

# ECE450 – Software Engineering II

## Winter 2007

### Assignment 3 – Open source contribution

#### **Objectives**

This assignment has one main objective: To familiarize with mid- to large-scale software development, working with teams of developers, and experiencing the challenges of coding for real users.

#### **Due Date**

This assignment is due at 5:00pm on **April 12<sup>th</sup>, 2007**.

#### **Description**

As was discussed earlier in the term, this assignment is very flexible: The only requirement is that you contribute to an open source project in some useful, non-trivial way. Your contribution does not need to be code: You can contribute with documentation or quality assurance as well.

Unless you *must* change software projects, you will be working with the open source application that you explored for assignment 1. If you have to switch projects, discuss it with your instructor in advance. You will be developing the contribution that you described on the first assignment, unless that contribution was deemed too small or too vague by your instructor. If it was considered too vague, let him know in advance the concrete details of your contribution.

By the due date, your assignment may be in one of three states:

#### ***Complete and accepted***

If your contribution is complete and incorporated into the project, it should be summarized in a short report, including the following elements:

A one- or two-page **description of the contribution** that presents, with precision, its nature.

A one-page description of **evidence that the contribution was accepted**, in the form of (a) a link to the code repository revision where your additions were incorporated, (b) correspondence with the project leaders stating when will they incorporate your additions, or (c) some other compelling evidence of acceptance.

A one- or two-page **summary of your experiences** and lessons learned. Specifically, what was surprising about working in this project? Was the process of contribution what you expected? What would you suggest other teams that will work on a similar project in the future?

In this case, if the evidence of your contribution is compelling, every participating member of your team will get full marks.

#### ***Complete but not accepted***

It is possible that you have finished your work for the project, but that for reasons beyond your reach it has not been accepted yet. In this case, your report should include:

A one- or two-page **description of the contribution** that presents, with precision, its nature.

A section of **explanations for the delay in acceptance**. Present all correspondence with the project leaders, including their dates and times, as well as details about when the contribution is expected to be accepted. If applicable, present a copy of the code, documentation, or error reports that you wrote for the project.

A one- or two-page **summary of your experiences** and lessons learned. Specifically, what was surprising about working in this project? Was the process of contribution what you expected? What would you suggest other teams that will work on a similar project in the future?

It is likely that if you fall in this category, *you will get zero marks*. However, if you convince us beyond reasonable doubts that you participated early, that your work was of high quality, that your work is on its path to approval, and that the reasons for the delay are external to your team, every participating member of your team will get full marks instead. Don't risk it.

### ***Incomplete***

If your contribution is incomplete, or has not been accepted for reasons within your control, do not submit a report. *You will get zero marks*. If you want to send an email or a report explaining the reasons for the failure in the assignment, you are welcome to, but it will have no impact on your grade.

### **Deliverables**

If you fall in the first or second case, you must submit an electronic report in **PDF** format as an attachment to your instructor's email account. Name your file: "TeamName-Assig3.pdf". The subject line of your email should be "[ece450] [team name] Assignment 3". Your report will be made available to the rest of the group in a password-protected section of the website.

### **Marking Criteria**

You will get full marks for an accepted non-trivial contribution. Border cases (that is, those in the second scenario) will be handled by us. Be aware that if this is your situation, it is unlikely that you will convince us of getting full marks instead of zero.

### **Suggestions**

If you lapsed on your correspondence with the project leaders, and on your contribution, make up for the lost time right away. Remember that approval processes take time, and that project leaders are in no rush to accept your work: the onus is on you to provide excellent work that passes quickly and without objections.

Note that even if your team gets full marks, *your personal mark may be zero if you did not collaborate*. As usual, use your team blog to discuss project-related matters. It's a good idea to leave a trail of evidence that you care about your project, in case things go wrong later in the term.