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***Narrative SLO 3: Developmental Context***

*Students will demonstrate knowledge of the multiple environmental*

*contexts in which children grow and develop, and will be able to*

*analyze systems that support children’s well-being.*

1. What experiences have you had that facilitated your growth in understanding this learning objective?

Some of the experiences I’ve had that facilitated my growth in understanding the multiple environmental contexts children grow and develop in has been from both my coursework and my internships. In my coursework I have read several different articles, studies, books, and watched documentaries that demonstrate the plethora of environments (cultural, class, etc.)

2. Of all the things I learned in this area, the thing that (surprises, challenges, fascinates etc.) me the most is......

The thing I’ve learned that is most challenging has seeing kids that develop and grow in environments that don’t have their best interest at heart. More specifically this would include children who’s parents have neglected them or abused them, having to learn about these children and the effects that ripple through their lives has spoken to my heart in many different ways. An additional thing that fascinated me through gaining more knowledge of this was seeing several different cultures coming into the Associated Students Child Development Lab while interning there, these children who’s first language wasn’t English and seeing them have the ability to thrive and development while crossing over into a new environment they didn’t have much experience with prior.

3, What has hindered me**,** what I have struggled with has been... or appreciated...or wanted to know more about...or learned about families’ developmental contexts....

I have wanted to know more about the most beneficial ways to support children who have developed and grown in challenging or in at-risk environments. I have struggled with finding the right way to encourage these children, and find a direct way to the source. Our coursework has opened our eyes to the struggles of neglect and types of abuse, but I find myself wishing it gave us more complex tools to assist these families and children who come from these often stressful and misunderstood backgrounds.

4. My understanding of developmental contexts will guide my professional practice in the following ways. . .

My knowledge of the importance of the child’s environment being of high quality and developmentally appropriate will assure my confidence in my future career. My knowledge of developmental context will also assure I am providing the most developmentally appropriate environment for a specific age/developmental level. This would ensure the child is getting the most nourishment and is being set up for success rather than expecting something from a child that may not be at that specific developmental level.

5, Being a life-long learner, I will continue to grow in my understanding of developmental contexts by....

I will continue to learn about cultures, values, and beliefs I am unfamiliar with and come into contact with. I will keep an open mind and an open heart and understand that there is not one right environment for a child to come from. I will not judge any families, children, or environment either of the two come from.

**3, Assignments**

The first assignment I chose to demonstrate my knowledge of the multiple environmental contexts a child may grow or develop in was an assignment completed in Child Development 392. This paper consisted of observing a child from the Child Development Lab’s parent conference, more specifically the target child we selected. This conference gave the parents a chance to share with the teachers what the child was like at home and the type of support and encouragement they provided for the child. This also gave the teachers an opportunity to share with the parents how the child had grown and developed in the classroom setting, the two environments merging together to ensure the child will receive the same support at school as they are at home, and vice versa.

The second assignment I chose to demonstrate this knowledge was a paper written in the course Child Development 272, this paper was based on a novel chose by the student, so in this case a novel I chose to read myself. The list of novels were all based on children who came from different environments, whether that be a geological location, extremely dissimilar cultural beliefs, and/or an environment where abuse of all kinds were present. My novel happened to be about a child bride from Yemen who at 10 years old was married off to a man who raped and emotionally abused her. She fights for a divorce and is the first child bride granted one due to the severity of the situation. Being able to read this novel and analyze it for the differences and beliefs/cultural aspects helped me grow as a Child Development professional in multiple ways. It obviously showed me some children come from very detrimentally extreme environments and cultures, it showed me I have to keep my mind open and free of judgments, and lastly is showed me that children everywhere still need the same amount of high quality care and concern, and it’s my job to learn the correct way to tailor this to each child.