Jordan Navratil

Reflective Portfolio 5

*SLO V. 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.*

One of the first fundamental values of child development I have learned were the theorists who brought us our knowledge that we know today. From Piaget to Vygotsky to Freud and Bronfenbrenner, my knowledge of the child development field has increased due to these theorists and what they stood for. I have learned that although I can know and understand these scientific theories, I really have learned the most from the practical hands-on experiences I have had in the child development field.

I have learned different ways of thinking and to be open-minded when it comes to the child development field. I may have certain ways that I think are best for children and growth, but the Associated Students Child Development Lab has taught me that as a whole, we must all comply by the same standards. For example, the ASCDL does not celebrate holidays because children that attend our school come from all different walks of life’s. Instead, we celebrate each others’ cultures, ethnicities and backgrounds in order to learn more about ourselves and each other.

My learning has stemmed from the direct interactions I have had with children and families, as stated above. In my first two years of my major, I simply learned about theorists and different theories. I thought all of this was great and useful information, but once I had my first hands-on experiences in a classroom, I learned that this is really what makes my major meaningful.

In order to learn more about this area, I want to expand my knowledge of child development. For example, in one course titled “Methods of Inquiry in Child Development,” I spent a semester learning about different methods of research, how to write a research paper, how to use SPSS data files, and how to understand correct mathematical empirical research. Although these tasks were difficult and often daunting, I learned a lot about research methods. After all, research is how we gain the most knowledge about issues in child development.

As a member of the child development profession, I can offer an understanding of the different areas of child development. As a child development student and graduate, I experienced many different things that some people who have not had the opportunity to go through my major have. I have done research and wrote an extensive paper on my findings, interned hundreds of hours, and eventually all of this led to me being a paid-staff in the ASCDL. I can assist people who have not had as much experience, but want to learn more. All of the information I have learned is practical knowledge and can directly be turned into working with children in the “real world.”

The research paper I wrote in the inquiry class is one that can be used to display my learning in this SLO. Also in this class, I learned how to use SPSS files, which helped my computer skills. Another piece of work I can use is my observation in an “Observation Techniques” class at the beginning of my child development career. There, I learned not to use inference and to solely state facts, and that is something that has helped tremendously in the rest of my child development career.