*SLO II. Child and Environmental Assessment and Study*

*Students will demonstrate knowledge of assessment issues and perform qualitative and quantitative assessments of children and their environments.*

I have grown in understanding assessment through the Child Development course: Assessment Issues in Families. This course taught me about the different types of assessments, issues surrounding assessments, as well as how to score and evaluate certain types of assessments. I am more aware of the way different assessments are constructed, as well as how that affects the curriculum of a classroom. I have also learned specific information about the ITERS (Infant Toddler Environmental Rating Scale), ECERS (Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale) and the CLASS (Classroom Assessment Scoring System).

This growth happened through the Assessment Issues in Families course that I took last semester. Throughout the course, I learned about assessments in a variety of different ways. I read about them in the textbooks, participated in discussion activities in class, did a group presentation about an assessment, and completed an observation and paper. I was able to understand assessments more due to the variety of contexts I studied them in. I also was able to expand on the knowledge I had learned and practice it through the questions on the course exams.

One of the most important things I learned about assessment is that the scoring is always specific and it is the most important part of the assessment. The scoring is also different for every assessment. I also learned how much bias can have a presence in an observation assessment. I learned how important the accuracy of an assessment is when evaluating or assessing something significant. For example, a child’s potential developmental delay can be proved or disproved through an assessment. I struggled to understand screening and all of the aspects that it includes. For example, screening includes sensitivity, specificity, positive predictive value and negative predictive value. Each of these aspects had a formula and a definition that was always difficult for me to understand.

One assignment that helped me develop my assessment skills was the Desired Results Developmental Profile (DRDP). I completed this assignment during the Child Development Practicum course. This assignment required me to choose a target child, whom I was currently interacting with in my internship for that course. I completed an analysis of the child according to the 43 different measures that are included on the developmental profile. I scored each child’s level of progress on a certain skill such as fine motor or health and safety. I chose what level I thought the child was at based on referring to examples, included on the DRDP, of actions a child might do at each developmental level.

I was responsible for observing, evaluating, rating the child’s developmental level and providing documentation through observation notes. This assignment helped me learn to assess a child’s developmental level without bias and become familiar with the DRDP. It also gave me the confidence when evaluating a child’s developmental level on a specific area.

The second assignment that played an active role in my understanding of assessment was the Environmental Observation Assignment. I completed this assignment in the Assessment Issues in Families course. This assignment required me to complete an observation on the Child Development Laboratory’s Preschool Room environment. For this observation, I used the ECERS and assessed many areas of the program such as the structure, parent and staff interactions, activities, language and literacy opportunities and space and furnishings. The hardest part of this assignment was the scoring because it is very specific and easy to make mistakes. The scoring took more time to complete than most of the observation itself. This assignment helped familiarize me with this type of assessment. I know that in the future if I ever need to use this type of assessment in a classroom; I will be confident.