Spring 2024: Product Management

SCET - Sutardja Center for Entrepreneurship & Technology

Disclaimer: Syllabus/Schedule are subject to change.

Course:	ENGIN 183D
Credit:	3 units
Format:	3-hour lecture / discussion / team projects / industry speakers
Time/Location:	Thursday 5-8 PM, Wheeler 212 (Active Learning Classroom)
Seats:	60 seats for all Majors, including 15 seats for Global / International Students, across Junior, Senior, and Graduate levels ***All applicants must complete a survey by the deadlines***. ● Cal Students should receive enrollment decisions by mid-December 2023 and early-January 2024. ● Global/International Students should receive enrollment decisions in January 2024, after also applying on CalCentral by 1/8/2024.
Instructor:	Derek S. Chan (derekschan@berkeley.edu)
Course Coordinators:	Isabella Otterson (isabellaotterson@berkeley.edu) Leyan Ibrahim (leyanibrahim@berkeley.edu) Sepehr Khosravi (sepehr9000@berkeley.edu) — also a Reader
Global Programs Manager:	Ricardo Rodríguez I. (rrodriguezi@berkeley.edu)

Overview:

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.

Learning Outcomes

- Experience a live development of a product within the context of a product development process
- Learn common methods used in product management
- Gain experience needed to work as product managers in real life environments

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.

Footnotes

- Workload is expected to be 3-4 hours (no longer 5-6 hours) outside of class per week, on average, but designed to maintain student learning experience.
- ChatGPT is allowed since the tool has become critical for product managers and companies, and activities still involve you to think critically and demonstrate learning.

  (Please reference a "ChatGPT Usage" section below, including Appropriate Use of ChatGPT and Similar AI Tools.)

Grading:

ENGIN 183D Product Management is not your typical class. Rather than only case-studies and lectures, we learn skills and apply them immediately. We encourage you to focus on learning, not grades. There are few "right" and "wrong" answers, and no exam. SCET classes are intended to simulate real-world environments. You work in cross-functional teams with diverse experiences and skill sets – just like a real product team does. You each come to the class with different backgrounds, strengths, and challenges. You are expected to get out of your comfort zone – try something new, speak up or present in front of class, and take some risks.

Focus on learning as much as you can. Engage, have fun, and contribute to your team. If you're thinking of ways to "work the system" to find short-cuts to make the class easier – that's missing the point! The class experience is meant for you to develop real skills for your career.

Your overall grade is 50% based on your group work and 50% on your individual contribution.

Area		**Percent of Grade**
Group work	4 group assignments 2 confidential peer reviews	50%
Individual contribution	Weekly preparation ["Stay Current"] Attendance and participation	20% 30%

You will receive group assignment feedback ~2 weeks after submission, and individual contribution updates around week 7 to inform your progress.

Group Assignments: 50% *(4 submissions)*

Around week 3, you will form groups of 5-6 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 and a rubric – will be provided when the assignment is set. Assignments, due dates, and grade weighting are below.

Group Assignment	Due Date	% of Grade
1: Understand your Customer + Scope your MVP	02/23	15%
2: Customer (In)Validation and Feedback (Parts 1 and 2)	03/08 03/22	15%
3: Build Your Backlog + Demo Your Prototype	04/11	5%
4: Final Presentations	04/25	15%

Outside of class, each team is asked to schedule 2, 45-minute interactive grading sessions via Zoom. All team members and the instructor will discuss Group Assignment 1 and 2 and, as needed, your team dynamic. Any student who misses unexcused can receive a grade lower than their team for the group assignment.

By 4/22 at the latest, you can resubmit up to one group assignment (your choice of 1 or 2) for regrading. That must highlight updates clearly for easy comparison of old vs. new content (e.g., PDF shows old page followed by new page), and must show significant improvements to increase in grade.

Peer Reviews *(2 submissions)*

You'll be asked to assess your own and teammates' contribution, not whether you like working with each other, for example. Peer reviews are not a popularity contest.

We implemented peer reviews as a way for the Instructor and Course Coordinators to get a deeper understanding of how teams are functioning and the relative contributions of each team member. At the mid-way point of the class you will complete your first peer review. We will *confidentially* reach out to individuals or teams that might be able to improve, providing feedback aimed to help. This gives you a chance to address any issues before the final peer review.

If one receives final peer reviews noticeably above or below average, one's individual group grade can be adjusted 1-2 grades above or below their team's group grade, respectively. If one doesn't submit a peer review, one's individual group grade can be adjusted 1 grade below their team's group grade.

Weekly Preparation (Stay Current): 20% *(14 submissions)*

You will complete weekly research, self-learning, reflection, online collaboration, and/or surveys. Creativity is encouraged – written posts, videos, podcasts – critically analyzing what you are learning through the course.

Each week, you can engage in learning and contribution 24 hours before class…

- Complete submission to learn and contribute (3 points)
- Submission missing an attempt at part of a framework or prompt (or late submission Wednesday) to learn and contribute (2 points)
- Submission hardly related to prompt to learn and contribute (1 point)
- No submission to learn and contribute (0 points)
- Standout submission to learn and contribute, and/or insightful comments to help 2 or more peers (+1 bonus point)

[Added 4/12/2024: Optional (re)submission — up to 1 Stay Current among Stay Current 1-12 — is open from now until Monday 4/22/2024.]

Missing 3 Stay Currents unexcused will result in a non-passing final grade.

Otherwise, overall grade is based on the "Overall Criteria" section below.

Attendance and Participation: 30% *(14 classes)*

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.

If you have a midterm exam that overlaps Thursday 5-8pm, please ask your other instructor ASAP for a potential alternative time. We can provide a note, as necessary.

Each week, you can engage in learning and contribution during class…

- Active participation to learn and contribute in a group, plus in class discussion or 1st place with a weekly team competition (3 points)
- Active participation to learn and contribute, collaborating in a group and paying attention in class discussion, especially with an invited guest speaker (2 points)
- Inactive participation to learn and contribute, hardly collaborating in a group (e.g., focused on non-class) and/or paying attention in class discussion (1 point)
- No participation at class, e.g., absent, to learn and contribute (0 points)

Missing 3 classes unexcused will result in a non-passing final grade.

Otherwise, overall grade is based on the "Overall Criteria" section below.

Overall Criteria

The typical A- to A students/teams do all the following…

- Completes all assignments without rushing them or taking short-cuts
- Attends and engages in each class – ask questions, discuss, pay attention
- Takes weekly preparation (Stay Current) seriously (top students consistently provide the most thorough answers and post ahead of the deadline)
- Makes every effort to contribute and build relationships within your teams – addressing interpersonal issues if necessary

Exceptional performers receive an A+.

The typical B to B+ students/teams do one or more of the following…

- Does not regularly speak up and participate in class discussion and activities
- Skips, leaves to the last moment, or rushes assignments – or fails to address feedback in their final submissions
- Ignores team issues, reducing overall quality and leading to poor peer reviews
- Struggles to contribute to team (miss commitments, skip meetings, low quality)

Grades B- and below are uncommon but not unheard of, typically due to lower effort.

Can you pursue extra credit?

Yes, if your group assignments are at least "B" quality. To earn 2 extra credit points toward participation, you can consult with the instructor to apply to present externally at the Jacobs Design Showcase or another approved event.

Can you take the class for P/NP or S/US?

Yes. And if you seriously consider switching to P/NP or S/US mid-semester, you can consult the instructor in case your work might be on track for your preferred final grade.

- If you are in the College of Letters & Science, public resources include Late change of class schedule and Video on 5 factors to consider.
- If you are outside the College of Letters & Science, please reference your respective College's deadline for late change of class schedule.
- You also are advised to consult your Academic Advisor directly.

Enrollment:

In the first 3 weeks, please complete readings and Stay Currents, and attend class to retain your spot. In case of missing preparation or class unexcused or without notifying the Course Coordinators in advance, you can be dropped from the class to allow a student on the waitlist (who has been completing all expected work) to take that spot. That is out of fairness since missing work without communication can impact other students in the class, which relies on communication, preparation, and participation for collaborative learning and contribution.

Instructor:

Derek S. Chan has been an AI product leader, helping Bill.com and Automation Anywhere reach their highest-ever customer satisfaction and/or revenue growth, plus #1 AP Automation 2020-21 and the IT World Award 2018. He was AI Product Director at Bill.com, explored greater personal meaning with Berkeley SkyDeck's incubator and FutureSight's venture studio, and now co-founds a new AI startup with Inception Studio.

Whether or not AI is involved, Derek is passionate about mentoring people from diverse backgrounds in valuable product management skills. He has taught students in popular SCET courses — Product Management and Data-X — and was surprised to co-receive the SCET Award for Best Instructor, spring 2023. He is an alum of UC Berkeley's Master of Information and Data Science, where he co-received the Hal R. Varian Award then informal Google partnership, while working at Yahoo! (which acquired BrightRoll).

Office Hours:

Derek is available Thursdays 8:00-8:30 PM after class at Wheeler 212, or by appointment for in-person or video-based meetings, on any course-related or professional/career topic. Outside of class time, 2 feedback sessions per team on group assignments will be scheduled.

Required Texts:

After your enrollment is confirmed, you will be required to purchase "*The Influential Product Manager*" by Week 3. Course Chapters (or sections) and exercises will be assigned weekly.

Course Structure & Status:

The course is designed around a highly participatory model. Classes will include the following:

- interactive lecture or special guest (aided by a short presentation)
- class activity or discussion to apply the skills being learned
- group-work and mentorship on group assignments

The typical workload of group and individual work outside of class is 3-4 hours per week, including a recommended, ~1-hour recurring team meeting per week.

Schedule:

This is a broad outline of the expected dates and course material, which is subject to change.

6 of 14 classes are expected to include industry guests to diversify your learning experiences.

Jan 18: 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"

Jan 25: 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"

Feb 1: Understanding Your Customer (Week 3)
Target Customers. Problem Statements. Competitors and Alternatives. Risks. Team allocations.
Activity: "Key Questions"; *Group Assignment 1*: "Understand Your Customer" (15% grade)

Feb 8: What ChatGPT can Teach us about Product Management (Week 4)
The Product Specification. Steps to define a product solution. Initial prioritization technique.
Activity: "Inter-team Scoping"; *Group Assignment 1 (cont):* "Scope Your MVP" (15% grade)

Feb 15: The Product Organization (Week 5)
Special Guest Panelists discuss their experiences, then serve as Mentors to student groups.
Cross-Functional Teams. Leading through Influence.
Activity: "Get Mentored!"

Feb 22: 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.
*Activities: "*Interview Questions*", "*Figma Interactive Designs*"; Group Assignment 2:* "Product Discovery and Customer Validation" (15% grade)

Feb 29: Effective Product Development Processes (Week 7)
Product discovery and validation (cont). Then iterative (Agile) Development. SCRUM roles, ceremonies, artifacts, estimation, velocity. Pitfalls.
Activities: "Mock Usability Testing", "Practicing Agile"

Mar 7: 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"; *Group Assignment 2 (cont)*

Mar 14: PM Job Search Workshop (Week 9)
PM resumes, networking, interview preparation with Special Guest.
Activities: "PM Job Search Workshop"; *Group Assignment 2 (cont)*

Mar 21: Mastering Product Requirements (Week 10)
User Stories and Attributes. Breaking down stories. Acceptance Criteria. The Product Backlog.
*Activities: "*Visual to written stories*"; Group Assignment 3*: "Build Your Backlog" (5% grade)
(Mar 28: Spring Recess – no class held)

Apr 4: Three-Two-One… Launch (Week 11)

Types of Launch – deployments, betas, market. Then an Early-Career PM Panel.

Activities: "Launch Strategies", "Early Career PM Panel"; *Group Assignment 3 (cont)*

Apr 11: Measuring Product Performance (Week 12)

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

Activities: Prototype Demos, "Five-key Metrics"

Apr 18: Product Planning and Optimization (Week 13)

Product Roadmaps. Prioritization techniques. Then Special Guests mentor student groups.

Activities: "Collaborative Prioritization", Dry Runs for Final Presentations

Apr 25: Putting It All Together (Week 14)

Final presentations with Special Guest Judges. Team selected to represent 183D at Collider Cup.

Activities: Awards Ceremony; *Group Assignment 4*: 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 on what hasn't and/or has helped their learning experiences. SCET values and appreciates student responses, which are used to better understand and improve our courses. Students are strongly encouraged to submit the evaluations.

Scheduling Conflicts

Please notify Course Coordinators in writing as soon as possible about any known or potential extracurricular conflicts. We will try our best to help you with making accommodations, but cannot guarantee them in all cases.

ChatGPT Usage

- UC Berkeley Office of Ethics: Appropriate Use of ChatGPT and Similar AI Tools
    - For "completion of academic work in a manner not allowed by the instructor", sometimes for example you might be asked proactively to share your work (e.g., product hypothesis) vs. updated work with ChatGPT's feedback. ChatGPT can be inaccurate, so you always need to evaluate.
- ChatGPT's free version can be considered a semi-public domain. Your interactions are not publicly displayed like on a social media platform, but the data is still processed and stored by the service provider (OpenAI). From OpenAI's privacy policy, you can use ChatGPT while opting out of their use of your Content to train their models (source).
- Similar tools: E.g., Anthropic's Claude, Google's Gemini Pro in Bard, Inflection AI's Pi.
- Other considerations: E.g., The New York Times vs. OpenAI lawsuit, ~[16-ounce water bottle] every time you ask [ChatGPT] a series of between 5 to 50 prompts or questions

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 instructor(s), 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 us.

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.

Students who need academic accommodations or have questions about their accommodations should contact DSP, located at 260 César Chávez Student Center. Students may call 642-0518 (voice), 642-6376 (TTY), or e-mail dsp@berkelely.edu.

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, take your case to the SCET Chief Learning Officer, SCET Faculty Director, and the College of Engineering Dean, in that order. 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.

Support during Remote Learning:

We understand that your specific situation may present challenges to class participation. Please contact the instructors if you would like to discuss these and co-develop strategies for engaging with the course.

The Student Technology Equity Program (STEP) is available to help access a laptop, Wi-Fi hotspot, and other peripherals (https://technology.berkeley.edu/STEP).

You will be alerted as to when synchronous sessions are about to be recorded. If you prefer not to be recorded, you may turn your video and microphone off.

Please set your Zoom name to be the name you would like the instructors to call you. You may optionally include your personal pronouns.

Please set your Zoom picture to an appropriate profile picture of you to foster a sense of community and enhance interactions. If you are not comfortable using an image of yourself, you may use an appropriate picture of an avatar.

We encourage participating with your video on to foster a sense of community and enhance interactions. However, we understand that some students are not comfortable with video or may not be able to participate by video.

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 (227 Bechtel Engineering Center; 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; 2222 Bancroft Way; 510-642-9494) and in the College of Engineering (counseling; 241 Bechtel Engineering Center), 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 (510-643-2005; 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 (102 Sproul Hall; 642-5754; 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 (#68 Martin Luther King Student Union; 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.

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