Abstract

THESIS: “You mean we have to work together!?!”: A Study of the Formation and Interaction of Programming Teams in a College Course Setting

STUDENT: David L. Largent

DEGREE: Master of Science

COLLEGE: Sciences and Humanities

DATE: May, 2010

PAGES: 134

This study explored how software development teams form and interact in a computer science college course setting and what an instructor can do to enhance effective teamwork. The experiences of computer science college courses’ teams are compared and contrasted to the theory of Bruce Tuckman’s stages of small group development model, which he characterized as forming, storming, norming, performing and adjourning. Participants repeatedly self-assessed their enthusiasm and skill levels over time on a questionnaire by agreeing or disagreeing to statements utilizing a five-point Likert scale. The data indicated that Tuckman’s model likely applies to software development teams in a computer science college course setting, although this could not be confirmed quantitatively. Indicators for which instructors or students can watch
to identify a team that is struggling are provided along with some possible personality traits that may lead to a team’s success.