**Reflective Portfolio SLO 6 – Developmental Context**

*Students will understand the multiple child rearing contexts in which children grow and develop. Students will appreciate and interpret how social class, parents, families, peers, type of children’s programs, culture, societal changes, and communities influence the course of development.*

In a diverse society, such as ours, there are many different contexts in which children grow and develop. From different socioeconomic classes to ethnicity and from types of children’s programs to communities in which we live, all children are raised differently. As a child development professional, I understand these multiple child rearing contexts in which children grow and develop.

My knowledge in this area has grown from my coursework and through application of my knowledge in my experiences. Through a forty-five hour classroom experience course, I engaged with students from many different backgrounds. It was my job to apply what I had learned about children’s development and their learning styles to the specific class work in this environment.

As a future teacher, I need to fully understand and be prepared for any developmental context that walks through my classroom door. Through my education, I have learned that the attitudes, values, and beliefs of the surrounding school community have a strong impact on the social curriculum in the school. To support these attitudes and beliefs, I know that there needs to be a relationship or bond between the students, the families, the community, and the school.

Also, through my employment at Chico State University’s Child Development Lab, I have helped develop curriculum that supports a classroom community. With such a young age group, three to five year olds, and such a diverse setting, with children from varying abilities and from different cultures, I implemented interactions, activities, and routines in the classroom to build relationships between the children and the classroom. For example, there is one child that came into the classroom for the first time and did not speak any English. She is an English language learner and speaks Spanish as her first language. In the classroom, we have the school routine posted on the wall for the children to look at. To build a classroom community and to support diversity, we posted the schedule for the day in the Spanish language as well as Arabic next to it. Not only do the children that speak that language feel more welcomed and accepted, other children become more aware and interested in diversity.

As a member of the child development profession, I will continue to research and gain knowledge in diversity and how to support it in the classroom or in any experience I may encounter. I can offer support and appreciation for children and families that are influenced by multiple child rearing contexts in which children grow and develop.

One assignment that I completed that shows documentation of my learning in this area is a writing assignment that I completed in a teacher education course (Education for Teachers 302: Access and Equity in Education). In this assignment, I was asked to reflect on my upbringing and family values that make me who I am. By reflecting on my own experiences and cultural background, I was able to compare my expectations and beliefs about cultural diversity to readings in textbooks and videos.

Another assignment documenting my knowledge in this area is a multicultural and democratic response paper that I wrote for a teacher education course (Education for Teachers 520: Fundamentals of Teaching Practice), in which I wrote about how I would apply multicultural education in a future classroom of mine. This documents my understanding of this area because I was able to research and gain knowledge through readings of multicultural education and then I came up with ways to incorporate multicultural education into the classroom to help all children develop and grow.

Lastly, I completed a classroom environment floor plan in Education for Teachers 520: Fundamentals of Teaching Practice. This would document my learning in the developmental context area because I used my knowledge of individual children’s learning styles and applied it to the physical learning environment. To create a positive learning environment for all children, no matter their child rearing context, I planned a classroom environment that would support all types of learning styles, including children who learn in small groups, large groups, or individually and children who learn better lying on the ground or a rug or sitting in chairs at desks.