#).

Safety and Emergency Preparedness/Evacuation Procedures

As class activities may keep you on campus at night, check out the Cal's [Night Safety Services website](#) for details on the University's comprehensive free night safety services. See the [Office of Emergency Management website](#) for details on Emergency Preparedness/Evacuation Procedures. The UC Berkeley [Police Department website](#) also has information regarding safety on campus. Dial 510-642-3333 or use a Blue Light emergency phone if you need help.

Grievances

If you have a problem with this class, you should seek to resolve the grievance concerning a grade or academic practice by speaking first with the instructor. Then, if necessary, contact the SCET Academic Program Manager for additional information. Additional resources can be found on the [Student Advocate's Office website](#) and the [Ombuds Office for Students website](#).

SCET Certificate in Entrepreneurship & Technology

This class can be used towards requirements to earn the SCET Certificate in Entrepreneurship & Technology. For details on the certificate requirements and other opportunities to engage with the Center, see the [SCET website](#).

Additional Resources

See the [Student Affairs website](#) for more information on campus and community resources.

Center for Access to Engineering Excellence (CAEE)

The Center for Access to Engineering Excellence (<https://engineering.berkeley.edu/student-services/academic-support>) is an inclusive center that offers study spaces, nutritious snacks, and tutoring in >50 courses for Berkeley engineers and other majors across campus. The Center also offers a wide range of professional development, leadership, and wellness programs, and loans iclickers, laptops, and professional attire for interviews.

Counseling and Psychological Services

University Health Services Counseling and Psychological Services staff are available to you at the Tang Center (<http://uhs.berkeley.edu>) and in the College of Engineering (<https://engineering.berkeley.edu/students/advising-counseling/counseling/>), and provide confidential assistance to students managing problems that can emerge from illness such as financial, academic, legal, family concerns, and more. Long wait times at the Tang Center in the past led to a significant expansion to include a 24/7 counseling line at (855) 817-5667. This line will connect you with help in a very short time-frame. Short-term help is also available from the Alameda County Crisis hotline: 800-309-2131. If you or someone you know is experiencing an emergency that puts their health at risk, please call 911.

The Care Line (PATH to Care Center)

The Care Line (<https://care.berkeley.edu/care-line/>) is a 24/7, confidential, free, campus-based resource for urgent support around sexual assault, sexual harassment, interpersonal violence, stalking, and invasion of sexual privacy. The Care Line will connect you with a confidential advocate for trauma-informed crisis support including time-sensitive information, securing urgent safety resources, and accompaniment to medical care or reporting.

Ombudsperson for Students

The Ombudsperson for Students (<http://students.berkeley.edu/Ombuds>) provides a confidential service for students involved in a University-related problem (academic or administrative), acting as a neutral complaint resolver and not as an advocate for any of the parties involved in a dispute. The Ombudsman can provide information on policies and procedures affecting students, facilitate students' contact with services able to assist in resolving the problem, and assist students in complaints concerning improper application of University policies or procedures. All matters referred to this office are held in strict confidence. The only exceptions, at the sole discretion of the Ombudsman, are cases where there appears to be imminent threat of serious harm.

UC Berkeley Food Pantry

The UC Berkeley Food Pantry (<https://pantry.berkeley.edu>) aims to reduce food insecurity among students and staff at UC Berkeley, especially the lack of nutritious food. Students and staff can visit the pantry as many times as they need and take as much as they need while being mindful that it is a shared resource. The pantry operates on a self-assessed need basis; there are no eligibility requirements. The pantry is not for students and staff who need supplemental snacking food, but rather, core food support.

Disclaimer: Syllabus/Schedule are subject to change.