*SLO IV. Professionalism*

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

Being professional is a vital part of future plans. Professionalism can translate to a job, relationships, school, parenting, and so much more. Throughout my higher education experience, I have had to demonstrate a variety of actions that were and are professional. Some of which include professional writing, giving presentations, and being a professional staff member at my internships.

Many, if not all of my classes in higher education have required some form of writing. I have had many classes that required professional papers that follow APA guidelines. An example of this would be a research paper I had to complete on a topic of my choosing. The class was solely based on this end assignment and the professor designated a large portion of time going over all of the aspects of a true research paper. In another class, a professor used a writing system called “claim data warrant.” First you make a statement for the claim. Next you provide data, a quote, paraphrase, or a statistic. Then lastly for the warrant part you justify why the data fits the claim you have made. This system is a great example of how to write a successful paper that has information or data to back up the statements you made.

Giving presentations is common in higher education. The tools used in class can be translated to job interviews, meetings in a job, or a training presentation. Dressing appropriately is important for being professional. This means taking the time to prepare an outfit that is nice and presentable. Preparation for presentations is a must. If you do not study or prepare the material that you are presenting on, it looks like you do not know what you are talking about. This can mean memorizing your speech or having note cards ready to go. For PowerPoint presentations, it is important to check each slide for accuracy, as well as run through the slides as a whole to check for cohesion. Another tip is to check that technology is working correctly or have a backup plan set up. In my college experience I have witnessed numerous presentations and lectures by professors and students. I have also participated in a variety of different presentation types from informal and short to interactive and lengthy.

In my internships it has been stressed that professionalism is an important skill to master for later job possibilities. To be professional in a job like setting, there are many traits that are necessary. Punctuality is vital. As an intern and a staff member your bosses count on you to be there when you said you would be. If you cannot make it to work, you also need to provide advanced notice. Having a positive attitude in a job setting is a great way to show your bosses and coworkers that you are invested in the work you are doing. Being positive can demonstrate to others that you value the work you are doing. Initiative is another quality that bosses and hiring professionals look for. Being helpful and finding ways to make your boss’s life easier is a great way to get you noticed.

My higher education experiences at my internships have shown me that there is a right way to do something and also a wrong way. I have taken notes and received feedback regarding my writing, and I will continue to work on my abilities. Watching a variety of presentations from skilled and unskilled presenters, has given me some great examples on what to do and what not to do. I have made observations about coworkers that have enlightened me on what it might look like if you are not professional at work. I now know that I do not wish to be seen in that way, so I will work hard to be professional in my future. Being a professional is an important characteristic I hope to achieve.