Chou Thao

Reflective Portfolio

*Critical Thinking*

*Students will demonstrate an understanding of and ability to apply scientific methods of thinking (including logic and empirical reasoning) about children, families, and their well-being. Students will differentiate between their personal and subjective theories about children’s development and scientific theories of development rooted in empirical research and based on best practices. In addition, students will demonstrate both currency in information technology appropriate to the discipline and an understanding of the ethical use of such technology.*

1. Read and reflect on the statement above. What is your response to what you have learned about critical thinking since the time you began your higher education experience?
2. Next, what assignments would document what you have written above? Are there assignments from your college courses that would document your growth in the area of critical thinking?

Everyone thinks because it is our nature to do so, however much of our thinking is biased and distorted. The quality of our life and what we make or build depends precisely on the quality of our thought. Critical thinking can occur whenever one judges, decides, or solves a problem. A critical thinker can communicate effectively with others while figuring out solutions to complex problems. A critical thinker can also gather and assess relevant information using abstract ideas to generate conclusions and solutions. We all use critical thinking.

 I have grown in the areas of critical thinking by using critical thinking every day. When I am making a decision, I am using critical thinking. My work experiences and my life experiences have taught me to use critical thinking as a tool for success. My child development classes have taught me how to effectively use critical thinking inside preschool classroom, and how to effectively use critical thinking to solve problems.

 Here is a question I often encounter when working with children: Should I find solutions for children? What I have learned was that I shouldn’t find the solutions for children, but should let them find their own. I learned that children at a very young age can use critical thinking to solve problems and generate acceptable conclusions. Young children often get upset if they do not immediately have a chair to sit in, cannot find the crayon they want, or accidentally rip the paper they are working on. It is easy to say, “Get a chair from over there, here is a crayon or get some tape,” however it is far better to respond, “Let’s think about how we can solve this problem,” and let the student come up with his or her own idea so he or she can test the idea. Even though the conclusions generated by the student may not be perfect, students are usually proud of their attempts to fix their own problems.

 I would like to continue to grow in the area of critical thinking. I know I must use critical thinking as a tool to help me accomplish my goals and objectives. In order to be a critical thinker, one must evaluate his or her thinking. Evaluating solutions and conclusions generated from critical thinking can help determine our own strengths and weaknesses. These strengths and weaknesses can be used as a tool to improve one’s thinking. Critical thinking is important because it enables one to analyze, evaluate, explain, and restructure their thinking, which decreases the risk of adopting or thinking base on false belief.

 There are assignments that document what I have written above. One assignment that documents my growth in the areas of critical thinking is my critical thinking assignments from my logic class. My critical thinking assignments taught me how to think outside the box when generating ideas. My critical thinking assignments also taught me how to recognize problems and find workable means for meeting those problems. Another assignment that documents my growth in the area of critical thinking is my Inquiry in Child Development research paper. This paper taught me how to effectively use critical thinking as a tool to do research. The third assignment that documents my growth in the area of critical thinking is my Child Development Practicum self-reflection papers. My self-reflection papers allowed me to critically think about problems that had occurred when I worked with children so I can develop solutions to solve the problems.