Hochschule
Bonn-Rhein-Sieg
University of Applied Sciences

b-it Bonn-Aachen International Center for Information Technology

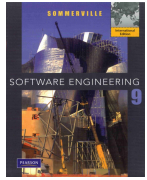
Institute for AI and
Autonomous Systems

# Software Engineering Methodologies

## How to Manage the Development Process

**Dr. Alex Mitrevski**
**Master of Autonomous Systems**

# Structure

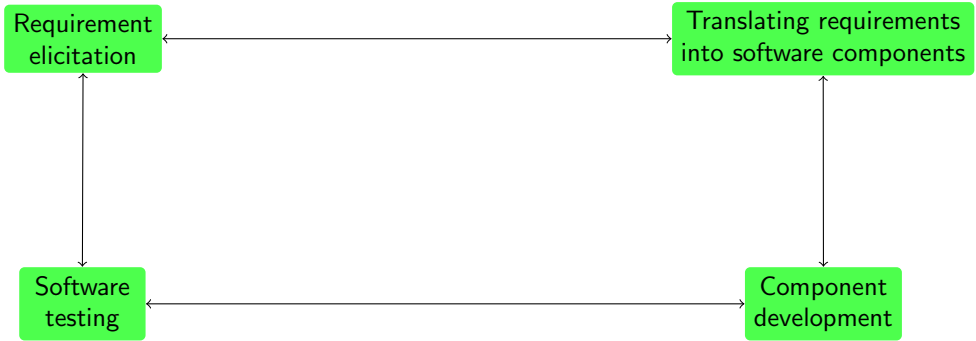



- Preliminaries
- Software engineering methodologies
- Agile development
- Paradigm challenges and implications for robotics

# Preliminaries

# Essential Steps in Software Development

- In our first lecture, we mentioned the following steps as being essential in software engineering




- There are, however, a variety of ways to perform these steps

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  - Without a suitable methodology, the process is highly unlikely to lead to well-developed software
- A variety of software engineering methodologies exist in the literature — these are **domain-independent** and **follow the complete software lifecycle**
- From an engineering point of view, **robots do not differ from other software systems** — robot software development should follow the same procedures as other software products
  - The practical implementation of individual steps along the process may differ though

# Who Decides on the Methodology to Follow?

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  - Large(r) organisations are likely to already have a methodology that all team members need to adopt
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  - **the availability of users during the development process** (frequent user feedback will shape the development differently than feedback only at specific milestones)

# Software Engineering Methodologies

# Methodologies Overview


Software engineering methodologies

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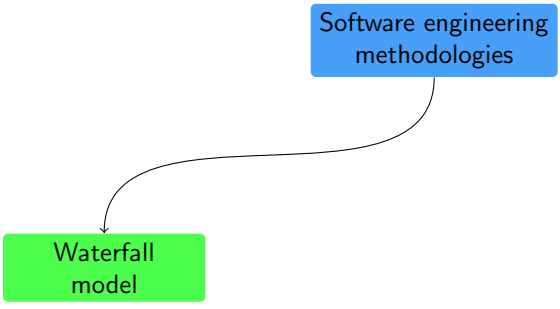

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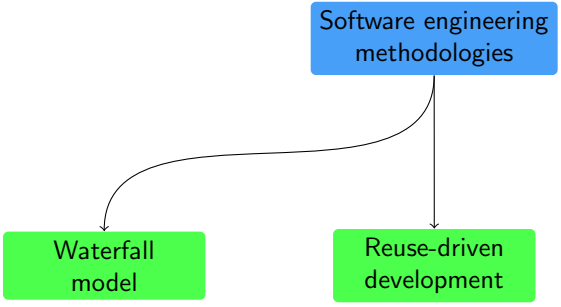

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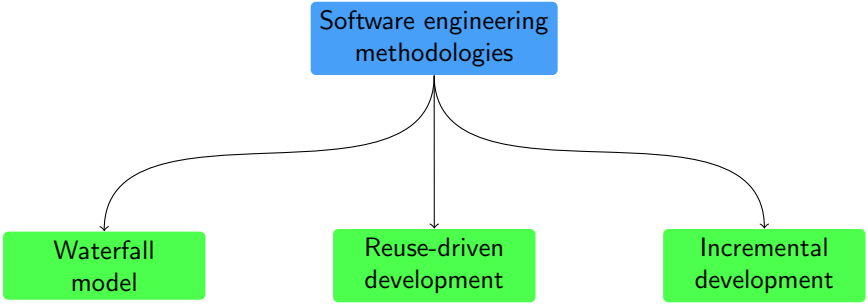
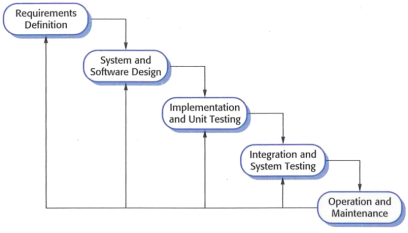


# Waterfall Model

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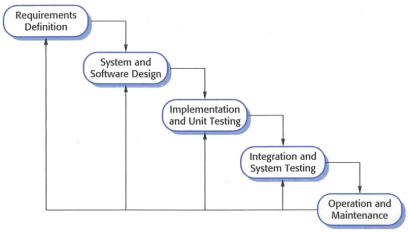


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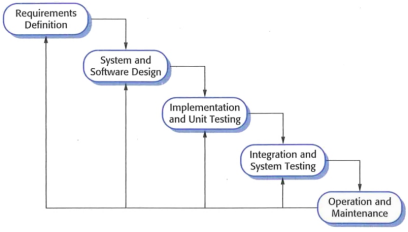


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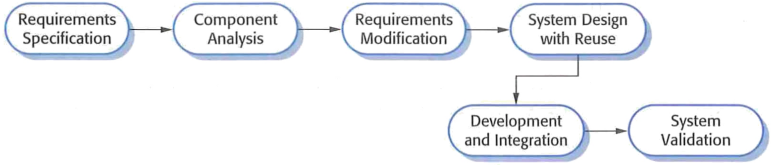
- The waterfall model is a **plan-driven process**

# Reuse-Oriented Development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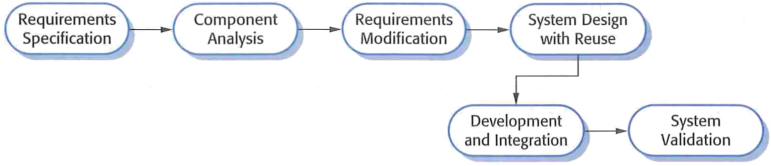


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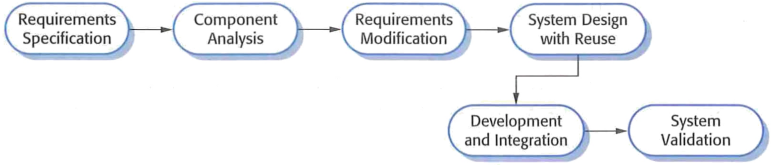


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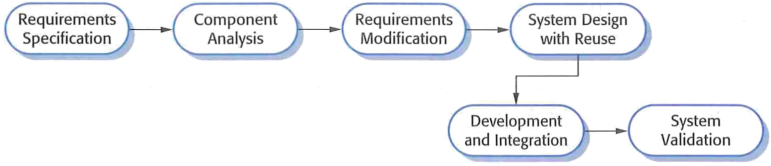


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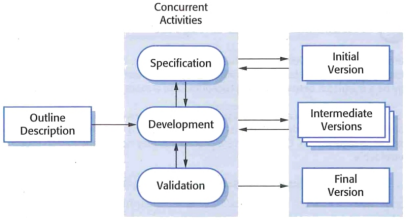
- **Robotics software development almost always involves elements of reuse-oriented development** — as we saw in the last lecture, there are many standard components that are used in robot software

# Incremental Development Model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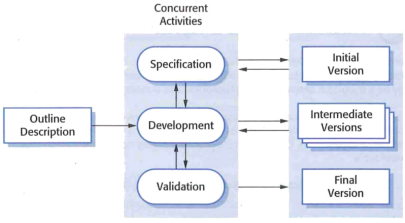


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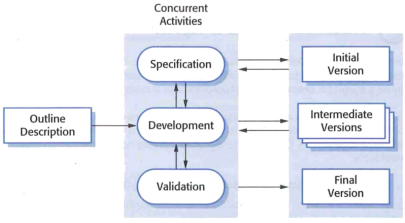


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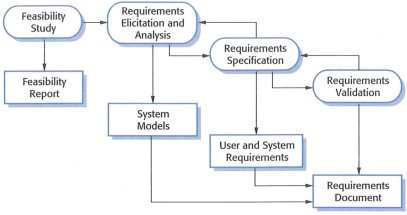
- An essential element of incremental development is that **prototypes are developed early** and **are then iteratively improved based on frequent user feedback**
- Unlike in the waterfall model, incremental development **focuses more on the development and deployment** and **less on documenting the process**

# Requirements Engineering


- Regardless of the concrete methodologies that is followed, it is necessary to **identify the requirements of the users of a robot system** (or even just a small component)



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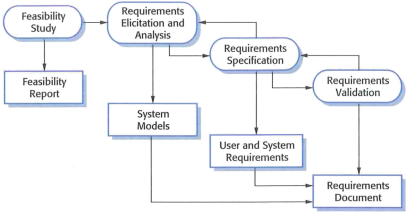


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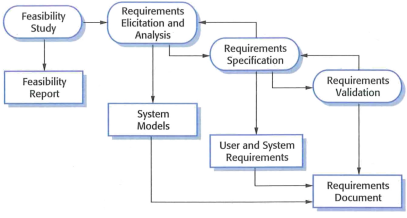


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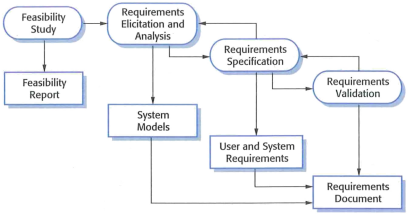


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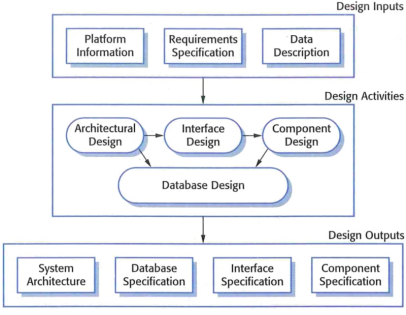
- The requirements engineering process usually ends with documentation that clearly specifies the requirements — **a requirement specification**

# Software System Design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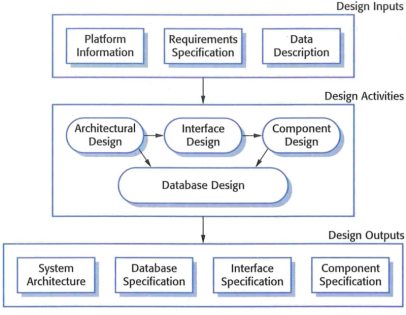


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- During this process, **the operational, system, and technical architectures are designed**
  - As discussed in our session on robot software architectures, **the operational architecture is typically based on standard models**

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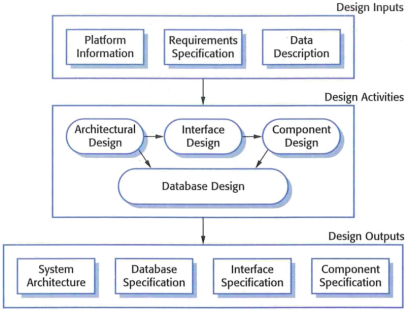


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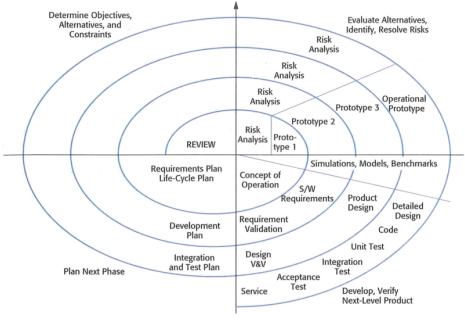
- During this process, **the operational, system, and technical architectures are designed**
  - As discussed in our session on robot software architectures, **the operational architecture is typically based on standard models**
- The design step may end with an architecture design document (in the waterfall or reuse-oriented models) or an initial system prototype (in incremental development)

# Risk Management: Boehm's Spiral Model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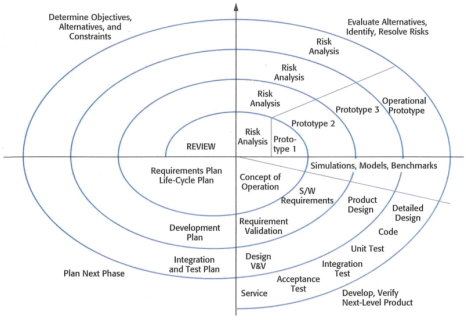


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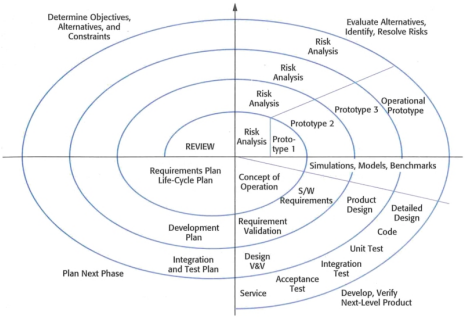


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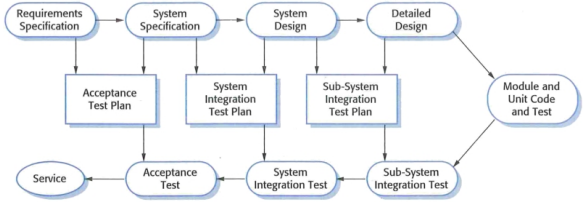
- Boehm's spiral model is particularly developed for risk management — **risks are re-evaluted at every stage of the design and development process**
- According to this model, **the evaluation of risks directly informs the subsequent development**
  - The individual development cycles can be based on any of the three development methodologies that we discussed before

# Software Testing Stages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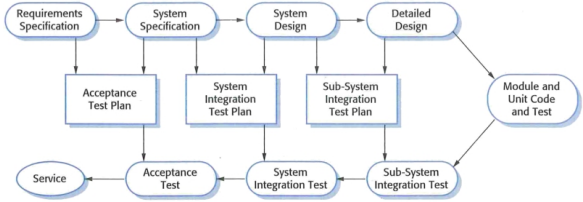


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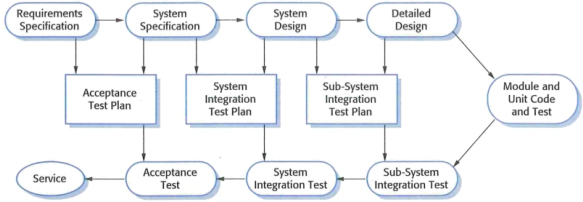


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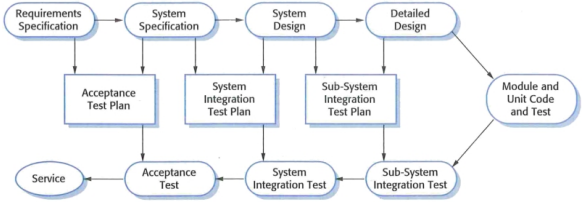


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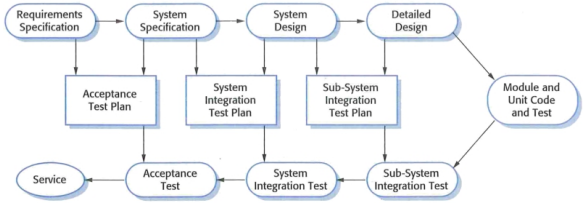


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  - **Alpha (aka acceptance) testing**, where the system is evaluated with respect to the requirements
  - **Beta testing**, where a larger base of potential users interacts with the system (typically for a prolonged period) and can report issues to the developers

# Agile Development

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- Agile development is a **collection of methods** rather than a monolithic structure of conventions and practices

# The Agile Manifesto[1]

"We are uncovering better ways of developing software by doing it and helping others do it. Through this work we have come to value:

- **Individuals and interactions** over processes and tools
- **Working software** over comprehensive documentation
- **Customer collaboration** over contract negotiation
- **Responding to change** over following a plan

That is, while there is value in the items on the right, we value the items on the left more."

[1] https://agilemanifesto.org

# Extreme Programming (XP)


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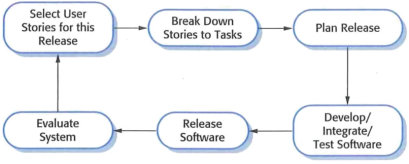
  - The name “extreme” refers to the fact that best practices for development are pushed to the extreme



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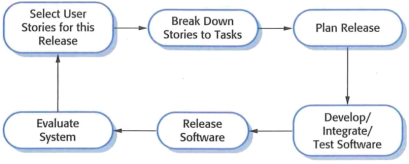

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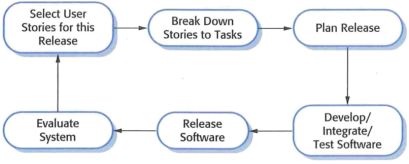
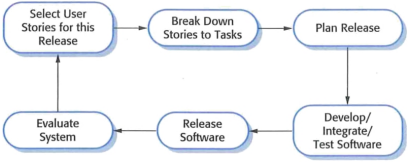
- Version releases in extreme programming are **done at frequent rates**, such that **users are directly involved in the development process** (to define development priorities and acceptance tests)



# Extreme Programming (XP)


- XP is one particular agile development method
  - The name "extreme" refers to the fact that best practices for development are pushed to the extreme
- In this paradigm, requirements are represented as **user stories** from which **concrete tasks are derived**
  - Stories are developed on so-called **story cards**
- Version releases in extreme programming are **done at frequent rates**, such that **users are directly involved in the development process** (to define development priorities and acceptance tests)
- Extreme programming performs **continuous automated testing** (new versions are accepted only if tests pass) and **regular refactoring** (to handle the complexity of rapidly changing software)

# Extreme Programming Practices


| Principle or practice | Description |
|---|---|
| Incremental planning | Requirements are recorded on Story Cards and the Stories to be included in a release are determined by the time available and their relative priority. The developers break these Stories into development 'Tasks'. See Figures 3.5 and 3.6. |
| Small releases | The minimal useful set of functionality that provides business value is developed first. Releases of the system are frequent and incrementally add functionality to the first release. |
| Simple design | Enough design is carried out to meet the current requirements and no more. |
| Test-first development | An automated unit test framework is used to write tests for a new piece of functionality before that functionality itself is implemented. |
| Refactoring | All developers are expected to refactor the code continuously as soon as possible code improvements are found. This keeps the code simple and maintainable. |
| Pair programming | Developers work in pairs, checking each other's work and providing the support to always do a good job. |
| Collective ownership | The pairs of developers work on all areas of the system, so that no islands of expertise develop and all the developers take responsibility for all of the code. Anyone can change anything. |
| Continuous integration | As soon as the work on a task is complete, it is integrated into the whole system. After any such integration, all the unit tests in the system must pass. |
| Sustainable pace | Large amounts of overtime are not considered acceptable as the net effect is often to reduce code quality and medium term productivity |
| On-site customer | A representative of the end-user of the system (the Customer) should be available full time for the use of the XP team. In an extreme programming process, the customer is a member of the development team and is responsible for bringing system requirements to the team for implementation. |

# Pair Programming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- Pair programming has various benefits compared to individual development:
  - **The code is written and looked at by two people** — likelier to discover bugs early
  - **There is shared knowledge of the code** — makes the development team more resistant to people leaving the team
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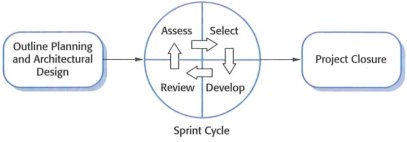
- Pair programming may, however, be less useful for senior developers or even negatively affect their productivity

# Scrum


- Scrum is an **agile development management methodology** and can be used in conjunction with other agile methods (such as extreme programming)



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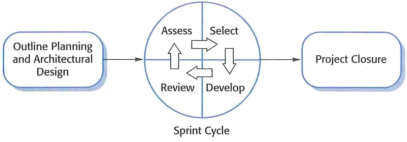

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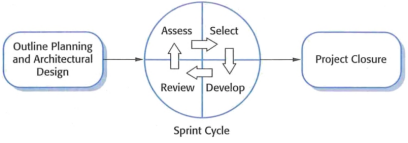


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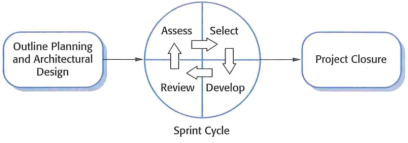


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- We use scrum frequently in the b-it-bots team, particularly before and during competitions

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- The product backlog is typically tracked using **issues**, which are **well-defined tasks that are assigned to a person**
  - Issues can have multiple statuses, such as **open, in-progress** and **completed**
- The scrum master, who leads the stand-up meetings during a sprint, **is a member of the team** or **works closely with the team**
  - A scrum master is not an explicit team manager, but needs to have enough expertise to oversee the sprint and resolve challenges during the implementation

# Paradigm Challenges and Implications for Robotics

# Challenges With Plan-Driven Development

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Careful and extensive management is usually needed for executing plan-driven methods, which can affect the flexibility of the development team

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Due to their rapid development and deployment nature, incremental techniques, such as scrum, require a fully dedicated team that can handle the pressure of the process

Daily stand-up meetings may be counterproductive in certain cases — some tasks require longer effort, and daily meetings distract rather than help

# Implications for Robotics

- In robotics, there is often a **discrepancy between user expectations and the reality of robots**
  - The best way to verify the acceptance of a robot is to **regularly interact with potential users** — incremental development methods are particularly suitable for this
  - It does not help to carefully plan the development of a robot that, in the end, will not be used by anyone

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  - Careful planning is required for project proposals, such that the success of projects is measured not only by the results, but also by how well the progress corresponds to the promised plan
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  - The expectation to produce detailed deliverables is also a common feature of such projects
  - Elements of iterative methods are, however, often adopted throughout the development
- **Incremental development is essential in the context of robotics competitions** — competition rules change frequently, so teams need to be able to adapt to those changes quickly

# Summary

- A software engineering methodology defines procedures for managing the complete workflow of a software project
- There are different types of software methodologies, which can be generally observed as plan-driven or incremental
- Reuse-oriented development is a methodology that is explicitly concerned with identifying and integrating existing components into the developed software
- Agile development methods, such as extreme programming and scrum, are popular examples of incremental development that emphasise change management and user involvement in the development process
- All of the methodologies have their own pros and cons with respect to robot software development; there is no one-size-fits-all methodology that works equally well for all cases