*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.*

I have learned through my higher education that putting aside personal feelings and theories is something that is extremely difficult, yet important to be able to do. When I reflect about my feelings and attitudes about how children develop before I was educated I realize that I based most of all my reasoning on how I feel, and most nothing on what has been researched. This is something that most people that are not educated do, which is understandable, but as a professional it is crucial for me to put personal theories aside and use research and scientific theories when it comes to understanding children, families, and their well-being.

I took a class Child Development 251, Observation Techniques, where I was given the opportunity to observe a child’s growth. I sat in an observation room for multiple hours and watched and documented what I saw. This was my first time ever observing a child with this type of eye. It was difficult at first, but as I sat and took observation notes it started to become more clear. I wrote specifically how this child showed or did not show: motor movement, fine motor, discrete movement, use of force, hand dominance, laterality, midline, physical play, and what their pattern of fine versus gross motor development was. By learning what all these terms mean I was able to put aside my personal feelings and judgments aside which made the assignment easier to complete.

I also have taken a class in Child Development called Research Methods. In this class I created a research study. The purpose of the research study was to examine the relationship between positive parenting and motor skill development in preschool-aged children. Before beginning my research project I had to give ample amount of research in order to show how I was going to implement my study. I learned that implementing research is a difficult task, it must be backed up by research that has been documented. It cannot be based on any type of personal feelings. This class also taught me how important technology is. In order to complete my research project I needed to learn how to find current research studies through a library database. This class was by far the most challenging class I have had in my higher education.

I was enrolled in a Practicum class where I was given the opportunity to sit in a parent conference and observe a head teacher speak to a parent about their children’s growth and answer any questions they might have had. Within this conference I heard the head teacher give detailed descriptions, using evidence that had been documented throughout the semester, on where this child’s development is so far. She did not put any of her personal feelings or theories into the conversation rather kept it very professional.

Being a lifelong learner I will continue to use technology as a way to educate myself in the field of Child Development. There is so much more to learn and the internet and research databases are such a brilliant way to continue my education after I have graduated. I will also continue to educate others on best practices