



College of Education
Department of Counseling and Higher Education
Counseling Program

COUN 3600 Therapeutic Play (section 002)
SPRING 2025

Instructor: Yung-Yu Lee, M.Ed., Ed.S., NCC, LPC-Associate (TX)

Office: Welch Street Complex 2, Center for Play Therapy

Office Hours: In person and Zoom (by appointment only)

- Mondays: 12:00 – 1:00 PM
- Tuesdays: 12:00 – 1:00 PM
- Thursdays: 11:00 AM – 12:00 PM

E-Mail: yung-yulee@my.unt.edu

Supervising Instructor: Ametis Bassir, PhD, LPC-S, RYT, Reiki Master

Clinical Assistant Professor

Undergraduate Program Coordinator

Department of Counseling and Higher Education

Office: Welch Street Complex 2, Room 120

Office Phone: 940-565-2913

Email: ametis.bassir@unt.edu

Class Meetings: Tuesdays & Thursdays 12:30 – 1:50 PM

Class Location: Wooten, Room 112

Welcome to this Therapeutic Play!

I am Yung-Yu Lee, a doctoral student in UNT's counseling program. Please feel free to call me Lee. I welcome you to this semester and this course. I aim to work to develop both didactic and experiential learning experiences, provide evidence-based resources, and provide opportunities for group discussions throughout. My hope is that the classroom climate we create together empowers you to evolve and flourish in ways that resonate with your personal growth. That being said, based on the needs and interests of you and your peers, the syllabus may undergo adjustments, all of which will be collaboratively decided and openly discussed throughout the course. I look forward to meeting you and co-creating our learning journey.

Catalog Description

Credit Hour(s): 3

Prerequisite(s): None

Didactic experience in how to be a therapeutic agent in children's lives. Students are introduced to the fundamental concepts and models of therapeutic play and building therapeutic relationships with children. Students are also introduced to basic child-centered play therapy principles and training requirements.

The purpose of this course is to familiarize students with the theory and practice of therapeutic play and the benefits of play throughout the developmental lifespan. Additionally, students will gain an understanding of child development and how to integrate such considerations into working with children.

Objectives of the Course

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Demonstrate an understanding of the importance of play in early childhood and its influence on physical, cognitive, and social-emotional development
2. Discuss influential theorists, and organizations that shaped the history of child development and therapeutic play
3. Compare and contrast between major theories of Play Therapy
4. Differentiate between the developmental stages of children and children's play
5. Identify developmentally appropriate play therapy toys and materials
6. Analyze issues of cultural diversity and how that affects play therapy and therapeutic relationship
7. Summarize rationale for play therapy
8. Demonstrate effective skills for working with children including reflection of feeling and content, limit setting, choice-giving, esteem building responses, and encouragement
9. Observe, explore, and facilitate greater play experiences with children in their environment
10. Conduct research of literature to advance knowledge of play therapy

Methods of Instruction

This integrative, discussion-based course is designed to be highly interactive and experiential. Students will be invited to participate in numerous ways such as role-plays, discussions, and experiential activities. Class readings will be supplemented with classroom lectures, experiential activities, discussions, videos, guest speakers, and student presentations. Please see the instructor as soon as possible if you have unique needs or concerns with any aspect of this course. If at any time, you find it difficult to utilize our time together for your benefit, I invite you to discuss it with me so that we can improve the experience and make it worth our effort and time.

Sharing & Confidentiality

In this course, each student is required to reflect on one's own developmental journey. This reflection will involve self-examination and sharing of personal information with the class. It is important that students strive to be appropriate in personal sharing. To promote an emotionally safe learning environment, each student will be asked to maintain confidentiality of others' personal material shared in class; however, confidentiality cannot be guaranteed. Therefore, each student should be mindful of what one chooses to share. Each student is encouraged to take risks and to challenge oneself while maintaining personal boundaries that are important to one's continued wellbeing and development as a professional in training and a person.

Discussions, exercises, activities, and presentations in this course may elicit unexpected emotions and memories or uncover previously hidden psychological processes that students may find unsettling. If at any time you feel that you are overwhelmed, please feel free to leave the room, pass from the current activity, and/or talk with the instructor. If you would like counseling to address personal concerns, you may contact UNT's Counseling & Testing at (940) 565-2741 or seek personal counseling at your own expense.

Required Texts

Axline, V. (1967). *Dibs: In search of self*. Ballentine Books.

Giordano, M., Landreth, G. L., & Jones, L. (2005). *A practical handbook for building the play therapy relationship*. Jason Aronson.

Ray, D. C., Ogawa, Y., & Cheng, Y. J. (Eds.). (2022). *Multicultural Play Therapy: Making the Most of Cultural Opportunities with Children*. Routledge. (Recommended)

Recommended Texts/Supplemental Resources

Landreth, G. L. (2024). *Play therapy: The art of the relationship (4th ed.)*. Routledge

Assigned readings posted to the UNT Canvas website associated with the course.

Attendance & Class Participation

Students are expected to attend class meetings regularly and to abide by the attendance policy established for the course. It is important that you communicate with the instructor prior to being absent, so you and the instructor can discuss and mitigate the impact of the absence on your attainment of course learning goals. **Please inform the instructor if you are ill, in mindfulness of the health and safety of everyone in our community.** The instructor will review attendance options, including participation via zoom, or being excused from attending class.

Students are allowed four excused absences before grade point deductions. Absence from more than four class meetings will result in a grade reduction. The above policy is intended to allow for reasonable accommodation in case of illness, family emergencies, or transportation problems. Individuals who choose to use non-penalized absences for other situations risk not having allowable absences available when needed. **Accommodation will only be made in situations when all absences are severe, extenuating, and documented. Students are responsible for ALL material and assignments covered on days they are absent.** In the event of an absence, please contact a classmate to get pertinent class notes, handouts, etc. Please refrain from texting, emailing, or communicating on the internet during class time. Should you need to make an important phone call or respond to an emergency please step out of class quietly.

Class participation points are determined by attendance, punctuality, engagement of in-class discussions, and participation during in-class exercises. This class will be highly experiential, therefore active engagement is critical for success in this course. The counseling profession is one requiring skill to stay open and engaged with clients, and class participation will be designed to help students identify and strengthen these skills.

Students will gain the most from this class by being present and participating fully in all classes, discussions, and activities. Students are expected to come to class prepared and having completed readings in advance. Students are expected to attend all scheduled classes during this semester. However, circumstances may arise, and absences are sometimes unavoidable. Please notify the instructor of absences in advance, if possible.

Absences Accrued	Percentage Deduction from Attendance Grade
4	0
5	-2 on attendance grade
6	-4 on attendance grade
7	-6 on attendance grade
8	-8 on attendance grade
9	-10 on attendance grade
10	-12 on attendance grade
	<p>*Absences should be due to medical issues or emergencies and must be communicated to instructor prior to class and a day in advance.*</p> <p>**Students with over 50% of absences will earn an overall course grade F at the instructor's discretion. **</p>

Lateness/leaving early: Class will begin promptly at the scheduled time and end at the scheduled time. The instructor may choose to document late arrivals and early departures as 1/2 absences.

Observation of Religious Holy Days: If you plan to observe a religious holy day that coincides with a class day, please notify your instructor as soon as possible.

Course Assignments/Assessments
(Assignments will also be posted on Canvas)

A. Class Attendance & Participation	12 points
B. Mid-Term Assessment	18 points
C. Final Assessment	20 points
D. Multicultural Play Kit and Reflection Paper	10 points
E. Group Project	30 points
F. Recorded Play Session	10 points
Total	100 points

Final Grade: A = 100-90; B = 89-80; C = 79-70; D = 69-60; F = 59 and below

A. Class Attendance & Participation (12 points):

Class will take place in-person, and students are expected to show up to class on time and be present during the whole class period. Students are expected to come prepared by having read and reflected on the reading assignments, timely submission of course assignments, and active engagement with instructors and peers. Additional reading assignments not included on the syllabus may be assigned throughout the semester and provided by the instructor. Class participation is determined by attendance, punctuality, engagement of in-class discussions, and participation during in-class activities. **In addition to attendance, participation will be evaluated accordingly:**

- ◆ **Excellent**– Student proactively participates in class by initiation, original ideas/insight, informing, challenging contributions that reflect in-depth study, thought, and analysis of the topic under consideration (This does NOT mean dominating discussion – or using a lot of words that say a little).
- ◆ **Satisfactory**– Reactive participation: Supportive and follow-up contributions that are relevant and of value, but rely on the leadership and study of others, or reflect opinion rather than in-depth thought.
- ◆ **Minimally Acceptable**– Passive participation: Present and awake but not involved and invested.
- ◆ **Unsatisfactory**– Uninvolved or detracts from the learning environment.

B. Mid-Term Assessment (18 points):

At the mid-term of the semester, students will demonstrate understanding of course content through a case study analysis that consists of existing knowledge of course content, readings, lectures, and understanding of therapeutic play, and relational dynamics. Students must address developmental, interpersonal, multicultural, and theoretical knowledge of therapeutic play. The case study analysis must be 3-4 pages and include citations and references from the text. A rubric will be provided via Canvas.

You will select a TV or movie character that is a child between 3-10 years old. After watching the TV show or movie, you will complete the case study analysis of this character. Below is an outline and questions to address in your analysis:

- a. Identify and describe the client you would be working with as a play therapist.
 - Age
 - Gender
 - Ethnicity/race
 - Living situation
 - Presenting problem
 - Relevant history (family, school, social)
- b. What would be your approach in working with this family? Why?
 - Play therapist attitude
 - 4 healing messages
 - CCPT skills
- c. What considerations from a multicultural perspective must be taken?
 - Racial identity development
- d. Considerations for social justice advocacy (school, community, family, social, etc.)
- e. Consideration of any ACEs
- f. Select one developmental theory (Piaget, Gesell, or Erikson) and conceptualize the child from this theory.

C. Final Assessment (25 points):

At the end of semester, students will complete a final assessment. Students must demonstrate how they intend to integrate the course content into their professional lives, and the areas in which they experienced the most learning and growth. The final assessment must include a case study analysis that consists of existing knowledge of course content, readings, lectures, and understanding of therapeutic play, and relational dynamics. Students must address developmental, interpersonal, multicultural, and theoretical knowledge of therapeutic play. The case study analysis must be 3-4 pages and include citations and references from the text. A rubric will be provided on Canvas.

You will select a TV or movie character that is a child between 3-10 years old. **The TV or movie character must be from a different movie or TV show than what was used in your mid-term assessment.** After watching the TV show or movie, you will complete the case study analysis of this character. Below is an outline and questions to address in your analysis:

- Identify and describe the client you would be working with as a play therapist.
 - Age
 - Gender
 - Ethnicity/race
 - Living situation
 - Presenting problem
 - Relevant history (family, school, social)
- What would be your approach in working with this family? Why?
 - Play therapist attitude

- 4 healing messages
- CCPT skills
- What considerations from a multicultural perspective must be taken?
 - Racial identity development
- Considerations for social justice advocacy (school, community, family, social, etc.)
- Consideration of any ACEs
- Select one developmental theory (Piaget, Gesell, or Erikson) and conceptualize the child from this theory. **The chosen developmental theory must be different than the theory used in your mid-term assessment.**

D. Multicultural Play Therapy Kit & Reflection Paper (10 points)

Based on the readings, play therapy videos, and virtual tour of the playrooms, students will design a multicultural play therapy kit. The kit must incorporate the **required categories of toys** and should be developmentally and culturally appropriate. Student groups can create a kit with appropriate toys for a specific identified population or a diverse population. Students will also submit an individual/personal 1–2-page paper focused on their experience with developing the play therapy kit, its relevance, and cultural/developmental considerations. Students will also turn a photo of the completed kit on canvas. Students may choose to complete this assignment individually or with a partner; however, each student will still need to complete the reflection paper.

E. Group Project (30 points):

Students will establish a group of *five to six* students to plan, develop, and create a project that demonstrates their learning and understanding of a specific area of play therapy. The projects should be research-based with a focus on **Multicultural Issues in Play Therapy**. Students will read available research articles related to play therapy, filial therapy, child-parent-relationship therapy, and any other empirically validated intervention for the selected population/concern. Students must submit their group names and population/plan on the date indicated in course schedule.

Each group will create a presentation for 20-30 minutes discussing the points given below. **This project may not be an assignment from another course. Students must submit their group decisions (selected topic, group members etc.) and gain approval from the instructor by Week 5. Groups may choose to submit a draft of their group project to the instructor for consultation and feedback by Week 10.** Groups agree that they will put forth strong effort and contribution to the project. Groups agree that one grade will be assigned to the project, and the group will receive that grade—irrespective of how the actual work distribution was (or was not) shared. Students will have the opportunity for two allotted in-class working days.

Format for Presentation:

1. Begin with why the group selected the population/concern
2. Discuss brief history of population/concern
3. Current statistics related to the population/concern (if applicable)
4. Interventions utilized with selected population/concern
5. Important play concepts that are relevant to the population/concern
6. Selection of toys based on cultural considerations for the population
 - a. Necessary adaptations to toys or playrooms based on population/concern
7. Include aspects of multiculturalism
8. Conclude with what you took away from learning more about the population/concern

9. Include in-text citations and references

F. Recorded Play Session (10 points)

Students will arrange one **15–20-minute** recorded play session demonstrating the skills and techniques learned in class. Your play session should be held with a **3 to 8-year-old child**, other than your own, at your home, a kindergarten room, or other settings with toys. **Please obtain approval and written consent from the child's parent/legal guardian prior to conducting your play session (Appendix A).** Students must also consult with the instructor to determine their plans for this assignment. Recorded sessions will be submitted through protected OneDrive to the instructor to receive a grade and written feedback. Please submit a copy of the **signed parent permission form** for your selected child through Canvas.

NOTE: If you do not have the opportunity to conduct a play session with a child, please email the course instructor in advance for alternative options.

Other Requirements and Special Note of Instruction

Expectations

Students are expected to submit assignments to Canvas no later than the due date assigned (**11:59 PM**) or unless stated otherwise. Extensions will be granted at the discretion of the instructor **PRIOR** to the due date of the assignment. No extensions will be granted the day an assignment is due or after the due date. Late assignments will be penalized .5 points for *each day* they are late. Assignments turned in more than 1 week past the due date will not be accepted for credit.

Cell phones and other electronic devices must be **silenced** during class for the respectful learning of all, unless otherwise requested/approved. Students who need to respond to an emergency call may leave the class with minimal disruption.

SYLLABUS ADDENDUM

Succeed at UNT:

- Show Up
- Find Support
- Take Control
- Be Prepared
- Get Involved
- Be Persistent

Academic Integrity and Academic Dishonesty

Academic Integrity is defined in the UNT Policy on Student Standards for Academic Integrity. Academic Dishonesty includes cheating, plagiarism, forgery, fabrication, facilitating academic dishonesty, and sabotage. Any suspected case of Academic Dishonesty will be handled in accordance with University policy and procedures. Possible academic penalties range from a verbal or written admonition to a grade of “F” in the course. Further sanctions may apply to incidents involving major violations. The policy and procedures are available at: <http://vpaa.unt.edu/academic-integrity.htm>.

AI

In this course, I want you to engage deeply with the materials and develop your own critical thinking and writing skills. For this reason, the use of Generative AI (GenAI) tools like Claude, ChatGPT, and Gemini is not permitted. While these tools can be helpful in some contexts, they do not align with our goal of fostering the development of your independent thinking. Using GenAI to complete any part of an assignment will be considered a violation of academic integrity, as it prevents the development of your own skills, and will be addressed according to the Student Academic Integrity policy (<https://policy.unt.edu/policy/06-003>).

Acceptable Student Behavior

Student behavior that interferes with an instructor’s ability to conduct a class or other students' opportunity to learn is unacceptable and disruptive and will not be tolerated in any instructional forum at UNT. Students engaging in unacceptable behavior will be directed to leave the classroom and the instructor may refer the student to the Dean of Students to consider whether the student's conduct violated the Code of Student Conduct. The university's expectations for student conduct apply to all instructional forums, including university and electronic classroom, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc. The Code of Student Conduct can be found at <https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/dean-of-students>

Disability Access

The University of North Texas makes reasonable academic accommodation for students with disabilities. Students seeking accommodation must first register with the Office of Disability Access (ODA) to verify their eligibility. If a disability is verified, the ODA will provide you with an accommodation letter to be delivered to faculty to begin a private discussion regarding your specific needs in a course. You may request accommodations at any time, however, ODA notices of accommodation should be provided as early as possible in the semester to avoid any delay in implementation. Note that students must obtain a new letter of accommodation for every semester and must meet with each faculty member prior to implementation in each class. Students are strongly encouraged to deliver letters of accommodation during faculty office hours or by appointment. Faculty members have the authority to ask students to discuss such letters during their designated office hours to protect the privacy of the student. For additional information see the Office of Disability Access website at <https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/office-disability-access>. You may also contact them by phone at 940.565.4323.

EagleConnect

All UNT students should activate and regularly check their EagleConnect (e-mail) account. EagleConnect is used for official communication from the University to students. Many important announcements for the University and College are sent to students via EagleConnect. For information about EagleConnect, including how to activate an account and how to have EagleConnect forwarded to another e-mail address, visit <https://eagleconnect.unt.edu>. This is the main electronic contact for all course-related information and/or material. **I will answer emails within 24-48 hours from/to the university's official email account, EagleConnect. Emails sent after 5:00 PM on Saturdays will be responded to on the following business day (Monday).**

Emergency Notifications and Procedures

UNT uses a system called Eagle Alert to quickly notify students with critical information in the event of an emergency (i.e., severe weather, campus closing, and health and public safety emergencies like chemical spills, fires, or violence). In the event of a university closure, please refer to Canvas for contingency plans for covering course materials.

Observation of Religious Holy Days

If you plan to observe a religious holy day that coincides with a class day, please notify your instructor as soon as possible.

Retention of Student Records

Student records pertaining to this course are maintained in a secure location by the instructor of record. All records such as exams, answer sheets (with keys), and written papers submitted during the duration of the course are kept for at least one calendar year after course completion. Course work completed via the Canvas online system, including grading information and

comments, is also stored in a safe electronic environment for one year. Students have the right to view their individual record; however, information about students' records will not be divulged to other individuals without proper written consent. Students are encouraged to review the Public Information Policy and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) laws and the University's policy.

Sexual Discrimination, Harassment, & Assault

UNT is committed to providing an environment free of all forms of discrimination and sexual harassment, including sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking. If you (or someone you know) has experienced or experiences any of these acts of aggression, please know that you are not alone. The federal Title IX law makes it clear that violence and harassment based on sex and gender are Civil Rights offenses. Because of Texas Senate Bill 212, as a UNT employee, I am required by law to report sexual misconduct, relationship violence, stalking, and crimes. I cannot keep those things confidential if you reveal any of those to me. If you need a confidential resource available on campus or in the local community then I can refer you. UNT has staff members trained to support you in navigating campus life, accessing health and counseling services, providing academic and housing accommodations, helping with legal protective orders, and more.

UNT's Dean of Students' website offers a range of on-campus and off-campus resources to help support survivors, depending on their unique needs: <https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/survivor-advocate>. UNT's Student Advocate can be reached through e-mail at SurvivorAdvocate@unt.edu or by calling the Dean of Students' office at 940-565-2648. You are not alone. We are here to help.

Student Perceptions of Teaching (SPOT)

Student feedback is important and an essential part of participation in this course. The student evaluation of instruction is a requirement for all organized classes at UNT. The survey will be made available during weeks 13 and 14 of the long semesters to provide students with an opportunity to evaluate how this course is taught. Students will receive an email from "UNT SPOT Course Evaluations via IASystem Notification" (no-reply@iasystem.org) with the survey link. Students should look for the email in their UNT email inbox. Simply click on the link and complete the survey. Once students complete the survey they will receive a confirmation email that the survey has been submitted. For additional information, please visit the spot website at www.spot.unt.edu or email spot@unt.edu.

COURSE SCHEDULE

(Instructor holds discretion to modify course schedule, as applicable)

Week	Class Content	Readings/Assignments
WEEK #1	Introduction, Syllabus Overview, & Classroom Agreements, History of Play	
8/19	Introduction, Syllabus Overview, & Classroom Norms & Agreements Group Exercise	
8/21	History of Play	Axline, Ch. 1-2
WEEK #2	History & Theories of Play	
8/26	Theories of Play	Axline, Ch. 3-4
8/28	Play—Meaning and Rationale	
WEEK #3	Neuroscience and ACES	
9/2	Neuroscience and Play Dibs discussion	Axline, Ch. 5-9
9/4	Adverse Childhood Experiences	
WEEK #4	Developmental Play	
9/9	Developmental Theories Dibs discussion	Axline, Ch. 10-18 Giordano, Ch. 17-18
9/11	Developmental Play: Infants & Toddlers	
WEEK #5	Developmental Play (Cont'd)	
9/16	Developmental Play: Preschool Years Dibs discussion	Giordano, Ch. 13
9/18	Developmental Play: School Age Years	Due: Group project topic, presenters, and date Axline, Ch. 19-24; Epilogue
WEEK #6	Introduction to Play Therapy	
9/23	Introduction to Play, Child-Centered Play Therapy	
9/25	Clinic Tours!	Giordano, Ch. 1
WEEK #7	Toys and Development	
9/30	Toy Materials and Play Environment	Giordano, Ch. 2
10/2	The Play Therapist Be-With—4 Healing Messages Structing Session	Giordano, Ch. 3-5
WEEK #8	Mid-Semester Check-In	
10/7 (Zoom)	Career Panel CCPT Skills and Responses (asynchronous)	Giordano, Ch. 6-9; 20

10/9 (No Class)	Mid-Semester Check-In	Questions, Thoughts, Feedback on class Due: Mid-Term Assessment
WEEK #9	Counseling Skills	
10/14	Limit Setting and Choice Giving	Giordano, Ch. 10
10/16	Understanding Play Behaviors, Facilitating Healing, and Termination	Giordano, Ch. 11
WEEK #10	Multicultural Play	
10/21	Gender and Culture in Play Therapy	Optional: Group presentation draft
10/23	Play and Disability/ Technology in Play Therapy	Due: Recorded Play Session
WEEK #11	Professional Development	
10/28	Training and Supervision, Licensure, and Certification in Play Therapy	
10/30	Librarian visit	Due: MC Kit and Reflection Paper **Last Day to drop a course with a W is 11/7**
WEEK #12	Parent Consultation	
11/4	Parent Consultations	Giordano, Ch. 12-16
11/6	In-Class Working Day	Group Projects
WEEK #13	Advocacy and Working Day	
11/11	Play Therapy Advocacy (APT & ACA)	TBA
11/13	In-Class Working Day	Group Projects
WEEK #14	Group Presentations	
11/18	Group Presentations 1 & 2	Group Project due prior to presentation
11/20	Group Presentations 3 & 4	Group Project due prior to presentation
	Holiday Break	
11/25	No Class	
11/27		
WEEK #15	Group Presentations	
12/2	Group Presentations 5	Group Project due prior to presentation
12/4	Class/Group Closure Activity	Due: Final Assessment
WEEK #16	Finals Week	
12/9	**Instructors' discretion**	
12/11	**Instructors' discretion**	Last Day of Class

Appendix A
Play Session Parent Request Form

Dear parent/guardian,
Your child is being asked to participate in ____ play session (s) with
_____ as part of a course requirement for **COUN 3600-
Therapeutic Play** at the University of North Texas.

_____ will **NOT** be conducting play therapy with your child. Rather, he/she will be practicing basic play language and skills learned during the semester. For supervision/grading purposes, the play session (s) will be video /audio recorded. Your child's identity will not be revealed, and the recording will be destroyed at the end of the semester.

Please sign this form as an indication of your consent. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact [instructor's name and email].

Parent Signature

Date

Student Signature

Date