Team Reflection

As a team we were successfully able to complete all the requirements of the MVP that we stated in the revised design document. All members contributed towards the project and we were able to stay on schedule with all deadlines. We made the critical design decisions together as team, however at times there was conflict of opinion regarding the vision of the project which took several meetings in the beginning to sort out. We spent a considerable amount of time discussing the details of the design and the potential implementation implications of the design before we started writing any code. This initial time investment eventually paid off: once everyone agreed on the overall design, we were able to split up the work effortlessly, and every member was able to pick up on individual parts of the project and complete them.

As a team we had a very good idea of what our application was about and how it was designed before starting the MVP implementation. Working on the design document beforehand helped us come to consensus as a team to what we were going to build and how the data model will be designed. Once it came to the MVP implementation, it was very easy to discuss the key design decisions since as a team we had a clear understanding of what we were building, the context in which it is being built and the design challenges that we would face.

Scoping the design down for the purposes of the MVP helped make our progress more manageable and lead to our success. We restricted the MVP in such a way as to allow us to get a fully functional product, building all the core and essential components of the product while leaving out features that are easily changeable or features that we consider less important. This helped us to focus and get an app running. Considering the restrictions we placed on our MVP, the tasks to be done were pretty straightforward and easy to split. By looking at our MVP specification, we knew that we had to accomplish the following functionality: 1. building a persistent app, 2. designing RESTful URIs to support all functions, 3. supporting facebook authentication, 4. supporting sharing in a minimal sense, 5. supporting occasion and thought creation (but without the ability to add pictures). These five key functions meant that we had the following five tasks:

1. Building the schema, models and connecting the server to mongoDB.
2. Figuring out routing and backend code.
3. Connecting our app to the facebook api through facebook login
4. Sharing occasions through facebook.
5. Building the front end for a landing page, occasion and thought creation and listing all the occasions.

After identifying these five tasks, splitting up the work became easy. Angus took the lead on tasks 1 and 2. Noor worked on tasks 3, 4 and some parts of task 1. Usman and Suniyya worked on task 5 and some parts of task 2. We worked on the project collectively and helped

each other out with the different tasks. However, each of us had a specific task that they were responsible for and made sure that it was accomplished.

Overall we managed to successfully complete the MVP implementation. All the parts specified in our MVP were done, except for some parts of sharing (task 4). When writing the MVP requirements, we did not have a clear idea of how sharing would look like and so we vaguely placed supporting sharing as part of the requirements but with no regard to privacy settings. In our MVP implementation, we set the website up for sharing (including getting the list of friends from facebook and displaying them), but we still have to integrate the facebook api for sending messages to the different facebook friends. This task proved a little more complicated than what we expected and we will work on it further before the final product.

Overall, our team dynamics were great and we managed to get all the work that we required done. For the next milestone of this project, we will make sure that we start early, have clear tasks and clear milestone and work on the tricky parts of the app with everyone in the same room.

Suniyya's Peer Reviews

Usman: Did a great job finding a nice template and getting most of the views taken care of. He has also been enthusiastic about the project which motivates us all too. I would like to see him work more on the back-end too. He could also be more punctual, and work in conjunction with the team rather than individually, i.e. be more involved during meetings and let people know what he is working on so as to avoid two people working on the same item. One other slight comment: he should separate his css from his html from the start, so as to avoid unforeseen issues before finalizing the project

Noor: Was great managing the team deadlines and helping make decisions during team meetings. He kept us on track, keeping us from going off on tangents during discussions. He also did a great job with managing facebook authentication. He could be a little gentler when he expresses disagreement. He could also try and be on time for morning meetings. I would encourage him to smile more. :)

Angus: Did a great job working on the back-end (much of the schema, model and routes). He was also very helpful in fixing bugs that arose from connecting the front-end with the back-end. He was very patient with us and that is very much appreciated. I would like to see him giving us more work and not taking on so much himself. In terms of technical skills, not much improvement needed. It would be nice if he also told us what parts he was working on so that we all work on different parts.

Usman's Peer Reviews

Suniyya: Did a good job with managing deadlines and getting the team off to a strong start. Especially helped with formulating the design document and coming up with a clean data model. Moving forward, I would like her to take more initiative with the coding part and try to solve problems independently by using stack overflow more extensively. During code review, I found some of Suniyya's code to be "hacky", especially with css manipulation. Moving forward, it would be beneficial if she makes effort to code more conceptually.

Noor: Did a good job with presenting the project and took lead in team meetings. Asked inquisitive and insightful questions about the design of the project which helped us get a better understanding of the motivations of the project.On occasions I found Noor to be less accepting of differing opinions which made it hard to discuss design ideas with him. I would encourage Noor to be more open to discussion and generally be more appreciative of individual contributions.

Angus: Helped a lot with the version control and made life easier for everyone on the team. Took initiative to finish off major parts of the implementation and bring everyone's code together. Due to his strong programming skills Angus was able to take the lead on coding the back end. However, at times it felt that he was several pages ahead of the team and I would like him to explain things in greater detail. At times Angus also ended up doing other member's work because he had a better understanding of how to complete the task. From a learning perspective, it would be better if Angus would point out the relevant concepts and ideas to a problem which will facilitate us to get to the answer ourselves instead of solving it for us.

Noor's Peer Reviews

Suniyya is great at keeping the team on track, reminding us of deadlines, take meeting minutes and getting things started on the main milestones. She also did a lot of great work on the views and routing. Suniyya showed some hesitation at times and lack of confidence in her programming skills. This is normal and I feel the same way at times, but I would encourage her to step up some more when it comes to implementation, work and try new and challenging parts of the apps and ask for help when need. Her focus should be on learning the key programming skills from this class rather than making sure that the rest of us are happy with the pace of progress.

Usman did a very good job at getting the front end of the application going with Suniyya's help. I was very impressed when I saw the different pages of the app come live before we started any real work on the backend. It was really helpful in getting things started! I would encourage Usman to work more with the team as whole, however, than working on it individually and pushing his changes. It would be really helpful for me to learn about the

different things that he has done in the front end and absorb those skills and this could only happen if we are working on the app in the same room at the same time.

Angus was in many ways the engineering lead on this project. He was the go to person if we got stuck on any parts of the code or if we were having a hard time debugging. We could count on him to get things done. It was clear to us that he is the person with the most programming experience out of all us and he was very patient and took the time to help us when we got stuck. I would really encourage Angus to keep that attitude, but also not to end up doing most of the work on his own! It would be great if he can help us make progress on our parts and help us when help is need it, but let us struggle through it too cause that's the best way to learn!

Angus' Peer Reviews

To everyone: most issues that come up are googleable and stack-overflow-able by searching for the appropriate error messages. We don't need to know exactly what is going on at first glance, but knowing the appropriate search terms to google and reading stack traces to identify the line(s) where errors were actually thrown goes a long way.

Suniyya: very organized in keeping track of deadlines and meetings. Worked on the front end to ensure a pleasant user experience. With clear communication, modularized the code and wrote the front end (eg. data passed from GET requests to templates and data passed to POST requests in form submits) before the backend was ready. Going forward, it would be nice to know more of the different functionalities of the Chrome debugger, which makes front end debugging (JS and CSS) much more pleasant.

Usman: creating a wireframe HTML/CSS user interface helped kickstart on the project, a foundation that made further changes to the layout and further addition of functionality (client-side JS) much easier. Although we all got busy toward the end of the week, we were able finish most of what we have committed to in the initial division of labor. Going forward, it would be beneficial to be involved with the backend and understanding HTTP requests, to be exposed to the full stack of web development.

Noor: knowledgeable with the different tools to simulate the UI, especially helpful during the design phase when we were deciding how different pages should look. Also great job with dealing with the Facebook API and integrating it into our app, a decision which we hope can boost usage. Going forward, it would be useful to understand deeper about HTTP requests (AJAX vs. full page reload, status codes). It is also important to clean up and change code copied from examples in order to fit our purposes.