

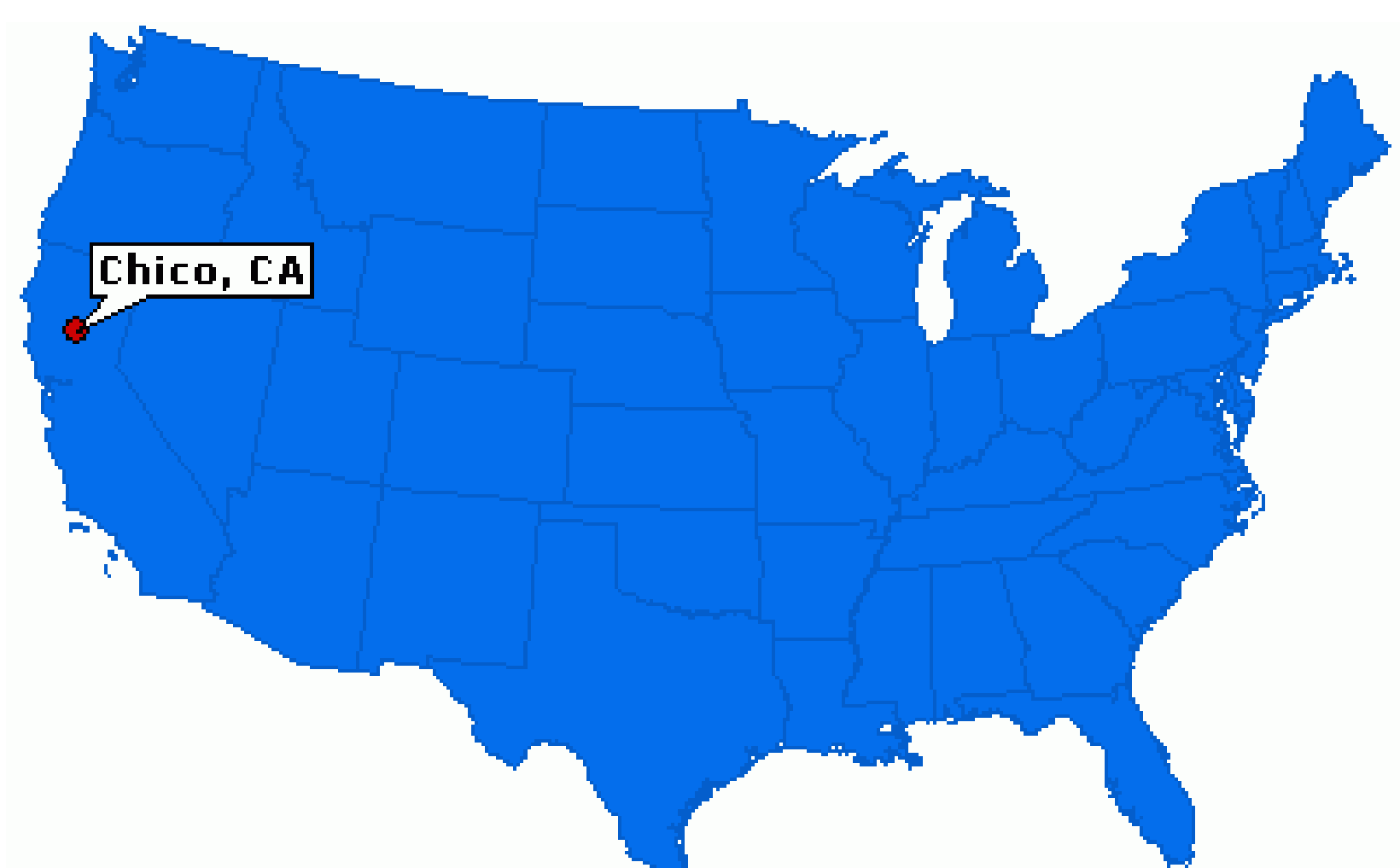
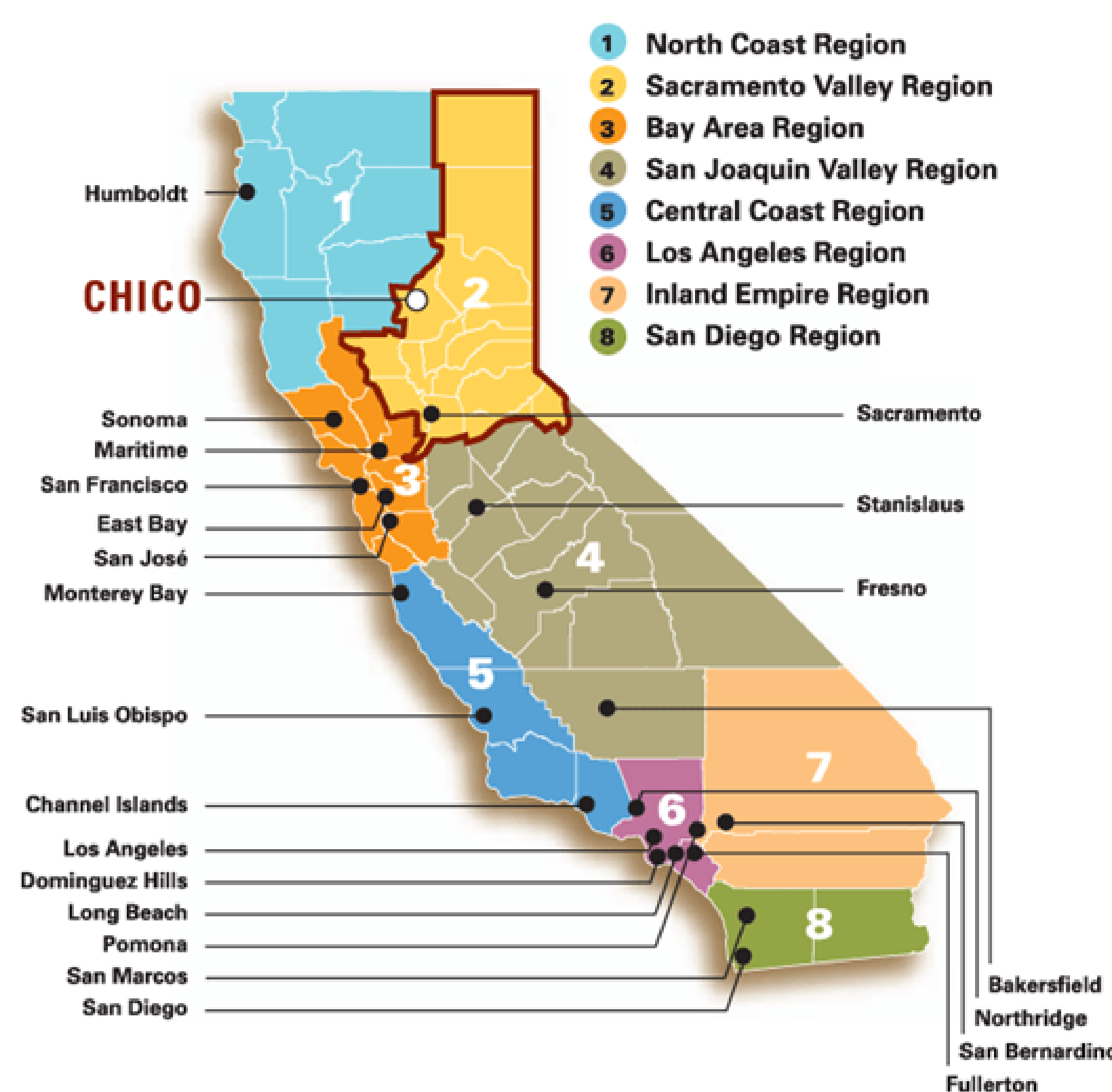


Awarding Failing Grades in a Senior Capstone Design Course

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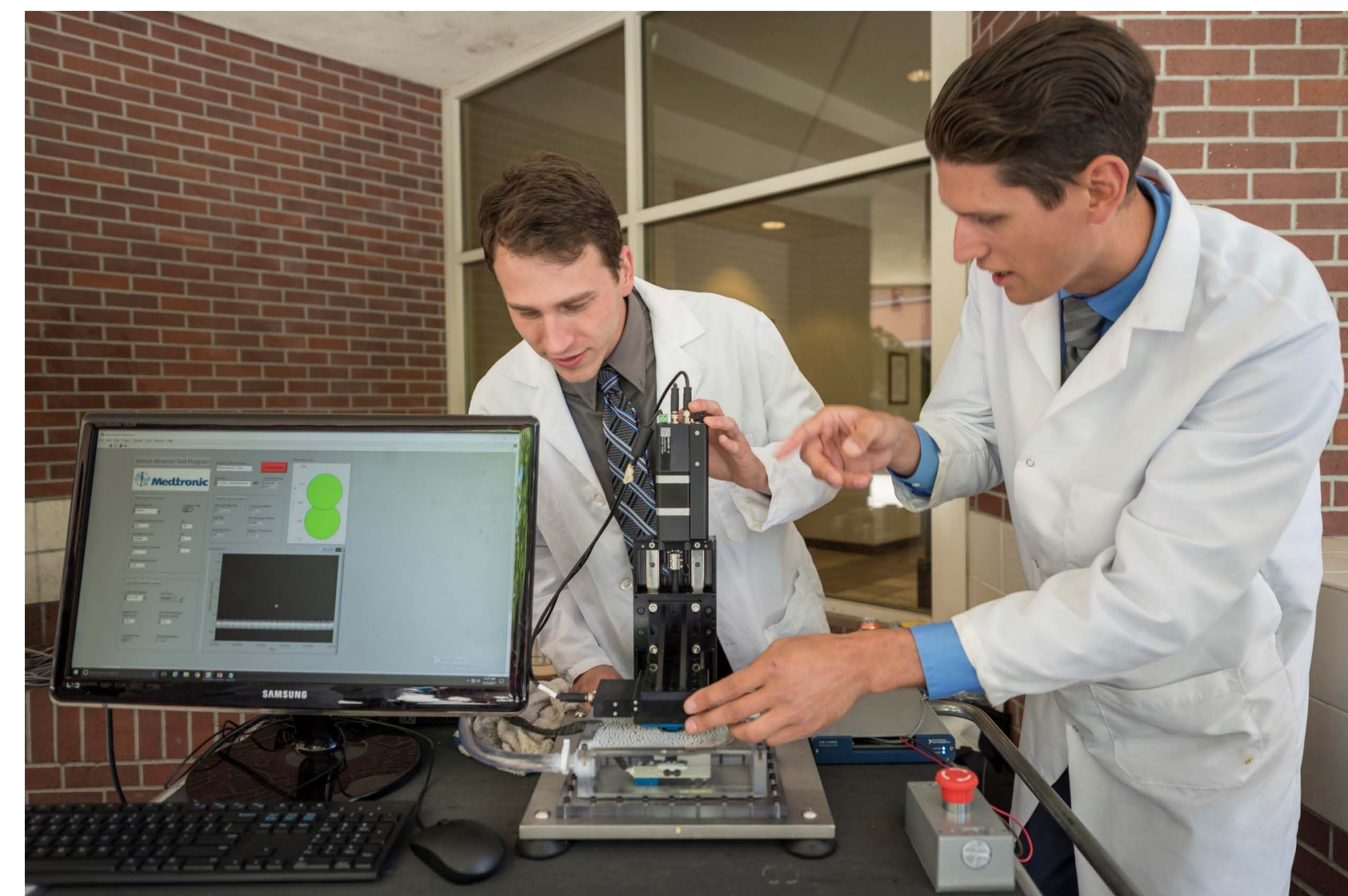
California State University Chico

- 13th largest of the 23 institutions within the California State University system
- 17,789 total students fall 2017
- Predominantly undergraduate with masters programs in some areas



The Issue

- Underperforming students are not uncommon on capstone design teams
- Can ride the coattails of their teammates and not do their fair share of the project work
- Can negatively impact team dynamics
- Failing an underperforming student has significant consequences including delayed graduation and potential grade appeals
- Passing grades are often awarded to students that haven't done sufficient work to earn them



Early Identification

- Confidential peer review process executed at mid-way point of the first semester
- Early identification of underperforming students
- In time for corrective action from faculty advisor to motivate the student, address team conflicts, and remind the student that yes, **"you can fail this class"**



Industry Style Performance Review

- Topics
 - Quality of Work
 - Initiative
 - Teamwork
 - Timely Delivery on Commitments
 - Effective Communication
 - Customer/Sponsor focus
- Outcome
 - Expectations for remainder of the term
 - "Contract" of what is required to pass the class
 - Signed by student and faculty advisor

Outcomes

- The student that didn't fail
 - Genesis of the current model
 - Midterm peer evaluations not yet implemented
 - Severely underperforming student
 - Advisor not fully aware until final peer evaluations
 - Decision made to pass the student since no warnings/feedback had been given
- The student that did fail
 - Identified early by mid-term peer evaluation
 - Intervention by faculty advisor
 - Did not yet include formal performance review
 - Student's participation did not significantly change
 - Failing grade was awarded, appealed, and upheld
 - Process showed need for more formal documentation of student expectations
 - Led to the Industry Style Performance Review
- The student that withdrew
 - Identified early by mid-term peer evaluation
 - Intervention by faculty advisor
 - Including Industry Style Performance Review
 - Student's participation did not significantly change
 - Student withdrew from the class

