

Texas A&M University-Texarkana Course Syllabus
COUN 540 Introduction to Play Therapy
Summer II 2019

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Office Hours: Monday – Thursday 3 – 4 pm or by appointment

Class Location: UC 247

Class Days & Times: Monday – Thursday 4:00 – 5:55 p.m.

Course Description: This course is designed to (1) assist those who work with children in understanding the fundamental tenets of play therapy, (2) help participants develop an effective philosophy of and approach to play therapy, (3) increase participants' understanding of the inner world and behavior of children, (4) help students connect with children on a feeling level, (5) promote self-awareness and self-understanding, (6) increase participants' understanding of child development, particularly with children ages three to nine, (7) enhance participants' sensitivity to and acceptance of others, and (8) equip students with beginning-level play therapy skills.

Course Delivery Method: This course incorporates the following: 1) lecture, 2) small group activities, 3) assigned readings and class discussion, 4) role play with toys and other hands on activities, and 5) videotapes and micro-practicum experiences. Students are expected to be a self-directed learner/reader of the text & other course materials.

Required Textbooks/Resources:

Landreth, G. (2012). *Play therapy: The art of the relationship*, 3rd ed. Taylor & Francis: NY. ISBN-13: 978-0415886819

Lowenstein, L. (2011). *Assessment and Treatment Activities for Children, Adolescents and Families Volume 3: Practitioners Share Their Most Effective Techniques*. Toronto, Canada: Champion Press. ISBN: 978-0-9685199-7-4

Purpose: The purpose of this introductory course is to assist those who work with children in understanding the fundamental tenets of play therapy, to help students develop an effective philosophy of and approach to play therapy, increase students

understanding of the inner world and behavior of children, to help students connect with children on a feeling level, to promote self-awareness and self-understanding, to increase students understanding of child development, particularly ages three to nine, to enhance students sensitivity to and acceptance of others, and to equip students with beginning-level play therapy skills.

Student Learning Outcomes:

The student will:

1. Demonstrate an understanding of children's perceptual view of their world (CACREP II.F.5.a,g).
2. Explain how children communicate and the rationale for using play therapy (CACREP II.F.5.g).
3. Identify the meaning, implications and themes of children's play behavior (CACREP II.F.5.g,h,i; 7.e,d).
4. Demonstrate the ability to establish a safe relationship with children, which is empathic, understanding, and accepting (CACREP II.F.5.f).
5. Demonstrate the ability to empathically respond to the content and emotional expression in children's verbal, non-verbal and play behaviors (CACREP II.F.5.f).
6. Explain the rationale for therapeutic limit setting, identify areas where limits are needed and demonstrate the ability to effectively implement the steps in setting limits (CACREP II.F.5.j).
7. Explain how to determine therapeutic progress in play therapy and the steps in preparing a child for termination (CACREP II.F.5.f)..
8. Identify and use relevant American Counseling Association ethical principles, legal considerations in working with children and appropriate multicultural considerations in the playroom (CACREP II.F.3.i, 5.d).

Methods of Evaluation:

Grades will be determined by the total grade average of scores earned for class participation/discussions, assignments, and assessments.

Grading Scale:

- A – 90% to 100%
- B – 80% to 89%
- C – 70% to 79%
- D – 60% to 69%
- F – under 60%

Assignments, Due Dates, and Possible Points:

Class participation/Discussion	20 pts.
Portable Play Therapy Bag/Box	50 pts.
In-Class Play Sessions (30pts.2X)	60 pts.
Video Play Sessions (50pts.2X)	100 pts.
<u>Exam</u>	<u>70 pts.</u>
Total Points	300 pts.
<i>Mid-Eval Bonus Pts.</i>	<i>5 pts.</i>

Course Assignments & Exams

Students are expected to participate in all areas of the course. Students must show some level of knowledge of the material in class discussions, assignments, and activities.

Course Requirements and Grading: Grades earned will be dependent upon the total points earned reflecting the activities as listed below. Assignments must be completed in a timely fashion in order to maximize the most amounts of points. Assignments will not be accepted via email unless prior arrangements have been made with the instructor. All assignments must be turned in at the beginning of class. Late assignments WILL NOT be accepted. Assignments will not be accepted by email. In effort to reduce difficulties, technical or otherwise, students should not wait until the last minute to complete assignments.

Class Participation: Students are expected to be prepared to discuss reading assignments and other learning activities. Failing to prepare as evidenced by non-participation may result in a decrease in grade.

Reading the Text: It is very important to keep up with the assigned readings in the text. This material is very different from the other material that has been presented in other courses. Play therapy is a unique specialty that is very different from mainstream counseling. The first half of the class is requires readings and acquiring basic knowledge. The second half of the class is experiential in nature.

Portable Play Therapy Bag/Box: This class is based on the idea that play therapy can be delivered in almost any setting. Students are expected to create/develop their own bag/box of portable play therapy materials. The bag/box should be designed to meet the needs of the expected population. A list of appropriate play materials will be provided to students.

In-class Play Session: Students will participate in two supervised play sessions. These sessions will provide the opportunity to implement play therapy skills. You will critique these experiences in a group sharing session.

Play Sessions: Students will arrange two 20-30 minute play sessions with a child 4 to 8 years old. Students are not allowed to conduct home play sessions on their own children. Play sessions can be conducted in the student's home, a kindergarten classroom, or other settings with toys. Students are expected to use their portable play therapy bag/box in the play sessions. **DO NOT CONDUCT HOME SESSIONS UNTIL AFTER THE LIMIT SETTING CLASS.** Students must videotape the sessions and critique each experience in a typed paper (2-3 pages for each session, double spaced, times new roman, 12 pt., with a cover page). Each session critique should include the following sub headings:

- Overview of the session (setting, happenings, etc)
- My feelings about the session (write in detail)
- Child's Feelings (your best guess if you are not sure)
- Returning Responsibility to the Child (provide specific examples)
- Corrected Responses (very important)

Select four responses you would like to correct and show how you would change the response using the following format:

- Child- (said or did... Give the child's verbal response or action)
- Your response
- Corrected response

- Reason for change

Exam: There will be one mid-semester exam. The exam will consist of short answer and essay questions. NO LATE EXAMS WILL BE GIVEN.

Library/Media Resources: YouTube video on each theory application is highly encouraged.

Late Assignments: Late assignments are assessed at a 10% point deduction for the first day late and an additional 10% point deduction for each additional day late. Feedback on late assignments will be minimal and will be returned to the candidate at a time that is at the discretion of the instructor. Students are not allowed to take exams past the deadline without advanced approval of the professor. Failure to turn in an assignment or exam will result in an incomplete or failing grade in the course.

Course Etiquette: Students are expected to be courteous in all their interactions with peers and instructor in class or online if applicable.

Discussion Board Standards: Except in unforeseen circumstances the blackboard will not be used for assignments. If and when used, student will be notified. However, certain course materials will be in blackboard.

Disability Accommodations: Students with disabilities may request reasonable accommodations through the A&M-Texarkana Disability Services Office by calling 903-223-3062.

Academic Integrity: Academic honesty is expected of students enrolled in this course. Cheating on examinations, unauthorized collaboration, falsification of research data, plagiarism, and undocumented use of materials from any source constitute academic dishonesty and may be grounds for a grade of 'F' in the course and/or disciplinary actions. For additional information, see the university catalog.

A&M-Texarkana Email Address: Upon application to Texas A&M University-Texarkana an individual will be assigned an A&M-Texarkana email account. This email account will be used to deliver official university correspondence. Each individual is responsible for information sent and received via the university email account and is expected to check the official A&M-Texarkana email account on a

frequent and consistent basis. Faculty and students are required to utilize the university email account when communicating about coursework.

Drop Policy: To drop this course after the census date, a student must complete a Drop/Withdrawal Request Form, located on the University Registrar's webpage or obtained in the Registrar's Office. The student must submit the signed and completed form to the instructor of each course indicated on the form to be dropped for his/her signature. The signature is not an "approval" to drop, but rather confirmation that the student has discussed the drop/withdrawal with the faculty member. The form must be submitted to the Registrar's office for processing in person, email Registrar@tamut.edu, mail (7101 University Ave., Texarkana, TX 75503) or fax (903-223-3140). Drop/withdraw forms missing any of the required information will not be accepted by the Registrar's Office for processing. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that the form is completed properly before submission. If a student stops participating in class (attending and submitting assignments) but does not complete and submit the drop/withdrawal form, a final grade based on work completed as outlined in the syllabus will be assigned.

Students with federal loans and/or grants: Students who have federal loans and grants must be aware that participation is monitored in online courses. In the event a student withdraws from a course the student will be required to refund all federal funds prorated from the last date of participation. A student's last access to Blackboard would not suffice as participation. The required weekly activity could include a comment to a blog, a discussion board posting, a journal entry, a quiz or exam, a submitted assignment, or other measurable and tracked activity.

Student Technical Assistance:

Solutions to common problems and FAQ's for your web-enhanced and online courses are found on the [Online Student Training](#) page on our website.

If you cannot find your resolution there, you can submit a support request by contacting the IT Service Desk:

Email: isite@tamut.edu

Phone: 903-334-6603

Submit a [Support Request](#)

Additional student help for Blackboard can be found here:

[Blackboard Help for Students](#)

Technical Requirements:

The following are the minimum computer requirements for online learning:

A computer capable of handling streaming video. A mid-range multi-core CPU should be adequate.

A sound card.

A high speed internet connection preferably directly connected to the computer via a hard-wired Ethernet connection rather than wirelessly connected.

Virus and adware protection software.

Microsoft Word, minimum version 2007 or above.

[Mozilla Firefox](#) browser available free.

The most recent versions of Java, Flash, QuickTime, Adobe Reader, and Shockwave. You can check this in the Firefox browser by visiting:

[Firefox Plugin Check Tool](#)

Please note: some instructors may require the use of a headset with microphone and/or a webcam. If so, the cost of these items is not included in your course fees and will need to be acquired at your own expense.

Blackboard Mobile for iOS and Android Devices

Android and iOS devices are currently supported using the Blackboard Mobile App, available for free from your App Store or scan the code below:



The Blackboard Mobile App provides limited access to courses, including the ability to read and contribute to discussions, check grades and announcements, access content, read and comment on blogs, reflect in journals, link to your personal Dropbox, and receive push notifications when courses are updated. Limited course features may also be available via your mobile device's browser; however, your mobile device does not replace your personal computer and should not be used as a substitute for one. High stakes assignments, tests, etc. should be completed on your personal computer, and not on your mobile device.

Course/Instructor Specific Information

Attendance and Participation:

Candidates are expected to arrive on time and participate fully in class discussions, activities, and assignments. Therefore, all technological devices should be out of view and silenced during class, except when needed for class or presentation purposes.

Candidates are expected to exhibit a high degree of professionalism in and outside of the classroom. Prompt and consistent attendance is an essential dimension of professional behavior. Missing more than 2 classes will result in being withdrawn from the course. Leaving early or arriving late will result in reduced participation points for the dates in which the event occurs or may be considered an absence from class, dependent upon the amount of time missed.

Email the instructor when being late or absent before class begins.

Course Communication & Changes: All communication about the course will be through email, Blackboard announcements, and in-class discussions. It is the student's responsibility to keep up with course assignments/exam changes. Any and all changes

will be communicated in advance. Not knowing a deadline or “confusion” is not an excuse. If you find yourself confused, ask other students and the professor.

Confidentiality: Because class and group activities often involve some level of personal self-disclosure, it is extremely important to maintain confidentiality. Revealing personal information about others outside of the classroom is a breach of confidentiality and is unacceptable.

Texas A&M – Texarkana Counseling Psychology Program

Statement on Professional Behavior

Counseling is a profession that requires the mastery of a large body of knowledge and the acquisition of clinical skills, as well as high standards of behavior and appropriate attitudes. In addition to fulfilling behaviors consistent with accepted standards of professional conduct at Texas A&M University – Texarkana, and further defined by the ethical standards for counselors.

The following personal characteristics and attitudes include but are not limited to those observed and evaluated throughout the Counseling Psychology curriculum. Students are expected to demonstrate these characteristics, both in their academic and personal pursuits.

Integrity: Displays honesty in all situations and interactions; is able to identify information that is confidential and maintain its confidentiality.

Tolerance: Demonstrates ability to accept people and situations. Acknowledges his/her biases and does not allow them to affect client care or contribute to threatening or harassing interactions with others.

Interpersonal relationships: Provides support and is empathetic in interactions with peers, clients, and their families. Interacts effectively with “difficult individuals.” Demonstrates respect for and complements the roles of other professionals. Is cooperative and earns respect.

Initiative: Acquires ability to independent identify tasks to be performed and makes sure that tasks are completed satisfactorily. Performs duties promptly and efficiently.

Is willing to spend additional time and to assume new responsibilities. Recognizes when help is required and when to ask for guidance.

Dependability: Completes tasks promptly and well. Arrives on time and actively participates in clinical and didactic activities. Follows through and is reliable.

Attitudes: Is actively concerned about others. Maintains a positive outlook toward others and toward assigned tasks. Recognizes and admits mistakes. Seeks and accepts feedback and uses it to improve performance.

Function under stress: Maintains professional composure and exhibits good personal and clinical judgment in stressful situations. Identifies unprofessional conduct while recognizing the importance of maintaining professional behavior in the clinical setting in spite of inappropriate action on the part of others.

Appearance: Displays appropriate professional appearance and is appropriately groomed.

PLAY THERAPY COURSE CALENDAR

WEEK	Dates	Reading Guide	Topics	Course Assignments
WEEK 1 M	7/8/19	Introduction Ch. 1, 2, 3	Introductions & Syllabus Review of Syllabi; Introductions; Landreth, Meaning of Play, History	
T	7/9/19	Ch. 4, 5,	View of Children, Child Centered Play Therapy	
W	7/10/19	Ch. 6, 7	Play Therapist, Parents as Partners	
Th	7/11/19	Ch. 8	Playroom & Materials	
WEEK 2 M	7/15/19	Ch. 9, 10	Beginning the Relationship, Facilitative Responses	Bring Toys!
T	7/16/19	Ch. 11, 12	Limit Setting, Typical Problems	Portable Play Therapy Bag/Box
W	7/17/19	Ch. 13, 14	Issues in Play, Children in Play	

TH	7/18/19		Therapeutic Process & Termination	
WEEK 3 M	7/22/19		Play Therapy Videos & Practice	EXAM
T	7/23/19		Guest Speaker – Play Therapy	
W	7/24/19		Play Therapy Videos & Practice	
TH	7/25/19			Video Play Therapy Session#1
WEEK 4 M	7/29/19		Guest Speaker – Sand Tray	
T	7/30/19	Lowenstein Section 1	Engagement & Assessment	
W	7/31/19	Lowenstein Section 2	Feelings Expression	In-Class Play Therapy Session
TH	8/01/19			Video Play Therapy Session#2
WEEK 5 M	8/05/19	Lowenstein Section 3	Social Skills	
T	8/06/19	Lowenstein Section 4	Coping & Problem Solving	
W	8/07/19	Lowenstein Section 5	Self-Esteem	In-Class Play Therapy Session
TH	8/08/19	Lowenstein Section 6	Termination	

Note: This course calendar is established as an organizational tool for course management. Changes may be necessary based on student learning, inclement weather, technical issues, and other unforeseen circumstances. Changes will be made in advance and students will be notified of all changes through email and Blackboard notifications.

