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*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.*

1. My interpretation of this SLO is that students will be able to put personal judgment and beliefs aside when working with children, in order to support their wellbeing. They will be able to use critical thinking skills and knowledge in their work in order to accurately represent the children and families in their care.

2. Someone who demonstrates critical thinking skills is able to apply their knowledge of scientific methods and processes when working with children. They are able to communicate clearly and effectively, sharing information that is both accurate and reliable while keeping personal biases separate from their work. They also possess the ability to come to conclusions based on information that is both credible and accurate.

3. Looking back at both my work as a preschool teacher, as well as my internships I have learned how to approach my job objectively and with an open mind. I have learned that it is vey easy to have personal biases when working with children and families, and that you really cannot make any judgments without knowing the entire story. Each family is unique and has their own special way of operating, and I am not in a position to judge the way that each family operates just because it may be different than my own. This is something that came with time and experience, as well as my studies in the field of child development.

4. What I have struggled with in this area is mainly just remembering to think and work this way at all times. While my approach with children and families encompasses these techniques, there are still times when I have certain thoughts about things that are simply a result of a personal bias or opinion. Not necessarily in my work but as a human being I do find myself possessing certain judgments at times, and want to come to a place where I approach all things with an open mind and positive attitude.

5. The best of what I have achieved in this area has to do with my work in the classroom. I feel that I have come a long way from when I first began teaching years ago. Having worked for different programs I have seen how people are able to work with an anti bias approach, as well as people who are unable to do so. It has shown me that I want to be one of the people who are able to possess the skills and knowledge to work effectively and positively for the wellbeing of those I serve. From communicating with children and families to my colleagues, I want to be someone that others want to work with and who also want their children to learn from.

6. As a member of the child development profession, I can offer a positive environment for those in my care. I hope to provide a place where children are able to grow and flourish as well as feel a sense of belonging. I will continue to learn as my career progresses, and gain new skills and knowledge in this field that will help provide a safe and comforting atmosphere for the families that I serve. I hope to gain the respect from my peers, and be able to work in a cohesive manner and provide the best quality care that I can.

Assignments:

One assignment that comes to mind relating to these ideas is the Inquiry project for my Child Development Practicum during the Spring 2015 semester. This project took months to fulfill, starting with observations and documentation based on our idea of wanting to expand the children’s knowledge of healthy eating. The idea came from noticing that certain children’s eating habits during mealtime didn’t always include healthy options, so we wanted to come up with a way to provide knowledge and teach them more about nutrition. The process itself was thorough, and proved to be a learning experience for not only the children, but us as their teachers as well. The second assignment also comes from the Child Development Practicum as a Self Reflection assignment. This assignment showed me how far I had come in my learning and understanding of anti bias approaches, as well as being able work objectively with the children in the program.