

SLO 4 Professionalism

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

A student that is educated in the field of Child Development will learn the necessary skills and characteristics to be a professional member of the field. These skill sets include being knowledgeable and aware of the ethical and moral standards that is expected of a professional. The code of ethics covers areas of focus like the importance of maintaining confidentiality, the obligations of being a mandated reporter, and always doing one's best to create a safe and stimulating learning environment for the children and families being served. Professionalism also consists of being a good role model for children and families in modeling appropriate appearance, behavior, and attitudes. Lastly, a professional child development student is expected to continually demonstrate their ability to be responsible through being organized, prepared, punctual and dependable. These transferrable professional qualities are practiced throughout the Child Development experience at California State University, Chico and will prove to be helpful in any career that a student shall delve into.

A Child Development Professional is responsible, punctual, organized, dependable, and experienced. These qualities are practiced through working with others and peers in groups, collaboratively working with colleagues and coworkers through various internship opportunities, and in the classroom setting meeting deadlines and course requirements on a regular basis. A Child Development Professional is also respectful, honest, trustworthy, and

approachable. These qualities are crucial to have in this field because of the unique experience of working directly with the sensitive population of children and families. The professional must present themselves in such a way that is comfortable and assuring to the families, and yet will have complete control of the environment in which the children are kept safe and secure.

Before being trained in this area as a Child Development student, I was inexperienced in engaging in situations that require professionalism. Although I already obtained many of the professional qualities including responsibility and respect as stated above, I was not really expected to have those characteristics by and for others. The discipline of Child Development helped me understand the duties and responsibilities of serving as a mandated reporter and provided me with numerous internship opportunities in which I had to be professional in this manner. Through these experiences, I grew in my ability to empathize with others and in my awareness of the needs of the children and families I worked with. For example, in my Supervised Practicum Internship at the Associated Students Child Development Lab (ASCDL) I was informed one time about a child whose father was recently incarcerated. I needed to know this because I was expected to be mindful of the situation when observing the change in her behavior and interactions. I also was expected to be respectful when conversing with the child's mother during pick-up and other community events. This experience helped me practice my professionalism through being respectful, mindful and confidential.

I would like to improve my professionalism by being more prepared. As I previously stated above an aspect of being a Child Development Professional is being prepared, whether that means in the classroom or in the field. This is an aspect that I can improve in the field especially. I say this because there were many instances in the ASCDL where I was encountered with a situation in which I was expected to react immediately in a professional manner and I felt very unprepared. I acknowledge that this quality comes with practice and experience, regardless it is still a characteristic of mine that could use improvement.

Being a life-long learner, I will continue to express my professionalism in an appropriate manner. As I take on various opportunities and roles, it is my obligation to adapt my skill sets to best provide help and support; all the while, I must remain responsible and respectful to all in order to be a Child Development Professional. For example, the best way that I have learned to achieve this professional goal is by being both a friendly, approachable face and a professional with a strong, determined work ethic.

The best of what I have achieved in this area is my ability to be approachable and professional at the same time. Most people see my external appearance and attitude and are naturally attracted to it, but also underestimate my capacity to be competent as well. When in reality, this is the part of professionalism that I do best. I am approachable so that I come off to others as trustworthy and therefore making them feel comfortable and

welcomed. I am also responsible in that I am immensely loyal and hard working to my obligations. I pride myself on being punctual, dependable, and consistently able to exceed the expectations held for me.

My first assignment that helps show my knowledge and comprehension of this professionalism learning objective is a letter of recommendation I received from my internship supervisor. This letter of recommendation exemplified my understanding and acquisition of *SLO 4: Professionalism* by demonstrating my active involvement on the CSU, Chico campus. This letter was written by one of my peer mentors in hopes of getting a director job in the Community Action Volunteers in Education (CAVE) program. Within the letter Taylor Herren described a few of my achievements in student leadership positions and how my “eager and dedicated” demeanor has prepared me for more of an administrative role.

My second assignment is a staff evaluation I received from my supervisor in the Community Action Volunteers in Education (CAVE) program. This staff evaluation has also provided support for my knowledge of the *SLO 4: Professionalism*. This evaluation was for my position as Program Coordinator written by the Director of the Kids Programs in CAVE. It covered areas like responsibility and dependability, organization, leadership, communication and interpersonal skills, and quality of work. All of which I was scored in the area of “Outstanding (1)” or “Exceeds Requirements (2).” This staff evaluation showed how I am passionate and inspire others, manage my time well and effectively,

am a student leader, work collaboratively with peers and colleagues and continually exceeds expectations.