SLO V. Critical Thinking

Students will apply critical thinking and scientific methods of thinking (including logical and empirical reasoning) to issues regarding children's well-being.

Critical thinking is an important aspect in the professional field. As a part of the child development department, the faculty create an environment where research and discussion is key to being successful in the program. With the influence of research, I have been able to apply the information that I have gained and use it in the field. Being able to use critical thinking while doing research is essential to growth as a professional.

As a part of the curriculum at California State University, Chico in the Child Development major we are required to take a methods to inquiry class. During this class we were required to do research, compute data, and compose our own research proposal. Through this course I learned how to use a data analysis computer system. The program allowed us to take numerical values and determine the probability, reliability, and validity along with the mean, median, and range. This skill will be useful if I choose to pursue a career that requires my personal research project. During the course I also learned how to do a research reviews. This is an important skill to have obtained because as an individual who wants to continuously learn about new methods to improve and refine my skills I can read a research paper and understand it.

I feel that the Child Development major emphasizes the importance of empirical data. Nearly every class taken required reading and analyzing articles in regards to families, children, and development. In the Issues in Assessment for Children and Families class we were required to take observational notes in the classroom and compute the data we gained into how children and teachers interact at the Associated Students Child Development Lab (ASCDL).

Before entering the Child Development major I struggled with understanding the scientific method and understand of independent and dependent variables in a study. However, after my years spent in Chico, I have received many helpful tips on how to not only understand the scientific methods but also apply, analyze, evaluate, and create. This is also stated by Bloom in his Taxonomy of education objectives where you need to remember, understand, apply, analyze, evaluate, and create.

The documentation of my growth in this area is shown in the writing assignment that takes data and converts it into useful information about the teaching staff in the Associated Students Child Development Lab. The other supporting evidence that I have included is my methods to inquiry research proposal. This information is supportive to my development as a student using critical thinking skills.

Overall, during my college experience I feel that my research methods have dramatically improved. I have learned to read, review, and discuss empirical data. With learning about Bloom's Taxonomy I feel like I can gage where I fall in my learning and how I can move up in the pyramid.