*SLO IV. Professionalism*

*Students will engage in professional behavior appropriate to the discipline in professional contexts.*

My personal definition of professionalism includes many aspects such as respect, collaboration, responsibility, communication, honesty and problem solving. Respect, collaboration and communication relate to one another. In order to foster and maintain a professional work environment, one must have respect for others and give them the opportunity to communicate their perspective on an issue. Once the perspective of others if understood, collaboration can be implemented. All professionals should feel a sense of responsibility in order to maintain a professional, effective, and high quality work environment. Honesty and problem solving both contribute to overall professionalism. Employees should be honest with one another and approach conflict resolution positively through problem solving.

I have grown to understand professionalism through many different contexts in my college experience. I have developed an understanding of the meaning of professionalism through several classes at Chico State including the Child Development Developmentally Appropriate Practice course (CHLD 282) and the Child Development Practicum course (CHLD 392). Both of these courses included internships, which were the foundation for my professionalism knowledge. I would like to gain more experience with interviews, as well as presenting myself in a professional manner at job fairs. Being a life long learner, I will continue to learn about different aspects of professionalism as they may alter in the future. I will continue to educate myself through attendance to job fairs and professional conferences in order to continue development of my professionalism knowledge. The best of what I have achieved in this area includes understanding the importance of being on time, teamwork, and collaboration.

I have been continuously building on my knowledge of professionalism by engaging in experiences that allow me to practice my professionalism and gain additional experience. These experiences include being president of The Child Development Student Association (CDSA) and attending job fairs and interviews for international education positions. I have been president of CDSA for almost a year now and when reflecting on my experience, I have learned a lot about professionalism. Part of my job description includes overseeing all of the officers, planning and leading meetings, contacting guest speakers, reaching out to the community for volunteer opportunities and managing membership. This position has required me to be collaborative with the other officers and emphasize team work. I have also gained leadership skills through planning and leading our club meetings, for all of the members, and the officer meetings. While contacting and communicating with potential guest speakers, I am required to be professional over email, on the phone and in person. This position has helped me practice professionalism and gain many diverse skills.

My other experience where I have practiced professionalism is my attendance at an international education job fair, as well as my participation in two professional interviews. At this job fair, I had to act, dress and talk in a professional manner. During part of the fair, there were booths from all of the different schools that were seeking teachers and individuals, like myself, who were searching for jobs had to visit the booths of the schools we were interested in. With each visit to each booth, candidates had about 60 seconds to sell themselves in order to persuade the head of the school that you are qualified and deserve an interview. I practiced talking about my college course studies, experiences and interests in a professional manner while maintaining eye contact with the person I was talking to.

I was able to get two interviews with two different schools and these were my first professional job interviews. Through these interviews, I gained experience talking about my course studies, work experience, teaching philosophies, and different skills I have that are relevant to teaching positions. Some of the questions were difficult, but I was able to answer the questions while maintaining eye contact with the head of the school. Both my officer experience in CDSA and my experience at this job fair have helped me build on my professionalism knowledge. I know that in the future I will be able to expand on my existing knowledge and experiences regarding professionalism.