All Child and Family Studies (CFS) students complete a “Professional Portfolio.”
(They do this over the two years they are in the program)

This is a Structured Portfolio in which students document their achievement of the first three of the CFS Program Learning Outcomes (Los)

They document their achievement of these LOs as they take three CFS classes. They take 494 Professional Development in CFS I when they are first admitted into the program as juniors. This class uses a standardized learning experience (The Creation and Use of Knowledge) to teach students the accepted process for documenting their achievement of the CFS Learning Outcomes.

The Creation and Use of Knowledge learning experience involves the following:

- Students are taught a process of documenting their achievement of CFS LO number 1: students will be able to describe the development, roles, and interaction patterns of children, youth, and family in their social settings;
- This learning experience includes the following:
  - They are introduced to and examine the tenants and history of professions, professional organizations, and the creation of professional or academic knowledge;
  - They learn about academic journals, the peer review process; They do this by selecting and analyzing 5 journals that are read by professionals in the career area they anticipate entering;
  - They select and read two articles (from peer reviewed journals) that they can argue will help them accomplish LO #1;
  - Then, they analyze the theoretical knowledge that is embedded in both articles. They learn to accurately use APA style guide as they cite within the text and create a reference list;
  - When writing about the theoretical knowledge, they use the CFS Learning Outcomes Documentation Template form which includes a description of how they expect to use the theoretical knowledge in their future professional practice (template question #6); and
  - They are also asked to explain how at least three of the PSU Campus-Wide Learning Outcomes have been a part of their accomplishment of the CFS Program LO.
- All of this makes sure they can accomplish both the CFS Learning Outcomes Preamble as well as CFS LO #1.

Example 1: Used as the student was documenting her/his achievement of CFS LO #1: Students are able to identify dimensions of diversity and recognize the oppressive forces that hinder their positive development.
6) What PSU Campus-Wide Learning Outcomes were involved in this learning experience?

The Portland State University (PSU) Campus-Wide Learning Outcomes that were involved in my public school system’s oppression of special needs students learning experience were, “Diversity, Ethics and Social Responsibility, and Engagement.”

The PSU Diversity Learning Outcome states the need for students to be engaged citizens and to have the ability to understand and communicate about the challenges people face when they have been oppressed in our society. My public school system’s oppression of special needs students learning experience was a clear match for this PSU learning outcome. I made a personal connection with people who are dealing with issues of being in an oppressed group and my eyes were opened to the challenges faced by special needs students and their families. As I was interviewing the parents during the learning experience, I had face-to-face contact with them. This allowed me to hear and see the emotions they feel every day as they struggle to overcome the issues related to being in an oppressed group. The real tragedy is that the oppressive system in some schools is hindering the positive development of a number of special needs students, which goes against the main goal of the public school system. I gained a new perspective on the differently-abled in our society and know that I will take this perspective with me in my work as a parent educator. I feel as though the learning has enhanced my ability to understand the oppressed individual’s life experience and to genuinely communicate about oppression in our community.

The Ethics and Social Responsibility PSU Learning Outcome describes an expectation for students to contribute to their community and to feel a sense of
responsibility to society as a whole. Being self aware and acting in an ethical manner will enhance the quality of life for every person a student encounters. As a result of the public school system’s oppression of special needs students learning experience, I have a deeper understanding of the feelings experienced by this particular marginalized group and I believe those feelings are similar to the experiences of other marginalized groups. I have been successful in meeting this PSU learning outcome because I feel a sense of responsibility to the public schools, and the community that surrounds me. I have unknowingly contributed to the problem through my vote and my voice, and I have a sense of social responsibility to help fix it.

The PSU Learning Outcome, Engagement, correlates with the feeling of responsibility to help fix the problem with the public school system. The learning outcome states that PSU strives to teach students how to apply their learning to benefit the broader community. The public school system’s oppression of special needs students learning experience has inspired me to engage myself in whatever way I can. For example, I know as I go through the rest of my life, I will always keep the special needs population in mind when I am casting my vote. Also, I will be engaged in community events and try to stay current on the issues in the special education field. My increased awareness of the oppressive forces hindering a student’s positive development has inspired me to advocate for families in my professional practice as well. This learning will stay with me, because it has been a powerful, eye opening experience. I have identified dimensions of diversity and I will access, analyze, apply, and articulate theoretical knowledge to make professional decisions with the hope of being able to improve the lives of children, youth, and families in diverse groups.
Example 2: Used as the student was documenting her/his achievement of CFS LO #3: *Students are able to demonstrate profession standards of ethical conduct.*

6. What PSU Campus-Wide Learning Outcomes were involved in this learning experience?

The Portland State University (PSU) Campus-Wide Learning Outcomes that were involved in my professionalism in cooperative learning projects experience were, “Creative and Critical Thinking, Communication, and Ethics and Social Responsibility.” Creative and critical thinking involves a student’s ability to solve problems by being a creative, yet critical, thinker. It is important for a student to learn how to critically analyze a situation and come up with a creative solution (retrieved from [http://www.pdx.edu](http://www.pdx.edu)). As I was observing the way the group members were interacting with one another, it became clear that we had stopped moving forward on the project. We were stuck because the frustration was building causing the communication to break down. Having had previous life experience in cooperative projects, I instinctually knew I needed to step up and take a lead role. As stated in the PSU learning outcome, I identified the problem and got creative with a strategy to solve it. Although I did not officially have the theoretical knowledge at that point in the process, I was applying and articulating a professional standard of ethical conduct in the process of resolving the problem.

The communication learning outcome relates to this same part of my learning experience. PSU states that among other things, communication skills are needed to interact, get information, gain skills, and to contribute to whomever a student encounters in their lives. Communication was clearly an issue during the cooperative learning project. I took the lead and acted in a mediator role, which forced the designated leader
to communicate honestly with the group member who was slacking. This process moved all the group members forward and put us back on the path of productive communication. As I stated before, my decision to demonstrate a professional standard of ethical conduct helped to solve the problem and to show my achievement of the CFS learning outcome.

In the ethics and social responsibility campus-wide learning outcome, PSU faculty strives to support their students in learning to think outside themselves. Success in this learning outcome means a student has an awareness of the greater community and feels a sense of responsibility to contribute to that community. Even before accessing this theoretical knowledge, I knew I should be able to expect this kind of professionalism from a 400 level course at PSU. When the slacking group member’s behavior became evident, the remaining group members and I shared a feeling of disappointment in not having all of our group members’ demonstrating a level of ethics and social responsibility. The shared disappointment was, in a way, a positive thing because we became more cohesive. I was the one who ended up taking the lead, but I did not do it without the support of others. These three PSU campus-wide learning outcomes all relate to demonstrating professional standards of ethical conduct in order to make professional decisions to improve the lives of families.