Instructor: Steve Armstrong, Ph.D., LPC-S, RPT-S  
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E-Mail: steve.armstrong@tamuc.edu  
Phone: (214) 536-0860  
Office Hours: Mon 6:00-7:00 (McKinney-CHEC); Tues 2:00-4:30; Thur 2:00-4:30- 
Metro; Fri 1:00-3:00- Commerce

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:
Accelerated Development.

Supplemental Texts:
Dallas, TX: Spring Publications.
Press.
New York: Routledge.
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 your home play session until after the limit setting class. Videotape the sessions and critique the 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 during and after the session (write in detail about how you experienced the session and how you feel about it after it is over)
   - 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:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Points</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attendance/class participation</td>
<td>20 pts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home Play Sessions/critique</td>
<td>80 pts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Micropracticum</td>
<td>100 pts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portable bag/box</td>
<td>20 pts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exam</td>
<td>80 pts</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Points</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>270 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>240 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>210 points</td>
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**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 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@tamuc.edu

**Discrimination Free Environment**
A&M-Commerce will comply in the classroom, and in online courses, with all federal and state laws prohibiting discrimination and related retaliation on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, age, genetic information or veteran status. Further, an environment free from discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression will be maintained.

"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).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Activity</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sep 1</td>
<td>Course Overview, Play, Development, &amp; Children, <strong>Read Dibs &amp; chapters 2 &amp; 3 in Landreth prior to next class</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Sep 8</td>
<td>Discussion of Dibs <strong>Read chapters 4-6 in Landreth prior to next class</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Sep 15</td>
<td>The core conditions, The child-centered philosophy &amp; therapist <strong>Read chapters 7 &amp; 8 in Landreth text prior to next class</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Sep 22</td>
<td>Playroom and toys, parents role, <strong>Read chapters 9 &amp; 10 in Landreth text prior to next class</strong></td>
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<td>Sep 29</td>
<td>Facilitative responses, Skill Practice <strong>Read chapters 11 &amp; 12 in Landreth text prior to next class</strong></td>
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<td>Oct 6</td>
<td>Limit setting, Skill practice <strong>Read chapter 16 in Landreth text prior to next class</strong></td>
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<td>Oct 13</td>
<td>Responding to typical problems, themes &amp; progress, Exam Review</td>
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<td>Oct 20</td>
<td>Exam <strong>Read chapter 15 in Landreth text prior to next class</strong></td>
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<td>Oct 27</td>
<td>Discuss home sessions, Play therapy cases-no reading Yea!!! <strong>Home play session critiques and videotapes due</strong></td>
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<td>Nov 3</td>
<td>Sandtray</td>
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<td>Nov 10</td>
<td><strong>Micropracticum</strong> <strong>Read Positive Discipline prior to next class</strong></td>
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<td>Nov 17</td>
<td>Process Micropracticum, Positive discipline, Consulting with parents</td>
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<td>Nov 24</td>
<td>Sandtray Happy Thanksgiving</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dec 1</td>
<td>Activity therapy/group play therapy</td>
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<td>Dec 8</td>
<td>Child Parent Relationship Therapy (CPRT)-Filial Therapy</td>
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COUNSELING 539- Fall 2015

Name:_________________________________________________________________

Cell: ________________________________________________________________

Best email: __________________________________________________________

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

Do you want to work in a school and/or community setting?_____________

Do you have any interest in private practice in the future?________

What experience do you have working with young children? _______________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

What is your dream job?____________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________