A Summary of Background Survey Statistics

We received a total of 27 background surveys. Below we shared some information regarding to some general questions.

Q1 Have you had any previous courses where HomeWorks (not projects) were completed in teams? If yes, which courses? Describe your experience.

Q2 Do you have a CSE lab account (yes/no)?
Q3. Have you had any previous courses with relative grading (i.e., based on median and standard deviation)? If yes, which courses?

Q4. Are you an Undergraduate, MS or PhD? What is your major?
Q5: DBMS Experience:
Q6: Which of the material are you familiar with (choose all that apply)

Q7. Which spatial computing systems and services have you used previously (choose all that apply)?
Q8. Which spatial concept are you familiar with (choose all that apply)?

Q9. Topics besides the course schedule:

Maps
Geo-Privacy and Geo-targeting.
Spatial statistics
Societal applications
Graph theory
Parallelization
HD Mapping for self-driving cars.

Q3: Forming, storming, norming, performing
Sample Responses:

“My most recent internship project actually underwent these stages better than any project that I’ve done as part of coursework. The first week the interns I was working with got to know each other, and we started coming up with a lot of ideas for how to approach the project. Once we had established some main ideas and broken up the tasking, we were able to get into a rhythm of who would be accomplishing which components, and then we worked for most of the summer to realize our goals. It wasn’t something that we had explicitly stated, but we followed these steps surprisingly closely.”

“For my first homework in the class described above we had a week to do a homework where no one really knew what was going on and it was not a cut and dry answer. As a result, we met, made a plan, and left, hoping everyone would pull their weight. Later that week we re-grouped and
figured out where we were at, one person had done nothing, another basically solved the problem on
their own. From there we decided we needed to better balance out the accompanying written report. We
were beginning to norm, but a group member was still not helping out much. We brought this to their
attention and eventually we had to remove them from the group in order to get to a team where we
normed. We were able to work together efficiently, get the problem done, and do the same thing next
week.’’

‘‘During my undergraduate studies, we had to complete a group senior thesis project for GIS. To begin
the process, we broke the class into very broad groups based off of the students’ interests. Once in these
groups, we began the forming process. I got to know my other partners and we each shared our desired
topics. We then began to weasel down to a more refined topic. To get to this stage, group members had to
say things along the lines of “that idea may not be as feasible with our timeline” or “the project needs to
fit to a 50-page paper, two presentations, and a poster. How can we fit this topic into that structure?’’
Once my team had a formalized topic, we went through the storming process. This entailed handling the
reality that we did not all have the same envisioned path to bring the project to fruition. We worked
around each other’s’ schedules, preferred survey designs, and skill sets. The storming stage required
compromise and honesty to move forward. Lastly, we reached the norming stage. Although members had
different strengths, weaknesses and preferred work styles, we all began to appreciate one another and
became a working team. We had a solid plan for developing and finishing our paper and were in unison.
We began to work together so well I still remain friends with the partners.’’

Q4 How do you engage a team member, whose contributions are not meeting your expectations?
Compare your approach to those discussed in the following article: What To Do When A Team Member
Isn't Pulling Their Weight, J. Boss, Forbes, Nov. 6th, 2016.

Sample Responses:

“I will go and talk to that team member candidly. I will tell him that he needs to put in more work and
that there’s more to be done. If he still doesn’t listen, then I’ll discuss this issue with the other team
members and come up with a solution to deal with the problem.’’

“If the project is short term enough, like with Computer Security, I usually just try to get through it
without worrying too much about people pulling their weight, although it will leave me with a negative
opinion of the person in general for future work. Long term, as I get to know the person, I would try to
talk to the person in a friendly way to see if there is something that is holding them back. In the article it
agrees with my long-term strategy of speaking to them. Obviously, the article doesn’t think ignoring it is
good, but recommends talking to the group or a supervisor instead.’’

“Actually, I had this experience with the same course as I mentioned above, “Software Engineering.” So,
initially as the article explained, my first move was to discuss each member of group responsibilities
toward their progress, and that helped for some parts, but as I noticed some members were not pulling
the weights. Hence, I disclosed group’s progress with my professor, where he then checked group’s
activities during our meeting, and that was the second improvement to have same balance of weights
among the group members.’’