



A Member of the Texas Tech University System

## **Course Syllabus: Parenting: Family and Community**

College of Health Sciences and Human Services  
Social Work Department SOWK 3233- X10  
Spring 2026

### **Contact Information**

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### **Course Description**

This course is intended for the distance education learner. This course explores various theoretical frameworks of parenting focused on fostering optimal child development within the familial context. Students will examine the impact of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) on developmental trajectories, alongside a critical analysis of child maltreatment—including neglect and abuse—and its long-term effects on standard developmental milestones. This course is intended for students from a variety of disciplines and is offered only in a distance education format. Participation is a requirement of this course through internet discussions.

### **Course Outcomes**

Upon completion of this course, students will be:

1. Compare and contrast various theoretical frameworks of parenting and their application in diverse cultural contexts.

2. Define the physiological and psychological effects of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) on the developing brain.
3. Identify and differentiate between the various types of child maltreatment, including physical, sexual, and emotional abuse.
4. Demonstrate proficiency in state-mandated reporting protocols and professional ethical standards.
5. Critically assess the role of community resources and social policy in promoting family resilience and preventing maltreatment.
6. Develop evidence-based strategies for fostering nurturing family environments that promote normative developmental milestones.
7. Analyze the evolution of child welfare frameworks through the lens of trauma-informed care and contemporary research on child maltreatment.
8. Evaluate the systemic functions, legal mandates, and ethical responsibilities of modern child protective services within the social welfare landscape.
9. Apply Family Systems Theory to examine how interpersonal dynamics and environmental stressors influence individual and collective family functioning.
10. Synthesize the ecological risk factors associated with child neglect and assess its longitudinal impact on physical, cognitive, and socio-emotional development.

### **Midwestern State University Values:**

People-Centered – Engage others with respect, empathy, and joy.

Community – Cultivate a diverse and inclusive campus environment.

Integrity – Always do the right thing.

Visionary – Adopt innovative ideas to pioneer new paths.

Connections – Value relationships with broader communities.

### **Instructional Materials**

**Required:** Crosson-Tower (2021). Understanding Child Abuse and Neglect (10th ed.). Pearson Education, Inc: NJ.

Student link:

<https://www.pearson.com/en-us/subject-catalog/p/understanding-child-abuse-and-neglect/P20000000924/9780135170908>

National Association of Social Workers. (2021). *Code of Ethics of the National Association of Social Workers*.

<https://www.socialworkers.org/About/Ethics/Code-of-Ethics/Code-ofEthics-English>

### **Tutoring and Academic Support Programs / Writing Assistance**

Begin drafting papers as early as possible and take advantage of the [Tutoring & Academic Support Programs](#), located on the first floor of the Moffett Library. The MSU TASP Learning Center offers drop-in tutoring support for most general subject areas, including but not limited to Writing, Math, Science, Business, and Foreign Languages. Students check in to work one-on-one with a tutor, typically for an hour, regarding specific concepts.

### **Student Handbook**

Refer to: [Student Handbook](#)

### **Academic Misconduct Policy & Procedures**

[The MSU Student Handbook](#) covers Academic Honesty under University Policies and Procedures. Academic dishonesty is defined as cheating, collusion, and plagiarism.

- Cheating is (1) the use of any unauthorized assistance, (2) dependence upon the aid of sources beyond those authorized by the Instructor, or (3) acquisition, without permission, of tests or other academic material.
- Plagiarism is the use of another person's published or unpublished work without full and clear acknowledgment.
- Collusion is collaboration with another person in preparing work offered for credit if the faculty member in charge does not authorize that collaboration.

### **Services for Students with Disabilities**

In accordance with Section 504 of the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, Midwestern State University endeavors to make reasonable accommodations to ensure equal opportunity for qualified persons with disabilities to participate in all educational, social, and recreational programs and activities. After notification of acceptance, students requiring accommodations should make an application for such assistance through Disability Support Services, located in the Clark Student Center, Room 168, (940) 397-4140. Current documentation of a disability will be required to provide

appropriate services, and each request will be individually reviewed. For more details, please go to [Disability Support Services](#) website.

## **Pregnant and Parenting Students**

To support the academic success of pregnant and parenting students and students with pregnancy-related conditions, the University offers reasonable modifications based on the student's particular needs. Any student who is pregnant or parenting a child up to age 18 or has conditions related to pregnancy may contact MSU's designated [Pregnancy and Parenting](#) Liaison to discuss support available through the University.

## **Moffett Library**

Moffett Library provides resources and services to support students' studies and assignments, including books, peer-reviewed journals, databases, and multimedia materials accessible both on campus and remotely. The library offers media equipment checkout, reservable study rooms, and research assistance from librarians to help students effectively find, evaluate, and use information. Get started on this [Moffett Library webpage](#) to explore these resources and learn how to best utilize the library.

## **College Policies**

### **Obligation to Report Sex Discrimination under State and Federal Law:**

Midwestern State University is committed to providing and strengthening an educational, working, and living environment where students, faculty, staff, and visitors are free from sex discrimination of any kind. State and federal law require University employees to report sex discrimination and sexual misconduct to the University's Office of Title IX. As a faculty member, I am required to report to the Title IX Coordinator any allegations, personally observed behavior, or other direct or indirect knowledge of conduct that reasonably may constitute sex discrimination or sexual misconduct, which includes sexual assault, sexual harassment, dating violence, or stalking, involving a student or employee. After a report is made, the office of Title IX will reach out to the affected student or employee in an effort to connect such person(s) with resources and options in addressing the allegations made in the report. You are also encouraged to report any incidents to the Office of Title IX. You may do so by contacting:

Laura Hetrick, Title IX Coordinator  
Sunwatcher Village Clubhouse  
940-397-4213  
laura.hetrick@msutexas.edu

You may also file an online report 24/7 at

[https://cm.maxient.com/reportingform.php?MSUTexas&layout\\_id=6](https://cm.maxient.com/reportingform.php?MSUTexas&layout_id=6)

Should you wish to visit with someone about your experience in confidence, you may contact the MSU Counseling Center at 940-397-4618. For more information on the University's policy on Title IX or sexual misconduct, please visit

<https://msutexas.edu/titleix/>

**Campus Carry:** Effective August 1, 2016, the Campus Carry law (Senate Bill 11) allows those licensed individuals to carry a concealed handgun in buildings on public university campuses, except in locations the University establishes as prohibited. The new Constitutional Carry law does not change this process. Concealed carry still requires a License to Carry permit, and openly carrying handguns is not allowed on college campuses. For more information, refer to [Campus Carry Rules and Policies](#)

**Active Shooter:** The safety and security of our campus is the responsibility of everyone in our community. Each of us has an obligation to be prepared to appropriately respond to threats to our campus, such as an active aggressor. Please review the information provided by the MSU Police Department regarding the options and strategies we can all use to stay safe during difficult situations. For more information, visit [Safety / Emergency Procedures](#). Students are encouraged to watch the video entitled "Run. Hide. Fight." which may be electronically accessed via the University police department's webpage: ["Run. Hide. Fight."](#)

**Smoking/Tobacco Policy:** Midwestern State University seeks to provide a safe, healthy, pleasant environment for its faculty, staff, and students. To this end, the use of tobacco products, including smoke and smokeless tobacco, and the advertising, sale, free distribution, and discarding of tobacco products shall be prohibited in all indoor and outdoor facilities and in all university vehicles. The policy extends to faculty, staff, students, vendors, guests, and visitors. For more information, visit: [Tobacco Free Campus](#)

**Alcohol and Drug Policy:** To comply with the Drug Free Schools and Communities Act of 1989 and subsequent amendments, students and employees of Midwestern State are informed that strictly enforced policies are in place that prohibit the unlawful possession, use, or distribution of any illicit drugs, including alcohol, on university property or as part of any university-sponsored activity. Students and employees are also subject to all applicable legal sanctions under local, state, and federal law for any offenses involving illicit drugs on University

property or at University-sponsored activities. For more information, visit: [Alcohol and Drug Policy](#)

## **Professional Expectations of Student Behavior**

Midwestern State University Department of Social Work is mandated by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) to foster and evaluate professional behavioral development for all students in the social work program. The Department of Social Work also bears a responsibility to the community at large to produce fully trained professional social workers who consciously exhibit the knowledge, values, and skills of the profession of social work. The values of the profession are codified in the NASW Code of Ethics. Given this context, all students in the social work program will be expected to exhibit the following ethical standards of behavior.

- 1. Accountability:** Attend class, arrive on time, and return from break promptly. Participate in group activities and assignments at a comparable level to peers. Complete work in a timely fashion and according to directions provided. Come to class prepared, with readings and other homework completed.
- 2. Respect:** Treat all your peers, your instructors, and all those you come in contact with, with dignity and respect at all times. Listen while others are speaking. Give feedback to peers in a constructive manner. Approach conflict with peers or instructors in a cooperative manner. Use positive and nonjudgmental language.
- 3. Confidentiality:** Treat any personal information that you hear about a peer or an instructor as strictly confidential. Maintain any information shared in class, dyads, or smaller groups within that unit. Use judgment in self-disclosing information of a very personal nature in the classroom. (Class time should not be used as therapy or treatment. If students feel the need to talk about issues they are struggling with, they may consult with their instructor to receive a referral for counseling.) Never use names of clients or disclose other identifying information in the classroom.
- 4. Competence:** Apply yourself to all your academic pursuits with seriousness and conscientiousness, meeting all deadlines as given by your instructors. Constantly strive to improve your abilities. Come to class with books, handouts, a syllabus, and pens. Seek out appropriate support when having difficulties to ensure success in completing course requirements. Take responsibility for the quality of completed tests and assignments. Strive to work toward greater awareness of personal issues that may impede your effectiveness with clients.

**5. Integrity:** Practice honesty with yourself, your peers, and your instructors. Constantly strive to improve your abilities. Academic: Commit yourself to learning the rules of citing others' work properly. Do your own work and take credit only for your own work. Acknowledge areas where improvement is needed. Accept and benefit from constructive feedback.

Submission of Papers: Students will submit their written assignments through D2L. Papers will be subject to plagiarism analysis and will be kept in an electronic file for future reference. A student may not submit the same paper, or essentially the same paper, project, assignment, or finished project to an instructor, which has been submitted to another instructor, unless specifically authorized by both instructors to do so.

**6. Humility:** Strive to become more open to people, ideas, and creeds that you are not familiar with. Maintain speech free of racism, sexism, ableism, heterosexism, or stereotyping. Exhibit a willingness to serve diverse groups of persons. Demonstrate an understanding of how values and culture interact.

**7. Communication:** Strive to improve both verbal and written communication skills as these skills are used heavily in interactions with clients and peers, and also in creating client records. Demonstrate assertive communication with peers and instructors. Practice positive, constructive, respectful, and professional communication skills with peers and instructors: (body language, empathy, listening).

**8. Social Justice:** Strive to deepen your commitment to social justice for all populations at risk. Demonstrate an understanding of how institutional and personal oppression impede the experience of social justice for individuals and groups. Strive to learn about methods of empowering populations and enhancing social justice at micro, mezzo, and macro levels.

### **Consequences of Unacceptable Behavior**

The Department of Social Work may terminate a student's participation in the program based on professional non-suitability if the Department's faculty members determine that a student's behavior has constituted a significant violation or pattern of violations of the NASW Code of Ethics, the MSU Department of Social Work Student Manual, or the MSU Academic Policies and Regulations. Examples of violations that may lead to termination include (but are not limited to) the following:

1. Failure to meet or maintain academic grade point requirements as established by the University and the Social Work program.
2. Academic cheating, lying, or plagiarism (turnitin.com will be used to check the originality of the text).
3. Behavior judged to violate the NASW Code of Ethics.
4. Failure to meet generally accepted standards of professional conduct, personal integrity, or emotional stability requisite for professional practice.
5. Inappropriate or disruptive behavior toward colleagues, faculty, or staff (at the department or in the field placement).
6. Consistent failure to demonstrate effective interpersonal skills necessary for forming professional relationships (for example, unable to demonstrate a nonjudgmental attitude or unable to allow client self-determination).
7. Documented evidence of criminal activity occurring during the course of study.

For additional university-wide policies and regulations, see the [MSU Undergraduate Catalog](#). This website contains information on grading, incomplete grades, cheating on exams, plagiarism, and expectations of student behavior.

### **Desire-to-Learn (D2L)**

Extensive use of the MSU D2L program is a part of this course. Each student is expected to be familiar with this program as it provides a primary source of communication regarding assignments, examination materials, and general course information. You can log into [D2L](#) through the MSU Homepage. If you experience difficulties, please contact the technicians listed for the program or contact your instructor.

### **Online Computer Requirements**

Taking an online class requires you to have access to a computer (with Internet access) to complete and upload your assignments. It is your responsibility to have (or have access to) a working computer in this class. ***Assignments and tests are due by the due date, and personal computer technical difficulties will not be considered a reason for the instructor to allow students extra time to submit assignments, tests, or discussion postings.*** Computers are available on campus in various areas of the buildings, as well as in the Academic Success Center. ***Your computer being down is not an excuse***

**for missing a deadline!!** There are many places to access your class! Our online classes can be accessed from any computer in the world that is connected to the internet. Contact your instructor immediately upon having computer trouble. If you have technical difficulties in the course, there is also a student helpdesk available to you. The college cannot work directly on student computers due to both liability and resource limitations; however, they can help you get connected to our online services. For help, log in to [D2L](#).

### **Attendance Policy**

Students are responsible for checking emails and logging onto D2L regularly to ensure that messages from the instructor and fellow students are received promptly.

### **Grading**

**Table 1:** The student's achievement will be evaluated based on the discussion board assignments and participation, quizzes, and the Reflective Paper.

<b>Assignments</b>	<b>Due</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Discussion board assignments & discussion thread participation	Weekly as assigned	40%
Quizzes	Weekly as assigned	40%
Reflective Paper	Due May 8	20%

**Table 2:** The weighted average will be used to calculate the final grade.

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Percent</b>
A	90-100
B	80-89
C	70-79
D	60-69
F	Less than 60

### **Discussion Thread/Board Participation:**

As indicated in the course schedule, the instructor will post question(s) on D2L for the class. There are **two** parts to each discussion. Everyone should post an initial response to the question(s) and should also respond to at least two peers' posts by Friday @ 11:59 pm. The discussion board is a mandatory

component. Students are expected to read all discussion board instructions and to participate actively throughout the semester. Students are expected to write formally (no shorthand or text messaging abbreviations). There will be general questions relating to the chapter(s), case vignettes, current events, and/or watching a video and posting your response. Thoughtful responses, constructive critique of fellow students, and meaningful participation are expected. Please keep in mind that the discussion board is a formal assignment and part of your grade.

I will review your posts and responses and give individual feedback when grading posts. I may respond in the discussion thread to a select few posts and/or responses or respond collectively to the class. This does not mean only the posts and/or responses of those to whom I respond are good, and other posts and/or responses are not good.

### **Discussion Rubric**

<b>Points</b>	<b>Responses</b>	<b>Expectations</b>
4	Reply to the Instructor's Questions	Discussion posts must show a deep understanding and original, profound thought about the topic.
2	Response to peer #1	Consistently responsive to classmates, including answering questions. Reply is to a chapter you have not already discussed, is a minimum of 1 paragraph long, and develops questions related to objectives to facilitate discussion. Reply generates or stimulates group discussion and presents creative approaches to the topic. For example, instead of "I like your paper.", "I appreciate how you connected...". Instead of "I agree with you.", "Your point about 'Social Connections' as a protective factor is supported by the video we watched....". Instead of "Good job.", "The resource you suggested for teen fathers is a great example of 'Mandated Support' as defined in our Texas DFPS training."
2	Response to peer #2	Same as above.

2	Grammar Quality / Academic Integrity	Written responses are free of grammatical, spelling, or punctuation errors. The style of writing facilitates communication. Sources are properly cited and referenced using APA style, if applicable.
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### **The difference between "exceptional" and "unacceptable" discussion post response.....**

<b>Level</b>	<b>Characteristics</b>	<b>Example</b>
Exceptional	Substantive, analytical, and professional. Connects to 2+ course concepts and offers a specific "What if?" or resource.	"Your focus on 'Parental Resilience' for teen dads is vital. I wonder if the Texas SPEDTex resource could also help the family you described navigate the school system?"
Proficient	Thoughtful and connected to the paper. Identifies a specific strength in the peer's argument.	"I agree that poverty is a huge factor in your county's neglect rates. Your idea to use the Nurse-Family Partnership is a great 'Mandated Support' strategy."
Developing	Relevant but generic. Doesn't offer new insight or specific course connections.	"Great paper! I liked how you explained the protective factors. It was very clear, and I learned a lot about your county."
Unacceptable	Surface-level "I agree" or "Good job" posts. Less than 2-3 sentences.	"Good post. I agree with everything you said."

### **Weekly Quizzes and Discussion posts**

Students will complete either a quiz or a discussion post weekly by **11:59 pm on Fridays** based on the required book chapters or required reading/video as indicated in the class schedule. The quizzes are open-book and notes, but there will be only 60 minutes to complete them. **Quizzes cannot be made up if missed, and a grade of zero (0) will be recorded.**

## Reflective Paper

**Due May 8th:** Reflective Paper Assignment: 20% of the final course grade.

Throughout the semester, we have learned about parenting styles, risk factors, protective factors, and child maltreatment.

This assignment requires you to move from **theory to practice**. You will develop a professional reflection that applies our semester-long learning to a real-world scenario, focusing specifically on how a 'strengths-based' lens can transform your future work with children and families.

Reflective summary requirements:

- Using the data you researched in Week 12, how do the social determinants in your area (poverty, isolation, lack of healthcare) contribute to the "Toxic Stress" and ACEs of the children living there?
- Reflecting on the Strengthening Families videos in Weeks 3 and 5, discussions of the nine characteristics of common family strengths, and risk vs. protective factors, choose **two** protective factors (strengths) and explain how strengthening these would specifically decrease abuse rates.
- Drawing from the Texas Mandated Reporting Training you completed in Week 13, instead of just reporting, propose one resource/strategy that could be implemented in the community, schools, or work with individual families? Refer back to Week 13 for existing Texas resources.
- Post your paper for peer review. Read and comment on at least **two** peer papers.

Paper requirements:

- Must be 5–6 pages of content (this does not count cover page and references).
- Use APA 7th Edition (resources provided in D2L for additional information, which include double spaces, 12-point Times New Roman or 11-point Calibri, 1-inch margins on all sides). The title page must include a professional title (not Reflective Paper Assignment), the student's name, the course name, and the date.
- Minimum of 4–6 scholarly sources (you can use the textbook, Texas DFPS Data Book, and peer-reviewed articles from the course modules).

## Reflective Paper Rubric

Criteria	Exceptional (90–100%)	Proficient (80–89%)	Developing (70–79%)	Unacceptable (<70%)
Data & Context (30 pts)	Uses specific, current Texas DFPS Data Book stats. Clearly connects local demographics to ACEs theory.	Uses Texas data but lacks specific county-level depth or a clear link to ACEs.	The data is generic or outdated. Weak connection to course concepts.	No Texas-specific data used. Fails to establish context.
Protective Factors (30 pts)	Deeply analyzes 2+ Factors. Proposes creative, realistic interventions for each.	Identifies 2 Factors. Interventions are logical but standard/generic	Only 1 Factor addressed, or interventions are poorly defined.	Fails to incorporate the Protective Factors framework.
Resource/Strategy (30 pts)	The proposal is professional, evidence-based, and considers "Return on Investment" for the community.	The proposal is solid but lacks a clear "pitch" for community stakeholders.	The strategy is unrealistic or lacks a clear, evidence-based foundation.	No clear strategy or proposal offered.
Writing & Mechanics (10 pts)	Professional tone. No errors. Correct APA citations for all cited sources.	Professional tone. 1–2 minor errors. Citations are mostly correct.	Casual tone or 3–5 errors. Missing citations for key data.	Poorly written. Numerous errors hinder readability.

### Late Work

Students who fail to post required assignments on time will receive a lower grade, and those who do not complete the assignments will receive a grade of zero (0). Please review the time submission criteria on the rubrics for each assignment.

### Makeup Work/Tests

Missed assignments & exams cannot be made up if missed. A grade of zero (0) will be recorded.

## **Instructor Class Policies**

All students registered for courses in the Social Work Department are expected to adhere to the responsibilities and behavior as articulated in both the [Student Handbook](#) and the NASW (National Association of Social Workers) [Code of Ethics](#). An essential feature of these codes is a commitment to maintaining intellectual integrity and academic honesty. This means that the following constitute violations of academic honesty: *a student has another person/entity do the work of any portion of a graded assignment for them, which includes using the work of another student in this course as a template, purchasing work from a company, hiring a person or company to complete an assignment or exam, and/or using generative AI tools (such as ChatGPT, QuillBot, or any generative AI assistance such as GrammarlyGO, Grammarly Premium, etc.).* There is a **zero-tolerance policy for academic dishonesty, cheating, plagiarism, or collusion**, and violations will result in substantial penalties, including a failing grade on the assignment with no make-up opportunity and/or a referral to the Dean of Students.

Repeated accidental or willful cheating or use of someone else's words, ideas, or evidence without attribution will be met with a failing grade in the course and a referral to the Dean of Students, regardless of whether the first occurrence was in this course. If you have any doubts or questions about what constitutes academic misconduct, please do not hesitate to contact me. Students are expected to display professional decorum at all times. This includes but is not limited to respecting classmates and the instructor.

## **Course Changes**

Although much thought, study, and research have gone into designing the course and learning opportunities, often the most significant learning comes in unexpected moments. The instructor cannot predict these times but responds to them. Changes in the course syllabus, procedure, assignments, and schedule may be made at the discretion of the instructor.

## Course Schedule Parenting: Family and Community

<b>Due Fridays @ 11:59pm</b>	<b>Chapters / Reading assignments</b>	<b>Assignments</b>
<b>Week 1 due Jan. 23</b>	Parenting Styles Information	-Introduction Discussion post -Parenting Style Discussion post
<b>Week 2 due Jan. 30</b>	Ch. 1: The Maltreatment of Children Then and Now  Ch. 2: The Family: Roles, Responsibilities, and Rights  Ch. 3: Trauma and the Developing Child	-Quiz - Chapters 1,2,3
<b>Week 3 due Feb. 6</b>	Strengthening Families Part 1 Video  Risk Factors vs. Protective Factors video	-Strengthening Families Part 1 Discussion post
<b>Week 4 due Feb. 13</b>	Ch. 4: The Neglect of Children  Ch. 5: The Physical Abuse of Children  Ch. 6: The Sexual Abuse of Children	-Quiz - Chapters 4,5,6
<b>Week 5 due Feb. 20</b>	Strengthening Families Part 2 Video	-Strengthening Families Part 2 Discussion post
<b>Week 6 due Feb. 27</b>	Ch. 7: Intrafamilial Abuse  Ch. 8: Extrafamilial Sexual Abuse, Misuse, and Exploitation  Ch. 9: Psychological Maltreatment of Children	-Quiz - Chapters 7,8,9
<b>Week 7 due March 6</b>	ACE's information	-ACE's Discussion Post
<b>Week 8 due March 13</b>	SPRING BREAK	<i>No assignment</i>
<b>Week 9 due March 20</b>	Ch. 10: Intervention: Reporting, Investigation, and Assessment	-Quiz - Chapters 10,11,12

	Ch. 11: Collaborative Intervention and Case Management  Ch. 12: The Legal Response to Child Abuse and Neglect	
<b>Week 10 due March 27</b>	Fatherhood information	-Fatherhood Discussion post
<b>Week 11 due April 3</b>	Ch. 13: Case Management and Treatment of Physical Abuse and Neglect  Ch. 14: Treatment of Sexual Abuse	-Quiz - Chapters 13,14
<b>Week 12 due April 10</b>	Child Abuse Prevention Month	-Child Abuse Prevention Discussion Post
<b>Week 13 due April 17</b>	Complete the Texas DFPS Mandated Child Abuse Training online (link in D2L)	-Upload a copy/screenshot of the completion certificate in the <u>assignments</u> folder. No discussion post this week
<b>Week 14 due April 24</b>	Parenting Classes	-Parenting Class Discussion
<b>Week 15 due May 1</b>	Ch. 15: Foster Care for Abused and Neglected Children  Ch. 16: Adults Abused as Children  Ch. 17: Working in Child Protection and Prevention	-Quiz Chapters 15,16,17
<b>Week 16 due May 8</b>	Final paper due	-Reflective Paper due -Reflective Paper Discussion post