



## Department of Counseling and Psychology

### COUN 5367-110, CRN 10515, Play Therapy

Spring 2019 rev. 08.01.2018  
Texas A&M University-Central Texas

#### INSTRUCTOR AND CONTACT INFORMATION

**Instructor:** *Levi McClendon, Ph.D., NCC, NCSC, CSC*

**Office:** 318R

**Email:** [lmccleendon@tamuct.edu](mailto:lmccleendon@tamuct.edu)

Office Hours: 1:00pm-5:00pm Mondays and Thursdays

Class Time: 6:00pm-8:45pm Wednesdays

**Class Location:** *Warrior Hall, Room 312*

Mode of instruction and course access:

*This course meets face-to-face, (with supplemental materials made available online).*

*This course uses the A&M-Central Texas Canvas Learning Management System [<https://tamuct.instructure.com>].*

Student-instructor interaction:

*Email is checked daily during the weekdays (Monday-Friday). An email sent on Friday will be read and replied to the following Monday. Please provide at least a one week request for an appointment outside of my office hours.*

#### COURSE INFORMATION

Course Overview and description:

Learn play therapy with an emphasis on developing counseling skills using play as the means of communication and understanding. Study background, history, various play techniques, and related ethical concerns.

Prerequisite(s): COUN 5350 or permission of department chair

*To gain the most out of this course you will have also taken COUN 5304 and COUN 5357*

#### **Text/Readings:**

*Axline, Virginia (1964). Dibs: In search of self. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.*

*Axline, Virginia (1947). Play therapy. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.*

*Landreth, Garry (1991,2002). Play therapy: The art of the relationship. Muncie, IN: Accelerated Development. (recommended)*

*Mullen, J.A. and Rickli, J.M. (2014). Child-Centered Play Therapy Workbook. Champaign, IL: Research Press.*

**Course Format:** This seminar class includes lecture and PowerPoint presentations, narrative presentations, video presentations, whole class discussions & practical exercises, self-selected inquiries, and research presentations. Evaluation consists of professor assessments, including critiques of play therapy knowledge and skills, research paper, and case presentations.

**Course Content:**

- ⌘ Overview and history of the profession
- ⌘ Introduction to the major theories of the profession
- ⌘ Introduction to the practices of the profession
- ⌘ Introduction to the dynamics of the therapeutic relationship
- ⌘ Presentation of the role and responsibilities of the Play Therapist
- ⌘ Presentation of legal and ethical issues of the Play Therapist
- ⌘ Application of skill development
- ⌘ Discussion of the future/multicultural trends of the profession of Play Therapy

**Participation:****I expect the following from all students:**

1. You will demonstrate *quality class participation*. This means discussing and sharing information that is relevant to the overall learning experience of the class. You are expected to have read the material prior to class and be able to reflect and critique the material in discussions. In addition, you are expected to augment your class participation with relevant and related professional articles, as they relate to class topics. Additionally, due to the experiential nature of course instruction, I have expectancy that you will be open to opportunities for self/professional growth.
2. *Self-directed Inquiry/Reading*: You are encouraged to read materials, attend professional development workshops, conduct online and library searches that are personally meaningful. The content of the basic texts and other pertinent articles and books will be emphasized by the instructor according to her perceived level of interest or needs of the class.
3. *Simulation Activities*: You will be expected to participate in group and individual activities designed to facilitate the understanding requisite to achieving the course objectives.

## Learning Objectives

## Class participants will:

- ✓ Compare and contrast essential people, theorists and organizations that shaped the history of the profession of play therapy.
- ✓ Differentiate between the developmental stages of children and children's play.
- ✓ Compare and contrast the most widely accepted theoretical models of play therapy and the formats in which they are most commonly offered (individual, group, family, etc.).
- ✓ Identify developmentally appropriate play therapy toys and materials that can be incorporated into either a permanent or traveling play room for the purposes of both assessment and treatment.
- ✓ Conceptualize a client's presenting clinical problem(s) developmentally and theoretically.
- ✓ Demonstrate an understanding of the role of the play therapist and play therapy in the context of the client's broader clinical (medical/psychiatric treatment) and non-clinical system (family, school, community).
- ✓ Identify and differentiate the stages within the play therapy process from intake to termination.
- ✓ Examine and discuss key elements in a play therapy relationship.
- ✓ Demonstrate basic play therapy skills (with non-clinical volunteers) including (but not limited to) structuring, tracking, reflection of content and process, returning responsibility, facilitating self-advocacy, and limit setting.
- ✓ Evaluate personal and professional relational style and the impact of relational style on the unfolding relationship with the client. This will include issues of transference and counter-transference
- ✓ Compare and contrast the legal and ethical issues that are unique to play therapy and those shared with other modalities, i.e., documentation, competence, informed consent, confidentiality, boundaries and duty to warn and protect, use of touch. (visit A4PT.org for recent Paper on Touch and Play Therapy Best Practices).
- ✓ Identify and recognize the evolving body of qualitative and quantitative play therapy research.
- ✓ Analyze issues of diversity and how they impact on every facet of play therapy, from choice of materials to the relationship with the client.
- ✓ Identify the minimal training/supervision guidelines and play therapy best practices promulgated by the Association for Play Therapy (Association for Play Therapy, 2005)

**ASSIGNMENTS:**

Total Points: 500

1. Participation (20 points)

I am only responsible for certain elements of class learning opportunities; the extent of your learning is up to your own personal investment and interest in the course. Participation is expected and will be determined based on your attendance and contributions to class discussions/activities. I would like to have all students participate in text-generated insightful discussions. Additionally, I would like to see all students participate in live practice and experiential activities.

2. Spontaneous Celebration of Knowing (20 points)

The readings and workbook practices are essential for your understanding and application of course material. At random points throughout the semester, I will post Celebrations of Knowing on Canvas. You will have FOUR celebrations **with five questions each**. Format will be multiple choice or essay format if you have completed the readings/workbook (*or multiple guess/creative writing if you have not done the readings/workbook*) throughout the semester. These celebrations may cover material from *Play Therapy: The Art of Relationship*, *DIBS*, *Play Therapy (Axline)*, or from the *Child-Centered Play Therapy Workbook*.

3. Community Counseling and Family Therapy Center Play Room Assessment & Sandtray Recommendations (20 points)

Using resources provided:

- <http://cpt.unt.edu/about-play-therapy/playrooms/>
- <http://www.kimscounselingcorner.com/2012/08/20/unique-inexpensive-or-diy-ideas-for-a-play-therapy-or-childs-room/>
- <https://www.pinterest.com/bluedaylily2/my-dream-play-therapy-office/>
- Association for Play Therapy website
- Class handouts
- Chapter 8 Landreth text

You will make playroom update recommendations to Dr. Caroline Norris, the clinical director and will complete an assessment form and a brief 1-2 page report of your findings and recommendations. Your assessments and recommendations will be provided to Dr. Norris. This is both an individual and group assignment. You will complete the assessment and report individually. Next, you will form groups of 3 and create summary assessment recommendations for (the playroom and a sandtray room)

4. Tote-bag Playroom (25 points for cultural item, 25 for complete tote bag) (see appendix A for Grading Rubric)

Compile your own Tote-bag Playroom for use with your “minipracticum” play therapy client. It must include 4 or 5 toys representative of each of Landreth’s 3 categories. Bring your tote-bag to class. You will set up your kit and as I walk through you will need to be able to identify each category your toys represent according to Landreth’s categories. Your chapter readings will suggest how categories may be modified to be responsive to culture and environment of differencing populations. Adapt your tote-bag for culture and be able to discuss your choices.

5. Reaction Paper -- *Dibs: In search of self* (50 points) (See Appendix B for Grading Rubric)

This paper should reflect your impressions/thoughts/feelings as you read this fascinating case study. Consider the possible developmental needs of Dibs, what assessment issues may be up for consideration and your initial impressions. It should be from two to five pages, and contain your

observations of what Dr. Axline uses in her therapeutic repertoire to work with Dibs.

**Do not hand in a summary - I have read the book.**

Helpful phrasing to avoid a summary might include:

“Based on my experience with children I believe...”

“I found it interesting that Axline...”

“On the point of \_\_\_\_\_, I disagree with Axline’s belief because...”

6. Critique of *Play Therapy* (50 points) (See appendix C with grading rubric)

This paper should contain a more professional approach to the field of “nondirective play therapy” as outlined by Axline, including an explanation of her 8 Principles, as well as her use of particular “techniques” with her young clients. Discuss what characteristics you believed were central as a change agent for the client. Include your opinions of each of the 8 principles and give an example via your own PT with your practice client. Both positive and negative critiques are valued. Paper length 2 to 5 pages.

Ex: Axline principle #1

The therapist develops a warm, friendly relationship with the child, in which good rapport is established as soon as possible.

- ✓ I listen attentively
- ✓ I smile and appear interested
- ✓ I get on the child’s level when I greet the child

7. Play Therapy Sessions (100 points, 50 per session completed & documented) (See Appendix D with Rubric)

Conduct four play therapy sessions, with a child of your choice, using your Tote-bag Playroom.

This will provide you with an opportunity to implement CCPT concepts. These experiences (a total of 4) must be videotaped. Tapes must have play from the class ELMO system. I expect audio and visual to work for a full grade, they will be critiqued in group sharing sessions. Two of the four tapes will be shared for a grade. Write up the sessions using the forms given to you in class.

- Watch your tape and fill in your own skills sheet!!!!!!
- Complete a session summary

8. APT Credentialing Assignment (90 points)

9. Research Paper / Class Presentation (100 points)

This activity will require an in-depth study of one particular THEORY of play therapy. You may choose from a variety of theories that will be introduced to you in Kottman’s text (*Play Therapy: Basics and Beyond*). Please follow the APA, 6th Edition format and style for organization and include abstract, running head, & references. The paper should be from 8 to 10 pages in length (not including Cover Page, Abstract, References). Use at least 4 references for the paper, *in addition* to your texts; at least two must be from original sources and no more than one in the first five references may be from the internet. The paper will be graded according to the department writing standards, addressed at the end of this syllabus. Come prepared to discuss your findings in a formal presentation in class.

**SCHEDULE & Due Dates Wednesday Class**

**DATE CLASS TOPIC(S)/ACTIVITIES ASSIGNMENT(S)**

**NO CLASS** Self-Directed Learning \***IMPORTANT: Homework/Assignments are due on the dates listed**

**Web addresses for Play Therapy information: Center for Play Therapy:**  
<http://www.coe.unt.edu/cpt/>  
**Association for Play Therapy:** <http://www.a4pt.org>  
**Texas Association for Play Therapy:** <http://www.txapt.org>  
**Sam Houston Association for Play Therapy:** <http://www.shapt.org>

January 16 <sup>th</sup>	Introduction to the Course/Class members Informed Consent CCFTC playroom visit	Start reading Dibs  • <a href="http://cpt.unt.edu/about-play-therapy/playrooms/">http://cpt.unt.edu/about-play-therapy/playrooms/</a> • <a href="http://www.kimscounselingcorner.com/2012/08/20/unique-inexpensive-or-diy-ideas-for-a-play-therapy-or-childs-room/">http://www.kimscounselingcorner.com/2012/08/20/unique-inexpensive-or-diy-ideas-for-a-play-therapy-or-childs-room/</a> • <a href="https://www.pinterest.com/bluedaylily2/my-dream-play-therapy-office/">https://www.pinterest.com/bluedaylily2/my-dream-play-therapy-office/</a> •Association for Play Therapy website
January 23 <sup>rd</sup>	CCFTC Playroom visit/Assessment	Landreth Ch. 1, 8 Workbook p. 49
January 30 <sup>th</sup>	What is in store...? Principles of child-centered work Children Basic Tenets of CCPT History of PT Theoretical Approaches Overview	<b>CCFTC Play Room Assessment &amp; Sandtray Recommendations due</b> Landreth Ch. 2-3 Workbook p.11 Homework workbook 16-17 and 23-25
February 6 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Topics:</b> Meaning of Play Logistical aspects of PT Tracking behavior Tote-bag Playroom  ----- Video: Enter the World of Play-1 (Smith) Discussion	Landreth Ch. 6 & 9 Workbook p.43 and 45-47 Homework Workbook p. 34-40
February 13 <sup>th</sup>	<b>NO FORMAL CLASS MEETING</b> <b>Watch:</b> <b>Video:</b> Child Centered PT-Garry Landreth <b>Video:</b> Touching the Inner World of Children-Landreth	<b>Dibs Paper Due</b> Landreth Ch. 4-5 Start Reading Axline (b) preface to p. 127
February 20 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Topics:</b> Cultural Toy: Speed Dating Reflecting Content, and Feelings <b>How to: complete the skills sheet</b>	<b>Cultural Item Due</b>
February 27 <sup>th</sup>	Topics: Setting Limits, Returning Responsibility <b>How to: complete a session summary</b>  ----- Video: Enter the World of Play – 2 (Smith)/Discussion	<b>Tote Bag Due</b> Landreth Ch. 10-11 Homework Workbook p.54-55

March 6th	<b>NO FORMAL CLASS MEETING</b> READ on your own Play Therapy (Axline) Finalize your tapes for the midterm	Axline (b) preface to p.127
March 13th	<b>SPRING BREAK</b>	
March 20th	<b>Midterm: Skill Demonstrations</b>	<b>Session Tapes Due</b> <b>Workbook p.92-93</b>
March 27th	Encouraging/Esteem building	<b>Axline Critique Due</b> Landreth Ch. 12-13 Workbook p.63-64
April 3rd	Topic: Enlarging the Meaning AND Topics: Integration of Skills ----- Critiquing the experts - Video Critiques Theoretical Approaches to PT	<b>APT Credentialing Due</b> Landreth Ch. 14-15
April 10th	Topics: Consulting with Parents & Teachers ----- Video: Enter the World of Play – 2 (Smith)/Discussion Choices/Video: Choices cookies and Kids	Landreth Ch. 7
April 17th	Topic: Adlerian Play Therapy	Kottman Chapter 2,3 (on Canvas)
April 24th	<b>Final: Skill Demonstrations</b>	<b>Session Tapes Due</b>
May 1st	<b>Research Paper Presentations</b>	<b>Research Papers Due</b>

**Appendix A**  
**Tote-Bag Play Room Assignment**

Compile your own Tote-bag Playroom for use with your “minipracticum” play therapy client. It must include 5-10 toys representative of each of Landreth’s 3 categories. Bring your tote- bag to class. You will set up your kit and as I walk through you will need to be able to identify each category your toys represent according to Landreth’s categories. Your chapter readings will suggest how categories may be modified to be responsive to culture and environment of differencing populations. Adapt your tote-bag for culture and be able to discuss your choices.

**Grading Rubric**

<b>Student was able to identify categories</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Discuss how categories are used in prevention &amp; intervention</b></li> </ul>	<b>Possible</b> <b>5</b>	<b>Earned</b>	
<b>Each theme adequately represented = 5-10 toys</b>	<b>5</b>		
<b>Modified for diversity</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Demonstrate an understanding of how prevention &amp; intervention techniques can be modified for diversity</b></li> </ul>	<b>25</b>		
<b>Organized and orderly</b>	<b>5</b>		
<b>ON TIME</b>	<b>10</b>		
	<b>50</b>	<b>Total</b> <b>Score</b>	

**Appendix B  
Reaction Paper – Dibs**

This paper should reflect **your impressions/thoughts/feelings** as you read this fascinating case study. Consider the possible developmental needs of Dibs, what assessment issues may be up for consideration and your initial impressions. It should be from two to five pages, and contain your observations of what Dr. Axline uses in her therapeutic repertoire to work with Dibs. Do not hand in a summary - I have read the book.

Helpful phrasing to avoid a summary might include:

“Based on *my* experience with children I believe...”

“I found it interesting that Axline...”

“On the point of \_\_\_\_\_, *I disagree* with Axline’s belief because...”

**Grading Rubric**

Remember Impressions rather than summary	Possible total points 50	
Developmental impressions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discussed impressions of the role of family in Dibbs’ treatment (10)</li> <li>• Discussed issues of development (10)</li> <li>• Discussed assessment issues and impressions (10)</li> </ul>	30	
Page length	10	
APA style & cover page	10	
		<b>Total</b>

### Appendix C Critique of Axline

This paper should contain a more professional approach to the field of “nondirective play therapy” as outlined by Axline, including an explanation of her 8 Principles, as well as her use of particular “techniques” with her young clients. Discuss what characteristics you believed were central as a change agent for the client. Include your opinions of each of the 8 principles and give an example via your own PT with your practice client. Both positive and negative critiques are valued. Paper length 2 to 5 pages.

Ex: Axline principle #1

The therapist develops a warm, friendly relationship with the child, in which good rapport is established as soon as possible.

- ✓ I listen attentively
- ✓ I smile and appear interested
- ✓ I get on the child’s level when I greet the child

#### Grading Rubric

<b>Personal client examples</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Demonstrating theories of helping</b></li> </ul>	<b>20</b>	
<b>Impressions of characteristics</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Demonstrate understanding of the roles and characteristics of the counselor as helper</b></li> </ul>	<b>10</b>	
<b>8 principles attended</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Evaluate each skill of helping based lectures, reading, and research</b></li> </ul>	<b>10</b>	
<b>APA style &amp; cover page</b>	<b>10</b>	
	<b>Total possible 50</b>	<b>Total earned</b>

## Appendix D Taped Sessions

Conduct four play therapy sessions, with a child of your choice, using your Tote-bag Playroom. This will provide you with an opportunity to implement CCPT concepts. These experiences (a total of 4) must be videotaped. Your best two of the four practice sessions will be submitted (at midterm and final grading points) will be critiqued in group sharing sessions. Each of the two presented will have a session summary and skills sheet completed by you and submitted to me.

- Session 1 (no tape, session summary, completed skills sheet)
- Session 2 (tape, session summary, completed skills sheet)
- Session 3 (no tape, session summary, completed skills sheet)
- Session 4 (tape, session summary, completed skills sheet)
- Watch your tape and fill in your own skills sheet!!!!!!

### Grading Rubric

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 10 for incomplete skills sheet</li> <li>- 10 for incomplete session summary</li> <li>- 5 if I can't see you on the tape</li> <li>- 5 false start</li> </ul>	<b>Possible points</b>	
<b>Tape 1 Midterm Tracking behavior, reflecting content and feelings</b>	<b>50</b>	
<b>Tape 2 Limit setting, returning responsibility, esteem building</b>	<b>50</b>	
	<b>Total possible 100</b>	<b>Total earned</b>

## Appendix E

### Credentialing

*Note:* This is based on 2007 requirements. Please check your current requirements from a4pt.org website to see updated requirements.

I advise the following procedure for collecting artifacts towards your RPT. Act as if you were going to apply for RPT credentialing with APT.

Begin a notebook with tabs for each section. Note that you cannot submit your application until you have a state license; however, you can earn academic and workshop hours prior. Additionally, once you can count direct client hours in practicum and internship courses.

- 1) Section one: download your RPT application. It is long and difficult to interpret so using a highlighter, highlight important information regarding each section of the application criteria. Put this first in your notebook.
- 2) Tab 1: Titled Education. Collect the artifacts needed to include: course syllabi and transcripts for the 5 graduate courses as required by APT in the application.
- 3) Tab 2: Titled Play Therapy Training. Create a log for entering your play therapy specific training hours. You need 150 hours of *APT approved* play therapy specific instruction (this means your workshop certificate must have an APT approved provider number.) Or be an approved university. Behind your log of hours, in this section put your course syllabi, transcripts, letter from professor, and/or workshop certificates.
- 4) Tab 3: Titled Play Therapy Experience. Create a log for entering your play therapy specific client hours. You need 500 hours of direct play therapy client hours. Use client initials for maintaining confidentiality. Your categories in your log could include: date, client, time and a space for supervisor signature that you did see that client.
- 5) Tab 4: Titled Play Therapy Supervision. Create a log for entering your play therapy specific supervision. Your supervisor can be an LPC-S, does not need to be RPT-S. You need 50 hours of direct play therapy supervision hours. Your categories in your log could include: date, client, time and topic of supervision as well as a space for your supervisors signature per supervision.

**Appendix F  
Research Paper**

This activity will require an in-depth study of one particular THEORY of play therapy. You may choose from a variety of theories that will be introduced to you in Kottman’s text (*Play Therapy: Basics and Beyond*). Please follow the APA, 6th Edition format and style for organization and include abstract, running head, & references. The paper should be from 8 to 10 pages in length (Cover page, Abstract and References do not count toward page requirement). Use at least 4 references for the paper, *in addition* to your texts; at least two must be from original sources and no more than one in the first five references may be from the internet.

**Grading Rubric  
Possible Points: 100**

<b>Theory literature review</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Demonstrates a critical evaluation of research relevant to the practice of CMHC/SC</b></li> </ul>	<b>30</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>8-10 pages (not including Cover Page, Abstract, References)</b></li> </ul>	<b>10</b>	
<b>APA Style</b>	<b>20</b>	
<b>Presentation</b>	<b>40</b>	
	<b>Total possible 100</b>	<b>Total earned</b>

## Appendix G

### Optional Discussion Board Assignments (10 points, 5 points each)

- ✓ Read APT Paper on Touch and discuss Ethical issues for play therapist on discussion board
  - Cite relevant sources as will apply to your therapeutic setting (e.g., Play Therapy Best Practices, American Counseling Association Code of Ethics, Texas LPC Code of Ethics, American School Counselor Association Code of Ethics, Texas Educator Code of Ethics, Texas Model for Comprehensive School Counseling Programs, etc.)
  - 3 paragraphs minimum (a paragraph has at least 3 sentences) with APA style citations
- ✓ Read article “why play therapy is stupid” and respond on discussion board using theoretical and developmental arguments to dispute the author’s beliefs.
  - Cite Landreth text and at least 1 scholarly article
  - 3 paragraphs minimum (a paragraph has at least 3 sentences) with APA style citations
- Both assignments have an all/none requirement. Failure to complete any portion of the assignment will result in zero points.
  - Examples: Failure to cite relevant resources, failure to include 3 paragraphs, failure to conform to APA style (including both in-text material and references)