# INF 385T Product Management

###### Fall 2024

Class Meets: Mondays, 6:00 – 9:00PM in UTA 1.208

**Instructor:** Dr. Brad Lawrence

Office: UTA 5.470

Pronouns: he/him/his Office hours: by appointment

Email: bradley.lawrence@austin.utexas.edu , however please use Canvas for communications related to the class (e.g. questions, assignment clarification, planned absences, etc.)

Phone: TBD

# Course Description

### University Catalog Course Description

The emphasis of this course will focus on the fundamentals of product management and the tools and techniques employed by product managers. Students will learn about the corporate product phase gates and all the cross-functional teams with whom product managers engage. In order to build cross-functional empathy, we will explore the roles of the extended product team players (e.g. Architecture, Marketing, Engineering, Program Management, UX, Industrial Design, Interaction Design, etc.) and discuss when to engage with them and how. We will also explore how to align product requirements (features and functionality) with a company's financial goals by touching on how to read a company's quarterly report, prioritizing products, product features, and launch schedule to maximize market share capture and company return on investment (ROI) in terms of revenue, unit volume, and profit margin. Finally, we will learn how to conduct competitive analyses to understand how a company and its products would fare on the open market.

### learning outcomes

My goal for this course is that students come away with a deep understanding of the techniques product managers use to successfully conceive of, develop and launch a successful product to market. Along our course journey, you will be able to:

1. Understand common phase gates employed by companies that design, produce, and sell products and the various cross-functional team inputs and outputs to each phase
2. Understand a product's Total Addressable Market (TAM), Serviceable Addressable Market (SAM), and Serviceable Obtainable Market (SOM) and perform a product’s market sizing
3. Understand how to mine customer requirements to ensure products are designed and developed with the “Voice of the Customer” as a paramount product priority
4. Understand how to intercept technology roadmaps and timelines to ensure the product is adopting the right technologies at the right time, and competitively
5. Conduct a product competitive analysis
6. Develop a business case and forecast product revenue, unit volume, and margin (RUM) expectations
7. Articulate product value propositions to corporate executives to be formally approved and added to a company’s product roadmap
8. Dissect a product Bill of Materials (BOM) and understand the cost impacts associated with hardware product design
9. Compose an executive presentation for the major Plan Exit phase gate to compel your company to invest in your product and approve its addition to the corporate roadmap
10. Understand how UX professionals can help streamline product development processes and deliver user experiences that delight customers. This will have the effect of strengthening the product’s business case and ultimately the product’s return on investment (ROI), providing an evangelization opportunity for the product, the company, the product manager, and the UX professional.

### How Will You Learn?

### Statement oF Learning Success

Your success in this class is important to me. We all learn differently, and everyone struggles sometimes. You are not, ever, the only one having difficulty! If there are aspects of this course that prevent you from learning or exclude you, please let me know as soon as possible. Together we will develop strategies to meet both your needs and the requirements of the course. I also encourage you to reach out to the student resources available through UT and I am happy to connect you with a person or Center if you would like.

### TEACHING MODALITY INFORMATION

This course will be offered in-person and requires in-person attendance. No alternatives to in-person attendance, other than normal emergency accommodations, will be offered.

### Communication

The course Canvas site can be found at [utexas.instructure.com](https://utexas.instructure.com/). Please email me through Canvas. You are responsible for ensuring that the primary email address you have recorded with the university is the one you will check for course communications because that is the email address that Canvas uses.

### Asking For help

I will be accessible via email outside of class time for assistance or to answer questions. Additionally, office hours can be made by appointment and will be conducted online.

DISABILITY & ACCESS (D&A)

The university is committed to creating an accessible and inclusive learning environment consistent with university policy and federal and state law. Please let me know if you experience any barriers to learning so I can work with you to ensure you have equal opportunity to participate fully in this course. If you are a student with a disability, or think you may have a disability, and need accommodations please contact Disability & Access (D&A). Please refer to the D&A website for more information: <http://diversity.utexas.edu/disability/>. If you are already registered with D&A, please deliver your Accommodation Letter to me as early as possible in the semester so we can discuss your approved accommodations and needs in this course.

### Course Requirements and Grading

### Required Materials

Textbook: Product Management in Practice: A Practical, Tactical Guide for Your First Day and Every Day After. 2nd Edition. Author: Matt LeMay.

Amazon link: [https://www.amazon.com/dp/1098119738/ref=pe\_386300\_440135490](https://www.amazon.com/dp/1098119738/ref%3Dpe_386300_440135490)



### CLASS LECTURE SLIDES AND HANDOUTS

For your reference, the PDF versions of class lecture slides will be posted on Canvas. You have my permission to print a copy for your personal use. Assignment and project descriptions are also posted on Canvas. The files posted on Canvas will be either linked to Canvas Syllabus/Calendar or available directly in the Files section.

### Classroom expectations

**Class attendance**

You will not be graded directly on attendance. You are adults in a graduate-level course and are expected to be present for all course-related activities. Beyond the occasional need to be absent from class for a good reason, please consider that much of the learning for the course occurs in class. You cannot participate in this learning if you are not present.

Excused Absence: The only absences that will be considered excused are for religious holy days or extenuating circumstances due to an emergency. If you plan to miss class due to observance of a religious holy day, please let me know at least two weeks in advance. For religious holy days that fall within the first two weeks of the semester, the notice should be given on the first day of the semester. You will not be penalized for this absence, although you will still be responsible for any work you will miss on that day if applicable. Check with me for details or arrangements.

If you have to be absent, use your resources wisely. Ask your other classmates to get a run-down and notes on any lessons you miss. If you find there are topics that we covered while you were gone that raise questions, you may come by during office hours or schedule a meeting to discuss. Email specific questions you have in advance so that we can make the most of our time. “What did I miss?” is not specific enough.

**Class participation**

Class participation is a must for this course and includes the presentation of assigned materials in the classroom, maintaining an active role in in-class activities as well as active participation in classroom discussions.

**Behavior expectations**

We are all professionals and I expect us all to behave as such. Please refrain from talking while I or other students are lecturing/presenting, unless it is during an active discussion or part of a Q&A. And stay off computers and mobile devices unless the usage is directly related to the course topic at hand or taking notes. To summarize, just like at the movie theater, don't talk or text.

### Assignments

Below is a list of assignments and their grade percentages for this course. If any of these projects or grades change, I will notify you of those changes before we continue with the project. Grades will be computed on a 100 point scale.

| Assignments | Points Possible | Percent of Total Grade |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Weekly reading Q&A and discussion | 50 | 10% |
| Assignment 1 (Detailed market sizing, TAM, SAM, & SOM analysis) | 100 | 20% |
| Assignment 2 (Business case and forecast) | 100 | 20% |
| Assignment 3 (Business case revision due to market dynamics) | 100 | 20% |
| Assignment 4 (Product phase gate exit executive presentation) | 100 | 20% |
| Assignment presentations | 50 | 10% |

I reserve the right to add points to a student’s grade for active class participation or contributions in related forums.

**TOTAL: 500 points = 100% Grade Scale**

90% - 100% = A (90-93: A-)

80% - 89% = B (87-89: B+ | 80-83: B-)

70% - 79% = C (77-79: C+ | 70-73: C-)

60% - 69% = D (not passing)

0% - 59% = F (not passing)

WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS

You must prepare your written assignments using a presentation application like Powerpoint and submit it by uploading to Canvas by the due date/time. Please always use appropriate three- or four-letter file extensions in submitted filename (e.g., .pptx for Word files, .pdf for Adobe portable document format). Assignments usually may not be submitted via email to either the professor or the TA. All documents that you are submitting should include on the front page of your submission your name (spelled in the same way as in the course roster), course number/name, instructor's name, semester and the date of submission.

READING ASSIGNMENTS

You are responsible for keeping up with readings in the book per the schedule given in the course schedule/calendar. All assigned readings are to be done before a class meeting. You are required to post at least one discussion question relevant to the assigned weekly reading on the designated Canvas discussion area (please note there may be more than one topic per week) and respond to at least one question posted by another student. Your questions should be in depth (and not too short) to demonstrate that you read and did not skim the assigned material. Any student, TA or an instructor may post responses to online questions. The deadline for posting questions is Thursday before noon. The deadline for answering a question is Friday before 6PM. This allows time to respond to questions and prepare for class discussion Monday evening, where you should be prepared to discuss your questions.

IN-CLASS PRESENTATIONS

Weeks 4 & 5, 9 & 10, and 13 & 14, students will present assignment summaries: product market sizing, product business case, and a final product phase gate executive presentation. These will be based off of your written assignments (A1, A2, and A4). Assume presentations will be ~5-10 minutes in length for A1 & A2, ~10-15 minutes for A4, and nothing too formal (goal is to learn the course content, but also have fun).

Final presentations will consist of students presenting the culmination of their work (Assignment 4) in the framework of a hypothetical presentation to company executives. They will provide persuasive data and rationale (based on the product management principles and deliverables learned throughout the course) to obtain executive approval of their product being adopted onto the company’s Plan-of-Record (POR) product roadmap.

Late Work and making up missed work

All written assignments must be turned in at the beginning of class on the due date. Individual student presentations must be prepared and delivered on the date assigned specifically to each student. You should think of all due dates for assignments as firm. The tight schedule of deliverables throughout the whole semester makes it nearly impossible to extend due dates. Any assignment that you do not hand in on time may be penalized in grading. If you are not able to complete an assignment by the due date, it would be best for you to hand in as much of it as you have done. It will help if you notify us about special circumstances that will adversely affect completion of an assignment.

Absences

While you will not be penalized for absences, I do reserve right to add points to a student’s grade for active class participation and absences will negate any opportunity receive additional participation points.

Equitable accommodation

**Upon my discretion, a student may be able to make up one written assignment's grade, in a timely manner immediately after the assignment has been graded.**

### Course Outline

The class will meet once a week for 3 hours. Keep connected via Canvas for updates on meeting locations.

All instructions, assignments, readings, rubrics and essential information will be on the Canvas website at

[utexas.instructure.com](https://utexas.instructure.com/). Check Canvas regularly. **Changes** to the schedule may be made at my discretion if circumstances require. I will announce any such changes in class and will also communicate them via a Canvas announcement. It is your responsibility to note these changes when announced, and I will do my best to ensure that you are notified of changes with as much advance notice as possible.

| Week | Date | Day | Class Topic | Reading Assignments (PMIP) | Assignments Due |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1 | 8/26 | M | Introductions, objectives, and syllabus walkthrough.  |  |  |
| N/A | 9/2 | M | NO CLASS – LABOR DAY |  |  |
| 2 | 9/9 | M | What is Product Management?Product development process and corporate phase gates.Market sizing, TAM, SAM & SOM.Assignment #1 description. | PMIP: Foreword & Chapters 1, 2, & 3 |  |
| 3 | 9/16 | M | Technology trends & roadmapsthe importance of considering future technology trends in developing/planning one's product roadmap and understanding competitive threats regarding their technology adoption curve. * Determining product/technology intercepts
* Technology adopters (early adopters through laggards)
* Request for Proposal (RFP)/Request for Quote (RFQ) and competitive threats
* Industry consortia and standards
 | Chapters 4 & 5 | A1: Product Market Sizing |
| 4 | 9/23 | M | Product Market Sizing Assignment presentations and peer discussion |  | 5-10 minute student presentations (order randomized) |
| 5 | 9/30 | M | Product Market Sizing Assignment presentations and peer discussion |  | 5-10 minute student presentations (student order randomized) |
| 6 | 10/7 | M | Customer feedback* Meetings and meeting etiquette
* Sales team feedback
* Focus groups, surveys, UX heuristics & usability testing
* Converting careabouts into product requirements
 | Chapters 6 & 7 |  |
| 7 | 10/14 | M | Professor Lawrence out-of-town. Video lecture will be posted.Business case & product forecasting* Market sizing inputs
* Financial report inputs
* Competitive inputs
* CAGR, growth rates, & product transition planning (RFP)/Request for Quote (RFQ)

Assignment #2 description. | Chapters 8 & 9 |  |
| 8 | 10/21 | M | Business case & product forecast example walkthrough and Q & A | Chapters 10 & 11 |  |
| 9 | 10/28 | M | Product Business Case Assignment presentations and peer discussion |  | A2: Product Business Case5-10 minute student presentations (order randomized) |
| 10 | 11/4 | M | Product Business Case Assignment presentations and peer discussion |  | 5-10 minute student presentations (order randomized) |
| 11 | 11/11 | M | Game changing market dynamics1. Macroeconomics
2. Competitive news, announcements, events
3. Product schedule changes
4. Customer feedback
5. Product cost changes

Revised business case & example walkthrough and Q & AAssignment #3 description. | Chapters 12 & 13 |  |
| 12 | 11/18 |  | Product phase gate presentation example and walkthrough.Presenting to executives and “Answers First” presentation methodologyAssignment #4 description. | Chapters 14, 15 & Afterword | A3: Revised Business Case |
| N/A | 11/25 | M | NO CLASS – FALL BREAK  |  |  |
| 13 | 12/2 | M | Final Executive Presentations |  | A4: Final Executive Presentation (due prior to class, order randomized) |
| 14 | 12/9 | M | Final Executive Presentations |  | A4: Final Executive Presentation (due prior to class, order randomized) |

**PMIP:** *Product Management in Practice*

# Course Policies and Disclosures

### honor code

The University of Texas at Austin strives to create a dynamic and engaging community of teaching and learning where students feel intellectually challenged; build knowledge and skills; and develop critical thinking, creativity, and intellectual curiosity. As a part of this community, it is important to engage in assignments, exams, and other work for your classes with openness, integrity, and a willingness to make mistakes and learn from them. The UT Austin honor code champions these principles:

I pledge, as a member of the University of Texas community, to do my work honestly, respectfully, and through the intentional pursuit of learning and scholarship.

The honor code affirmation includes three additional principles that elaborate on the core theme:

* I pledge to be honest about what I create and to acknowledge what I use that belongs to others.
* I pledge to value the process of learning in addition to the outcome, while celebrating and learning from mistakes.
* This code encompasses all of the academic and scholarly endeavors of the university community.

The honor code is more than a set of rules, it reflects the values that are foundational to your academic community. By affirming and embracing the honor code, you are both upholding the integrity of your work and contributing to a campus culture of trust and respect.

### ACADEMIC INTEGRITY EXPECTATIONS

Students who violate University rules on academic misconduct are subject to the student conduct process. A student found responsible for academic misconduct may be assigned both a status sanction and a grade impact for the course. The grade impact could range from a zero on the assignment in question up to a failing grade in the course. A status sanction can range from a written warning, probation, deferred suspension and/or dismissal from the University. To learn more about academic integrity standards, tips for avoiding a potential academic misconduct violation, and the overall conduct process, please visit the Student Conduct and Academic Integrity website at: <http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/conduct>.

### CONFIDENTIALITY OF Class RecordingS

Class recordings are reserved only for students in this class for educational purposes and are protected under FERPA. The recordings should not be shared outside the class in any form. Violation of this restriction by a student could lead to Student Misconduct proceedings.

### Getting Help with technology

Students needing help with technology in this course should contact the [ITS Service Desk](https://its.utexas.edu/contact).

### content warning

### Our classroom provides an open space for the critical and orderly exchange of ideas through discussion. Some readings and other content in this course will include topics and comments that some students may find offensive and/or traumatizing. I’ll aim to forewarn students about potentially disturbing content and I ask all students to help to create an atmosphere of mutual respect and sensitivity.

### Sharing of Course Materials is Prohibited

### No materials used in this class, including, but not limited to, lecture hand-outs, videos, assessments (quizzes, exams, papers, projects, homework assignments), in-class materials, review sheets, and additional problem sets, may be shared online or with anyone outside of the class without explicit, my written permission. Unauthorized sharing of materials may facilitate cheating. The University is aware of the sites used for sharing materials, and any materials found online that are associated with you, or any suspected unauthorized sharing of materials, will be reported to [Student Conduct and Academic Integrity](https://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/conduct/) in the Office of the Dean of Students. These reports can result in initiation of the student conduct process and include charge(s) for academic misconduct, potentially resulting in sanctions, including a grade impact.

### artificial intelligence

The creation of artificial intelligence tools for widespread use is an exciting innovation. These tools have both appropriate and inappropriate uses in classwork. The use of artificial intelligence tools (such as ChatGPT) in this class shall be permitted on a limited basis. You will be informed as to the assignments for which AI may be utilized. You are also welcome to seek my prior-approval to use AI writing tools on any assignment. In either instance, AI writing tools should be used with caution and proper citation, as the use of AI should be properly attributed. Using AI writing tools without my permission or authorization, or failing to properly cite AI even where permitted, shall constitute a violation of UT Austin’s Institutional Rules on academic integrity.

If you are considering the use of AI writing tools but are unsure if you are allowed or the extent to which they may be utilized appropriately, please ask.

### Religious Holy Days

### By [UT Austin policy](https://catalog.utexas.edu/general-information/academic-policies-and-procedures/attendance/), you must notify me of your pending absence for a religious holy day as far in advance as possible of the date of observance. If you must miss a class, an examination, a work assignment, or a project in order to observe a religious holy day, you will be given an opportunity to complete the missed work within a reasonable time after the absence.

### names and pronouns

Class rosters are provided to the instructor with the student’s legal name, unless they have added a chosen name with the registrar’s office. If you have not yet done so, I will gladly honor your request to address you with the name and pronouns that you prefer for me to use for you. It is helpful to advise me of any changes or needs regarding your name and pronouns early in the semester so that I may make appropriate updates to my records and be informed about how to support you in this class.

* For instructions on how to add your pronouns to Canvas, visit [this site](https://utexas.instructure.com/courses/633028/pages/profile-pronouns).
* If you would like to update your chosen name with the registrar’s office, you can do so [here](https://enterprise.login.utexas.edu/idp/profile/SAML2/Redirect/SSO?execution=e1s2), and reference [this guide](https://docs.google.com/document/d/17uzmcD7oGE5JPMueJN7CsBlgE7SICUYu7ysmrFgc8cM/edit).
* For additional guidelines prepared by the Gender and Sexuality Center for changing your name on various campus systems, see the Resources page under UT Resources [here](https://diversity.utexas.edu/genderandsexuality/publications-and-resources/).

### land acknoWledgment

### I would like to acknowledge that we are meeting on the Indigenous lands of Turtle Island, the ancestral name for what now is called North America. Moreover, I would like to acknowledge the Alabama-Coushatta, Caddo, Carrizo/Comecrudo, Coahuiltecan, Comanche, Kickapoo, Lipan Apache, Tonkawa and Ysleta Del Sur Pueblo, and all the American Indian and Indigenous Peoples and communities who have been or have become a part of these lands and territories in Texas.

### Counseling and Mental Health Center (CMHC)

Students who are struggling for any reason and who believe that it might impact their performance in the course are urged to reach out to Bryce Moffett if they feel comfortable. This will allow her to provide any resources or accommodations that she can. If immediate mental health assistance is needed, call the Counseling and Mental Health Center (CMHC) at 512-471-3515 or you may also contact Bryce Moffett, LCSW (iSchool CARE counselor) at 512-232-4449. Bryce’s office is located in FAC18S and she holds drop in Office Hours on Wednesday from 2-3pm. For urgent mental health concerns, please contact the CMHC 24/7 Crisis Line at 512-471-2255.

# Important Safety Information

Carrying of Handguns on Campus

Students in this class should be aware of the following university policies related to Texas’ Open Carry Law:

* Students in this class who hold a license to carry are asked to [review the university policy regarding campus carry](https://www.utexas.edu/campus-carry#ac).
* Individuals who hold a license to carry are eligible to carry a concealed handgun on campus, including in most outdoor areas, buildings and spaces that are accessible to the public, and in classrooms.
* It is the responsibility of concealed-carry license holders to carry their handguns on or about their person at all times while on campus. Open carry is NOT permitted, meaning that a license holder may not carry a partially or wholly visible handgun on campus premises or on any university driveway, street, sidewalk or walkway, parking lot, parking garage, or other parking area.
* Per my right, I prohibit carrying of handguns in my personal office. Note that this information will also be conveyed to all students verbally during the first week of class. This written notice is intended to reinforce the verbal notification, and is not a “legally effective” means of notification in its own right.

### TITLE IX DISCLOSURE

Beginning January 1, 2020, Texas Education Code, Section 51.252 (formerly known as Senate Bill 212) requires all employees of Texas universities, including faculty, to report to the [Title IX Office](https://titleix.utexas.edu/) any information regarding incidents of sexual harassment, sexual assault, dating violence, or stalking that is disclosed to them. Texas law requires that all employees who witness or receive information about incidents of this type (including, but not limited to, written forms, applications, one-on-one conversations, class assignments, class discussions, or third-party reports) must report it to the Title IX Coordinator. Before talking with me, or with any faculty or staff member about a Title IX-related incident, please remember that I will be required to report this information.

Although graduate teaching and research assistants are not subject to Texas Education Code, Section 51.252, they are [mandatory reporters](https://titleix.utexas.edu/mandatory-reporters) under federal Title IX regulations and are required to report [a wide range of behaviors we refer to as sexual misconduct](https://titleix.utexas.edu/what-is-title-ix), including the types of misconduct covered under Texas Education Code, Section 51.252. Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 is a federal civil rights law that prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex – including pregnancy and parental status – in educational programs and activities. The Title IX Office has developed supportive ways and compiled campus resources to support all impacted by a Title IX matter.

If you would like to speak with a case manager, who can provide support, resources, or academic accommodations, in the Title IX Office, please email: supportandresources@austin.utexas.edu. Case managers can also provide support, resources, and accommodations for pregnant, nursing, and parenting students.

For more information about reporting options and resources, please visit: [https://titleix.utexas.edu](https://titleix.utexas.edu/), contact the Title IX Office via email at: titleix@austin.utexas.edu, or call 512-471-0419.

### campus safety

The following are recommendations regarding emergency evacuation from the [Office of Emergency Management](https://safety.utexas.edu/), 512-232-2114:

* Students should sign up for Campus Emergency Text Alerts at the page linked above.
* Occupants of buildings on The University of Texas at Austin campus must evacuate buildings when a fire alarm is activated. Alarm activation or announcement requires exiting and assembling outside.
* Familiarize yourself with all exit doors of each classroom and building you may occupy. Remember that the nearest exit door may not be the one you used when entering the building.
* Students requiring assistance in evacuation shall inform their instructor in writing during the first week of class.
* In the event of an evacuation, follow the instruction of faculty or class instructors. Do not re-enter a building unless given instructions by the following: Austin Fire Department, The University of Texas at Austin Police Department, or Fire Prevention Services office.
* For more information, please visit the [Office of Emergency Management](https://emergencymanagement.utexas.edu/).

# University Resources

For a list of university resources that may be helpful to you as you engage with and navigate your courses and the university, see the [University Resources Students Canvas page](https://utexas.instructure.com/enroll/TP964H).