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# Collaboration in School Social Work

**Spring 2026 Week 05 SOWK 587**

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# The Plan for Week Five

## Agenda

Multi-disciplinary team meetings

Best practices and strategies for effective collaboration

MTDM Role-Play Scenarios

Intersectionality and working with diverse team members



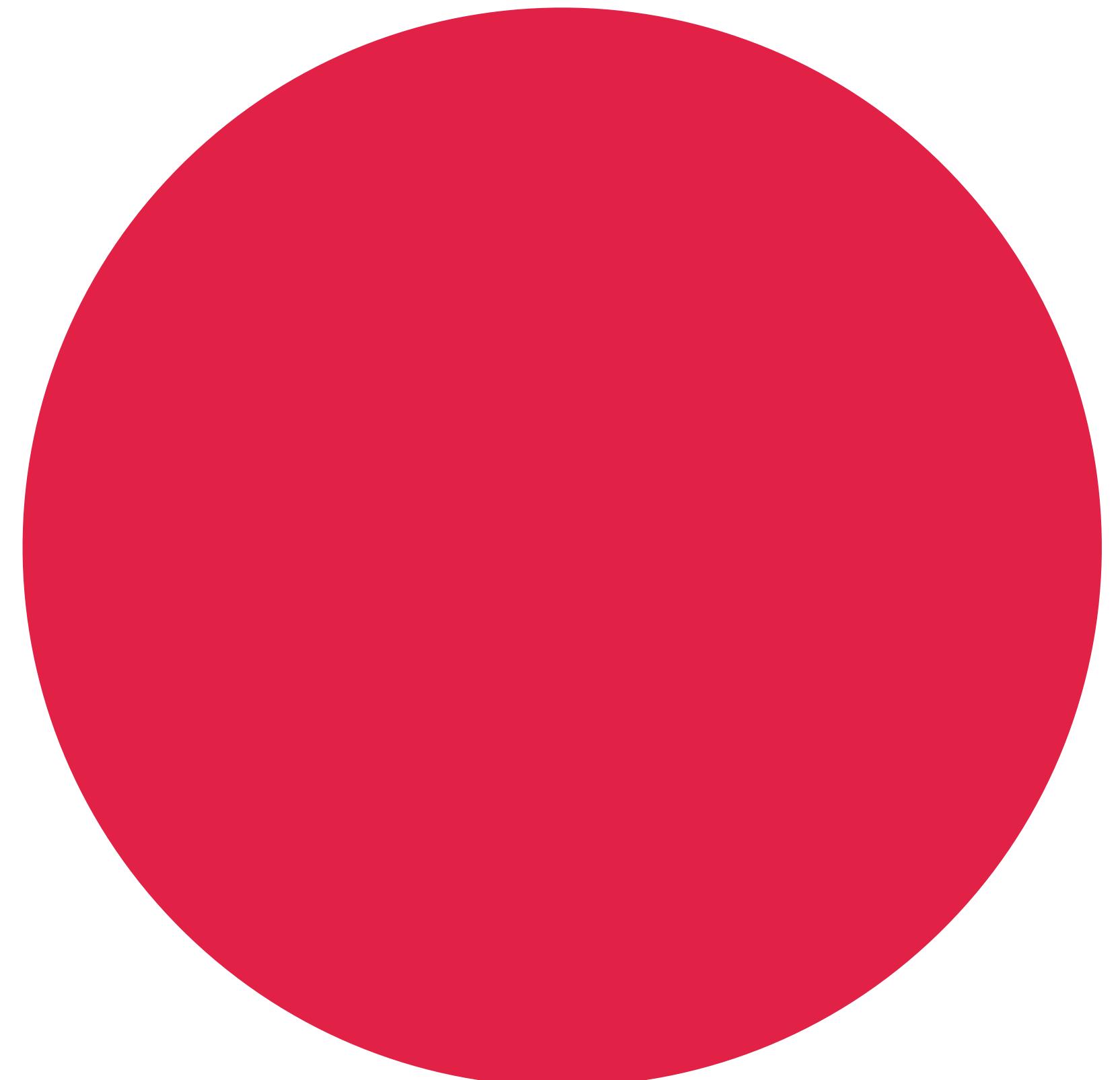
## Learning Objectives

- Identify practices that are effective working in teams and strategies for implementing them
- Assess methods to develop rapport and work with diverse team members
- Implement a collaborative meeting using active listening, shared decision-making, and conflict-resolution skills

# Disciplinary Perspectives

## What is a MDTM?

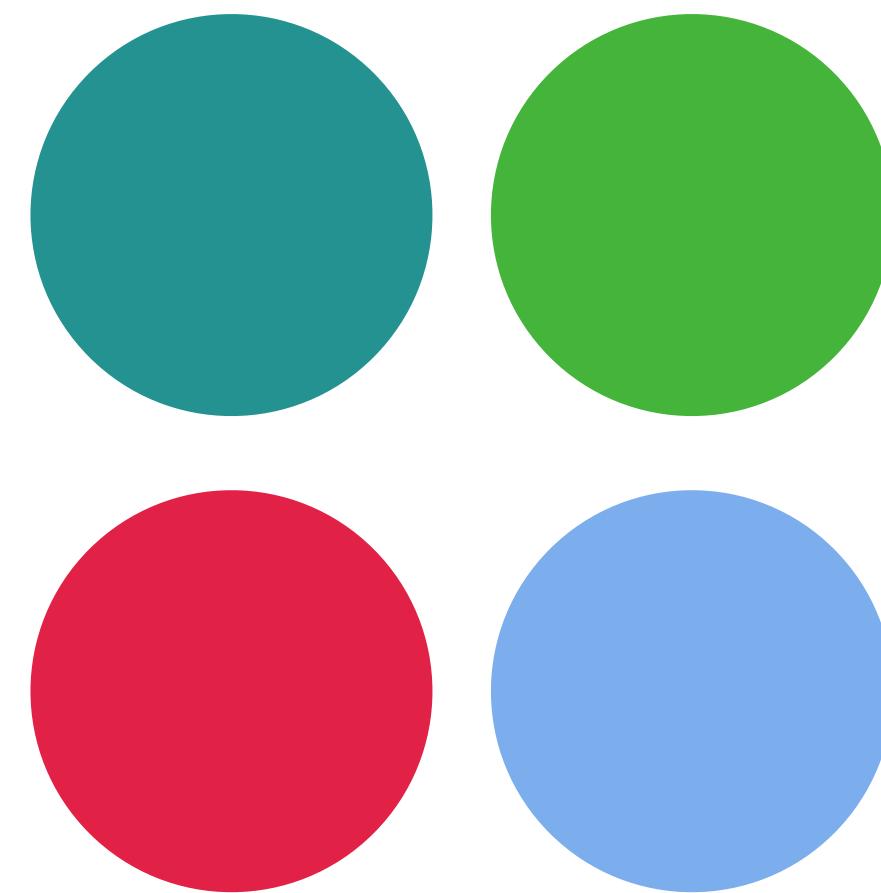
- What does multidisciplinary or interdisciplinary mean?
- Why is the work done in these settings potentially different than in single discipline-focused meetings?
- What kind of multidisciplinary meetings happen in schools?



# Disciplinary Perspectives

## A Type of Progression

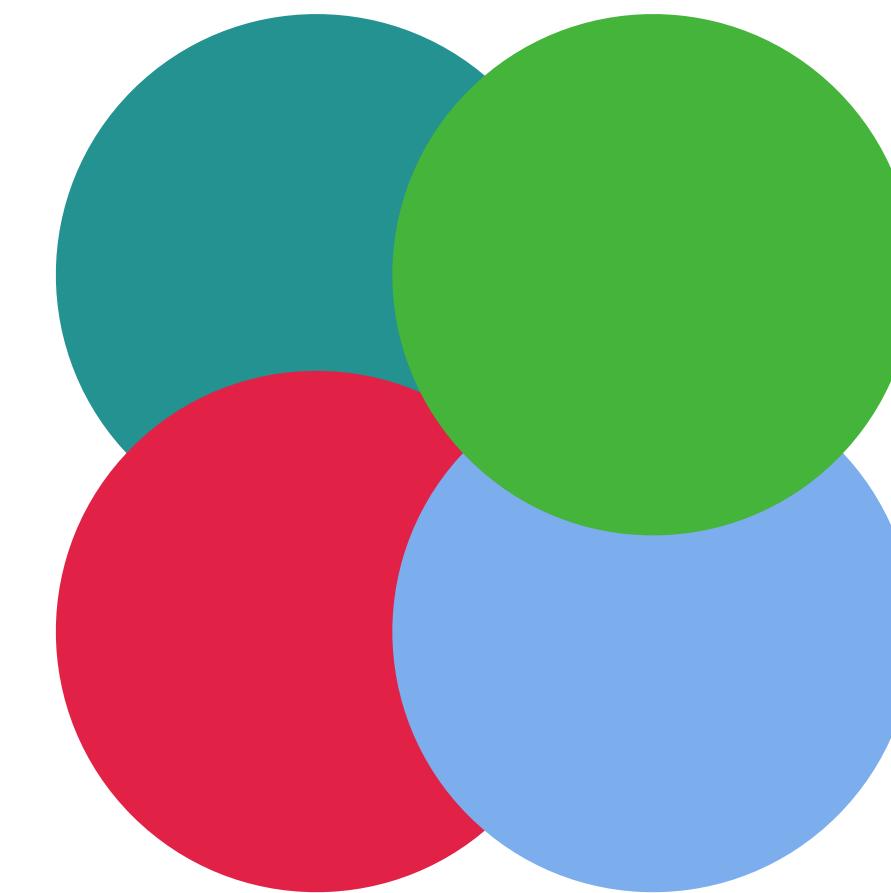
Multidisciplinary



Multidisciplinarity draws on knowledge from different disciplines but stays within their boundaries



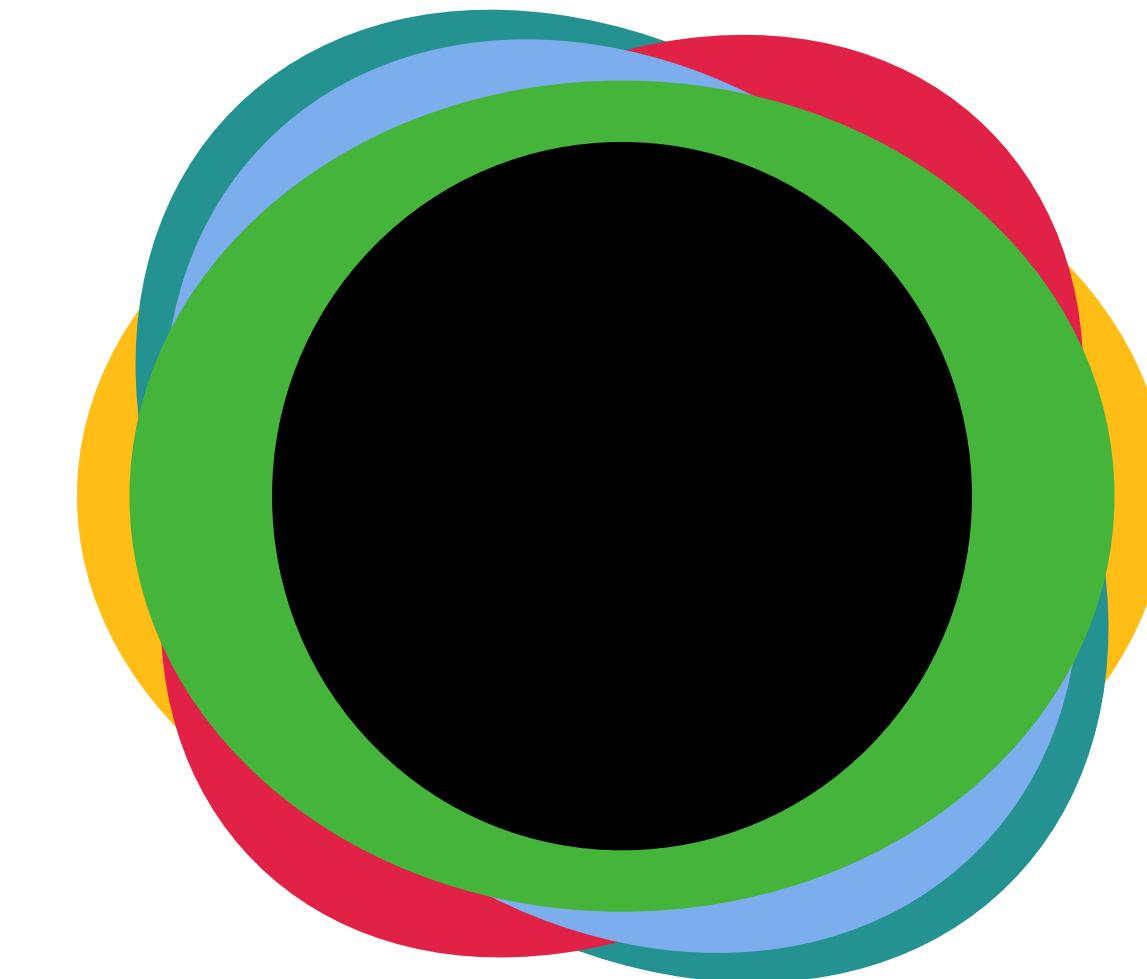
Interdisciplinary



Interdisciplinarity analyzes, synthesizes and harmonizes links between disciplines into a coordinated and coherent whole

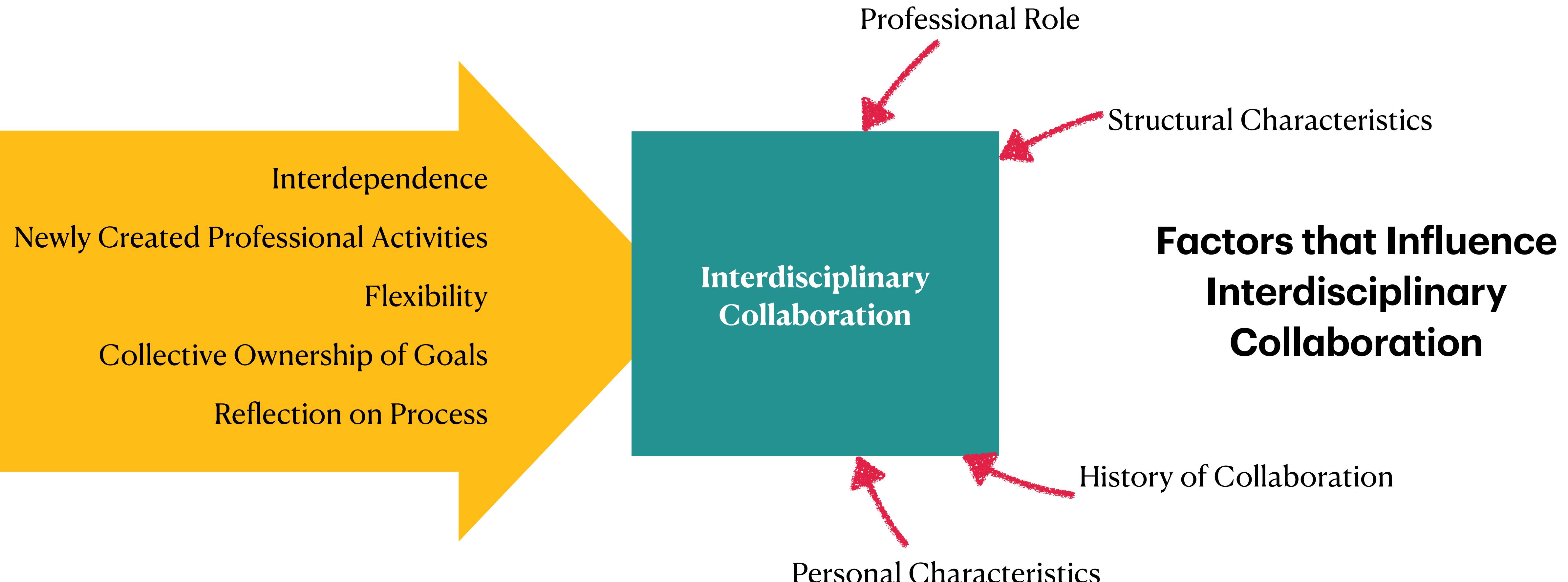
(Choi & Pak, 2006)

Transdisciplinary



Transdisciplinarity integrates the natural, social and health sciences in a humanities context, and transcends their traditional boundaries

# Model for Interdisciplinary Collaboration



A.

H.

O.

U.

B.

I.

P.

V.

C.

L.

A-Z

W.

D.

**What are the skills we need  
to be effective collaborators?**

E.

S.

Y.

F.

M.

T.

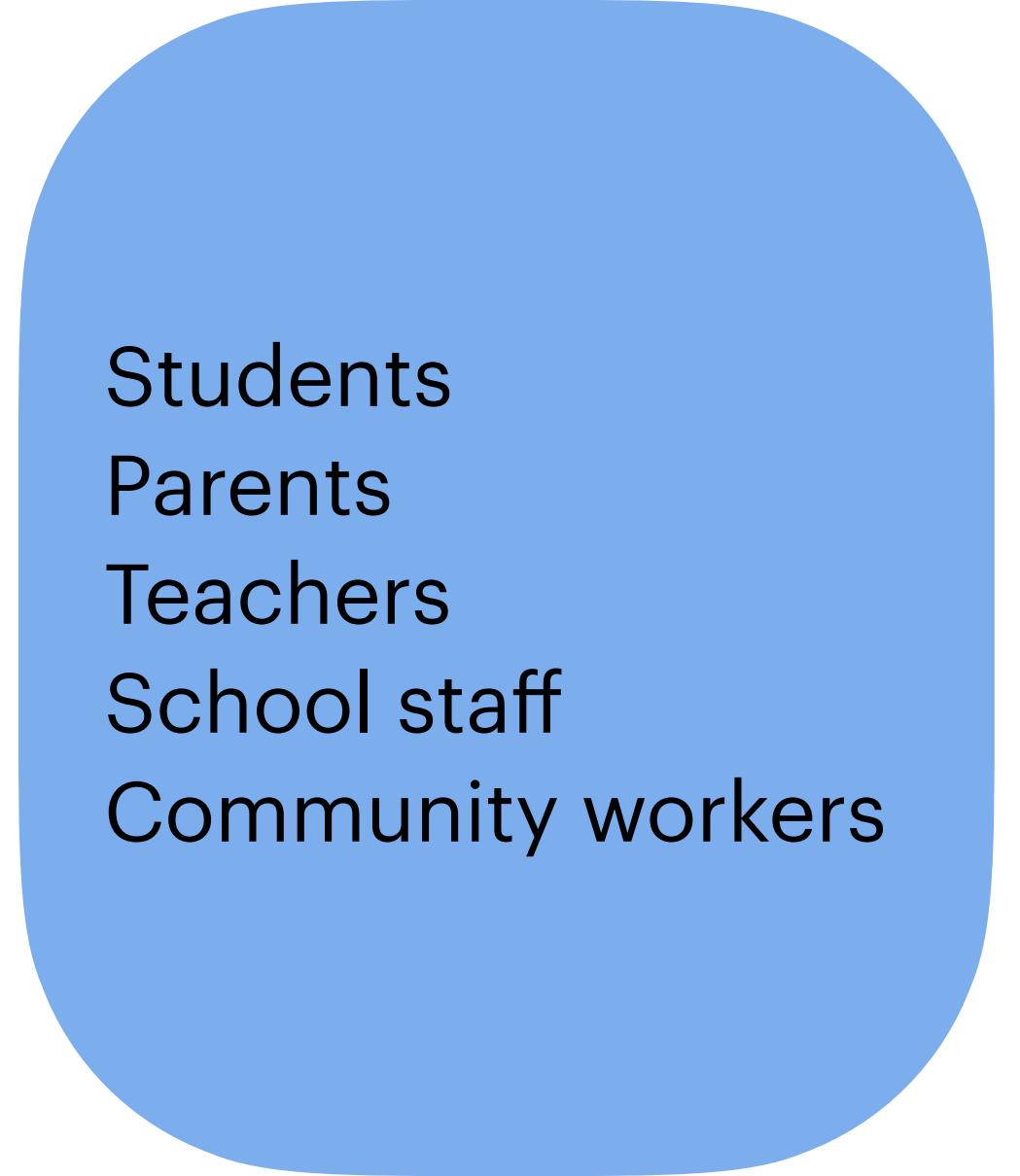
Z.

G.

N.



# How do we develop rapport with



- Students
- Parents
- Teachers
- School staff
- Community workers



# Obstacles to Teamwork

## What Makes it Not Work

### Interpersonal and Communication Difficulties

- Lack of shared professional language and technologies
- Personality conflicts among team members
- Lack of experience or training in teamwork

### Structural and Organizational Barriers

- -Inadequate organizational/administrative support and resources
- -Limited physical space for team meetings
- Time constraints

### Commitment and Leadership Issues

- Divided or conflicted commitment between the team and individual affiliations
- Unclear or unskilled team leadership
- Difficulties resolving conflict

### Power and Role-Related Challenges

- Continued dominance of higher-status professionals
- Role competition or “turf” issues
- Excessive role blurring or lack of role clarity
- Differential professional socialization processes
- Emphasis on autonomy rather than teamwork in professional education



# MTDM Role- Play Scenarios

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- Read the scenario and discuss who is going to do what
- Try to follow the situation and stay in character assigned by your role.
- When it is time to switch scenarios, spend a couple of minutes debriefing
- As a facilitator and social worker, I work to collaborate effectively and bring the group to consensus.



**Scenario 1:** Behavior-Focused Conference (BFC) - Addressing Chronic Disruptive Behavior

**Scenario 2:** Tier 1 Team Meeting – Addressing Classroom Disruptions

**Scenario 3:** IEP Meeting Follow-Up - Reviewing Accommodations & Progress

**Scenario 4:** Threat Assessment Team Meeting - Addressing Concerns About Student Well-Being

# Intersectionality & working w/ diverse team members



- How can diverse perspectives strengthen a team's ability to support students?
- What challenges can arise when team members have different cultural backgrounds or communication styles?
- How can school teams ensure all voices are valued, especially those from marginalized groups?
- How can social workers promote inclusive policies in schools?

# Ethical Decision-Making Video Presentation

The purpose of this assignment is to provide students with an opportunity to apply an ethical decision-making framework to a school social work setting. Students will demonstrate skills in analyzing client needs, identifying ethical dilemmas, and making informed decisions in accordance with professional and legal guidelines.

- 10–15-minute video presentation
- Setting Background Information
- Client Case Review (including Evidence-Based Practices and Special Education Services)
- Ethical Dilemma
- Ethical Decision-Making Framework and Application



# Ethical Decision-Making Video Presentation Rubric

Description	Highly Developed
<b>Provide strong context and background information about the client setting</b>	The presentation includes a detailed, well-articulated description of the school setting. The client's context is clear and relevant to the case.
<b>Include a descriptive overview of the client's case</b>	The presentation provides an organized and thorough case discussion, demonstrating a deep understanding of the client's needs and challenges.
<b>Identify an ethical dilemma and apply it to a decision-making framework</b>	There is an ethical dilemma that is clearly explained, explaining why it requires consideration. A nuanced discussion of an ethical decision-making framework clearly connects the rationale for decisions.
<b>Special consideration applied to evidence-based practices and special educational needs</b>	Demonstrates a strong understanding of evidence-based practices, providing citations for appropriately literature. Special education law or policies are directly connected to the client's situation.
<b>Professional presentation that is well organized and high-quality</b>	The presentation meets all assignment expectations and is clear, well-structured, professional, and engaging.

