## **Reflecting On Your Progress**

**The goal for this exercise** is to give you a chance to stop and think about how you’re doing this quarter – what’s going well, what’s not working, and what you can do to improve things.

**Background:** At this point you’ve been in this course for a couple of weeks, and you’ve had several chances to try out strategies for both the learning the material in this class and accomplishing all the work that this class requires.

(Doing the work will help you learn the material, but it’s worth separating those two just because people sometimes make the mistake of thinking that just because they slogged through all the work that they’ve really learned it. You haven’t really learned it until you can do it again, fairly quickly, and be able to explain why each and every part of your solution works.)

Now is a good time to stop and think about how you’re doing in this class, and what you can change to improve things that aren’t going so well, and/or to share successful things you’ve done with other students. Some things to think about might include:

* How you’re studying  
  “Studying” includes watching videos, filling out viewing quiz, trying stuff out on your own, reading the book, trying out stuff from the book on your own, reviewing your notes from class (if any), and experimenting with concepts until you understand them. In other words, anything that you might do to learn the concepts on your own, independent of applying them to the weekly coding exercises.
* How you’re doing the weekly exercises  
  How do you go about doing the actual assigned work? When you get stuck what do you do next? Have you found any strategies for working productively even when you’re stuck on an exercise (or even on an entire topic)?
* What else are you doing to learn this stuff?  
  Examples might include study groups, asking knowledgeable people for help, open lab hours, professor’s office hours, etc. If you’ve got stuff that goes into this list but I didn’t mention here I’d love to know about them.

For this exercise you need to post two comments in the online discussion forum for this week. All posts need to be positive, constructive posts that can help someone (you or someone else) do better in this class.

**What you need to do for this exercise:**

Post two comments to this week’s discussion forum.

1. The first comment is intended to be a discussion starter, and can either be
   1. Something new that you figured out:  
      The idea here is that I’d like you to have the chance to post something that’s working well, but I don’t want everyone to just post “I read the book and it’s working fine”. Instead, find something that’s an **interesting, new** idea that’s helping you to succeed in this class, and share it with everyone else
   2. A request for help with something that’s not working well  
      If you could use help with something please post a comment describing what you’d like help with, and at least one thing that you’ve already tried to do to fix this.
2. The second post should be a substantive response to another person’s post this week.
   1. The idea here is that you can help move the discussion forward. Simple “Me too” posts won’t count. One way you might offer something substantive would be to either try out someone’s idea in your own life and explain how it did/didn’t work in yours, or to comment on a similar approach that you’ve tried (and how it worked), or to help brainstorm a solution to the poster’s problem.
   2. Try to focus on solutions that are within each person’s ability to do directly, themselves.
      1. For example, if someone posts that they’re feeling overwhelmed with the amount of material, you might suggest that they only focus on a single topic at a time, and then take a break between topics. This suggestion is within the person’s ability to do on their own. In contrast, suggesting that the instructor reduce the amount of material in the class is not something that the person has any control over.