## Introduction to Assignment & Rubric:

The Critical Reflection assignment invites you to connect the topics from class to your own life, experiences, career, and beliefs. This assignment relates to a number of our course learning objectives, including:

* Assess the consequences of personal actions and language
* Understand and respect the needs, perspectives, and actions of others
* Recognize interpersonal and intrapersonal conflicts and identify possible solutions
* Reflect on one’s role in the Virginia Tech community and engineering profession

This assignment will be assessed according to the following rubric. To receive full credit for this assignment, you must score "Proficient" or above in all three categories. A score of "Working Toward Proficiency" in any category will require a resubmission based on feedback from the grader.

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|  | **Working Toward Proficiency** | **Proficient** | **Beyond Expectation** |
| **Organization** | Information is not organized and/or not written in paragraph format.  One or more components are missing.  Minimum word count not met or maximum word exceeded count by an excessive amount. | Information is well organized in paragraph format.  All components are completed and submitted.  Word count fits within specified range. | Information is very well organized with well-constructed paragraphs; use of subheadings.  All components are completed and submitted.  Word count is within specified range. If maximum word count is exceeded for a prompt, there are no more than 100 extra words. |
| **Quality of Response** | Information is not on topic.  All questions and sub-questions were not answered thoughtfully. | Information clearly relates to the topic.  All questions and sub-questions are answered thoughtfully.  Responses include some general ideas/issues from class discussion and/or from outside experiences related to the topic. | Information clearly relates to the topic.  All questions and sub-questions are answered thoughtfully.  Responses demonstrate in-depth synthesis of experiences related to topic and/or connections to experiences outside of class. |
| **Sources** | Sources are quoted or referenced, but they are not cited. | References or quotes are attributed to the original source through a citation. | Citations and references are organized and cited according to APA, IEEE, or other disciplinary standards. |
| **Note**: If you refer to a source (e.g., article, website, etc.), it **must** be cited. Failure to cite your sources appropriately is a violation of the VT Graduate Honor Code. | | | |

*A note on specified word count range:* Word limits/counts are approximate and represent our estimate of how much you need to write in order to complete each prompt in a thoughtful manner. Don’t fixate on the word count; instead, focus on providing quality responses.

## Assignment Prompts:

*Review the prompts below and type your responses in the yellow boxes/spaces provided. When complete, save this document as a .docx or .pdf file and submit it to Canvas.*

1. **Diversity** (Covered in Part 3)

**First**, read the following short article (*PDF available on Canvas under Files*):

* Manning, K. (2009). Philosophical underpinnings of student affairs work on difference. *About Campus*, 14(2), 11-17. <https://doi.org/10.1002/abc.284>

**Then**, reflect and respond to the following questions:

* 1. Of the 7 paradigms mentioned in the article, which do most align with? Which do you least align with? Please provide a thorough explanation.
  2. Consider an organization you were part of, are currently a part of, or aim to become part of (e.g., a department, research group, company, student club). What are 2-3 actions that you might take to improve the organization as it relates to DEI? Please specify the organization in your response.

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| **Please respond to 1.1-1.2 in the box below. Your response should be in paragraph format and be approximately 150-250 words total.** |
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| **Additional Context** |
| Topics associated with DEI (Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion) have become increasingly a source of controversy in recent years. As you continue in your career, you may find yourself having to a) articulate your stance during a hiring process or thereafter and b) interact with people from different perspectives. Because most people have little experience addressing this topic formally, we want you to practice articulating your perspective. This reading should help you do so. |

1. **Bias & Stereotypes** (Covered in Part 4)

**First**, complete at least one of the [Implicit Association Tests (IATs)](https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/takeatest.html)offered by Project Implicit *from the following list*: (1) Race, (2) Disability, (3) Gender-Science, or (4) Sexuality. (Tests are available at: <https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/takeatest.html>).

**Then**, reflect and respond to the following questions:

* 1. Did the results of your Implicit Bias Test surprise you? How did these results make you feel - pleased, guilty, defensive, skeptical? Please provide an explanation.
  2. When reflecting on your own life, where do you think stereotypes or biases may have originated?
  3. What steps can we take to reduce or eliminate our own stereotypes and biases?

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| **Please respond to 2.1-2.3 in the box below. Your response should be in paragraph format and be approximately 150-250 words total.** |
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| **Additional Context** |
| “The IAT measures the strength of associations between concepts (e.g., black people, gay people) and evaluations (e.g., good, bad) or stereotypes (e.g., athletic, clumsy). The main idea is that making a response is easier when closely related items share the same response key.” ([About the IAT](https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/iatdetails.html)). The IAT is an effective educational tool for raising awareness about implicit bias, which can help us assess the consequences of personal actions and language. However, it should not be used for diagnostic or selection purposes, such as hiring or qualification decisions. If you want to learn more about implicit bias, you may also find the following [Hidden Brain](https://hiddenbrain.org/) podcast episodes informative - Revealing Your Unconscious: [Part 1](https://hiddenbrain.org/podcast/revealing-your-unconscious-part-1/) and [Part 2](https://hiddenbrain.org/podcast/revealing-your-unconscious-part-2/). |

1. **Vulnerable Populations** (Covered in Part 5)

**First**, read the following article (*PDF available on Canvas under Files*):

* Mechanic, D., & Tanner, J. (2007). Vulnerable People, Groups, And Populations: Societal View. *Health Affairs*, *26*(5), 1220–1230.

**Then**, reflect and respond to the following questions:

* 1. How does and/or how could your engineering discipline impact vulnerable populations?
  2. Which people, groups, or populations are most impacted (*positively and negatively*) by your discipline or research?
  3. How might you mitigate the negative impact of your work?

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| **Please respond to 3.1-3.3 in the box below. Your response should be in paragraph format and be approximately 150-250 words total.** |
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| **Additional Context** |
| Although engineers periodically discuss the responsibility to hold paramount the safety, health, and welfare of the public, we seldom spend time reflecting on what this might mean in our everyday practices. This reading should help you do so by providing you with an operational understanding of “vulnerability,” sources of vulnerability, and a better understanding of what it means to be susceptible to harm. |

1. **Professionalism** (Covered in Part 6)

**First**, read/skim (or listen to) 2-3 of the following articles (*PDFs available on Canvas under Files.*):

* Lawson, W. D. (2004). Professionalism: The golden years. Journal of professional issues in engineering education and practice, 130(1), 26-36. <https://doi.org/10.1061/(ASCE)1052-3928(2004)130:1(26)>
* Stieb, J.A. Understanding Engineering Professionalism: A Reflection on the Rights of Engineers. Sci Eng Ethics 17, 149–169 (2011). <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11948-009-9166-x>
* Van De Camp, K., Vernooij-Dassen, M. J., Grol, R. P., & Bottema, B. J. (2004). How to conceptualize professionalism: a qualitative study. Medical teacher, 26(8), 696-702.. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01421590400019518>
* Martimianakis, M. A., Maniate, J. M., & Hodges, B. D. (2009). Sociological interpretations of professionalism. Medical education, 43(9), 829-837. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1365-2923.2009.03408.x>
* Professionalism: What Does It Even Mean? (Gallup, Cultural Competence, 2022) <https://news.gallup.com/podcast/396323/professionalism-even-mean.aspx> [**PODCAST**]
* Tobia, J. (2014, June 10). Why I’m Genderqueer, Professional and Unafraid | HuffPost. *HuffPost*.<https://www.huffpost.com/entry/genderqueer-professional-_b_5476239> **[BLOG]**

**Then**, reflect and respond to the following question:

* 1. What does professionalism mean? What are some characteristics of professionalism?
  2. How did the articles/class discussion inform what you think it means to be professional? Please explain.
  3. How might you manage interpersonal conflicts that arise due to different perspectives on what it means to be professional?

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| **Please respond to 4.1-4.3 in the box below. Your response should be in paragraph format and be approximately 200-300 words.** |
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| **Additional Context** |
| Professionalism is complicated, but it’s something we all have to navigate. As you continue in your career, you will undoubtedly find yourself in a situation where how professionalism is conceptualized will impact your ability to either manage others or be managed. To better prepare you for these situations, we want you to reflect on what the term “professionalism” means to you. |