

Counseling 539: Play Therapy Fall 2012

Instructor: Steve Armstrong, Ph.D., LPC-S, RPT-S

Office: 201 Henderson

E-Mail: steve.armstrong@tamuc.edu

Phone: (214) 536-0860

Office Hours: Tues 2:00-4:00 (McKinney-CHEC); Metro: Mon: 5:00-7:00; Wed 3:00-4:30

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 Procedures: Involvement and learning in the course will be facilitated by means of:

- Lecture
- Small group activities and discussion
- Assigned readings and class discussion
- Role-play with toys and other hands on activities
- Videotapes and practicum experience

Required Texts:

Axline, V. (1964). *Dibs: In search of self*. New York: Ballantine.

Landreth, G. (2012). *Play therapy: The art of the relationship* (3rd ed). Muncie, IN: Accelerated Development.

Nelsen, J. (1996). *Positive discipline*. New York: Ballantine.

Supplemental Texts:

Allan, J. (1988). *Inscapes of the child's world: Jungian counseling in schools and clinics*. Dallas, TX: Spring Publications.

Armstrong, S. A. (2008). *Sandtray therapy: A humanistic approach*. Dallas, TX: Ludic Press.

Homeyer, L., & Sweeney, D. (2011). *Sandtray therapy: A practical manual* (2nd Ed.). New York: Routledge.

Oaklander, V. (1985). *Windows to our children*. Highland, NY: Gestalt Journal Press.

Sweeney, D., & Homeyer, L. (1999). *The handbook of group play therapy*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Class Requirements:

1. **Reading text:** I cannot stress how important it is to keep up with assigned reading in the text. This material is different from other material that you have read. Play therapy is a unique specialty that is very different from mainstream counseling. The first half of the class requires consistent reading. The second half of the class is mostly experiential.

2. **Play sessions:** Arrange two 30-minute play sessions with a 4 to 8 year old child, other than your own, at your home, a kindergarten room, or other setting with toys. Either use your toy bag, or use toys that are consistent with appropriate toys in the playroom (See Landreth text p. 166). Do not conduct home play sessions until after the limit setting class. Videotape the sessions and critique each experience in a paper (2-3 pages for each session), double-spaced) using the following subheadings:

- Overview of the Session (setting, happenings, etc.)
- My feelings about the session (write in detail)
- Child's Feelings (your best guess or hunch if you're not sure)
- Returning Responsibility to the Child (Provide specific examples)
- **Corrected Response (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 child's verbal response or action)
 - Your response
 - Corrected Response
 - Reason for Change

3. **Micro-Practicum:** A supervised play therapy experience with a child will provide you with an opportunity to implement what we have dealt with in class. You will critique this experience in a group sharing session and provide a self-evaluation of your experiences. Details of this assignment will be worked out later.

4. **Exam:** There will be one mid-semester exam.

5. **Portable Play Therapy Bag/Box:** This class is based on the concept that play therapy can be delivered in most any setting. Hence, you will need to create/develop your own bag/box of portable play therapy materials. Your bag/box should be designed to meet the needs of your expected population.

Grading:

Attendance/class participation	20 pts.
Home Play Sessions/critiques (2)	40 pts. each
Micropracticum	100 pts.
Portable bag/box	20 pts.
Exam	80 pts.

A	90%	270 points
B	80%	240 points
C	70%	210 points

Attendance: A large part of what we do in class is experiential, therefore, class attendance is considered to be crucial. **More than two absences will result in the final grade being lowered one grade level.** Being repeatedly **late** for class will affect your attendance grade. Any late assignment will result in a deduction of 10 points per week for that assignment.

Digital devices: It is inappropriate to text, email, check email or texts, use a laptop or go online during this course. I expect your full attention and participation. Confine your use of digital devices to breaks.

Students with Disabilities:

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact:

Office of Student Disability Resources and Services
Texas A&M University-Commerce
Gee Library Rm 132
Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835
Fax (903) 468-8148
StudentDisabilityServices@tamu-commerce.edu

"All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment." (See Student's Guide Handbook, Policies and Procedures, Conduct)

UNIVERSITY CLOSING DUE TO WEATHER

Check <http://www.tamu-commerce.edu/> regarding class cancellations. Also, KETR radio on 88.9 FM and television channels 4, 5, and 8 (channel 7 for Tyler & Longview Area).

Flexible Calendar

- Aug 28 Course Overview, Play, Development, & Children, **Read Dibs & chapters 2 & 3 in Landreth prior to next class**
- Sep 4 Discussion of Dibs
Read chapters 4-6 in Landreth prior to next class
- Sep 11 The core conditions, The child-centered philosophy & therapist
Read chapters 7 & 8 in Landreth text prior to next class
- Sep 18 Playroom and toys, parents role, **Read chapters 9 & 10 in Landreth text prior to next class**
- Sep 25 Facilitative responses, Skill Practice
PT Boxes due
Read chapters 11 & 12 in Landreth text prior to next class
- Oct 2 Limit setting, Skill practice
Read chapter 16 in Landreth text prior to next class
- Oct 9 Responding to typical problems, themes & progress, Exam Review
- Oct 16 **Exam**
Read chapter 15 in Landreth text prior to next class
- Oct 23 Discuss home sessions, Play therapy cases-no reading Yea!!!
(Home play session critiques and videotapes due)
- Oct 30 Sandtray, Prepare for Micropracticum
- Nov 6 **Micropracticum**
Read Positive Discipline prior to next class
- Nov 13 Process Micropracticum, Positive discipline, Consulting with parents
- Nov 20 Happy Thanksgiving
- Nov 27 Activity therapy/group play therapy
- Dec 4 Child Parent Relationship Therapy (CPRT)-Filial Therapy

COUNSELING 539- Fall 2012

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

TELEPHONES: (wk, home, cell) _____

E-mail: _____

Why did you decide to take this class? _____

Do you have any children of your own between the ages of 4-8? _____

Are you interested in becoming a Registered Play Therapist (RPT)? _____

Do you want to use play therapy in a school or community setting? _____

Do you have any interest in using play therapy in private practice in the future? _____

What experience do you have working with young children? _____

What is your dream job? _____
