

**The University of Texas at Austin  
School of Social Work**

<b>Course Number:</b>	SW 360K	<b>Instructor:</b>	Jaclyn N Sepp, MA, LPC, RPT, NCC
<b>Unique Number:</b>	60840	<b>Email:</b>	jnsepp@utexas.edu
<b>Semester:</b>	Spring 2016	<b>Phone:</b>	(512) 762-4030
<b>Meeting Time:</b>	Mondays 5:30pm – 8:30pm	<b>Office Hours:</b>	Mondays 4:00pm - 5:15pm (appt. pref.)
<b>Meeting Place:</b>	SSW 2.130	<b>Office Room:</b>	3.104A

*“Play is the highest form of research.” - Einstein*

**Methods of Play Intervention**

**I. Course Description**

This course will cover an overview of the history and development of play therapy and applications of play interventions across the life cycle with an emphasis on children; discussion of the major theoretical perspectives which provide the basis for individual play therapy, group play therapy, filial therapy, and play interventions with families, adults, adolescents, children and organizations; examination of the relevant practice research; exploration of the role and desired characteristics of the social work practitioner; acquaintance with the various tools and techniques utilized; and consideration of the implications of diversity for the utilization of play therapy and play interventions.

Upon completion of the course, students should be able to demonstrate:

**II. Standardized Course Objectives**

1. Familiarity with the history and development of play therapy for assessment and as a treatment modality;
2. Understanding of the major theoretical perspectives utilized by practitioners and awareness of practice research;
3. Beginning skills in the use of the various tools/techniques utilized in play therapy and use of play as a therapeutic intervention with individuals, groups, families and organizations.
4. Knowledge of stages of play development and applications for the assessment process.
5. Awareness of the implications of diversity for the use of play therapy and techniques of play as interventions.

**III. Teaching Methods**

This class will be taught using a variety of methods with an emphasis on experiential learning, i.e., lecture, class discussion, experiential activities, videos, community based activity, course assignments, and readings. The assignments will provide the opportunity for “learning by doing”. For success in this class you must be willing to participate, take risks with new ideas, stretch your creativity, and attend class. It is imperative for effective practitioners working with play as an intervention strategy to participate in an ongoing process of self awareness. You are encouraged to ask questions, give the instructor feedback, and meet with the instructor as needed.

#### **IV. Required Texts and Materials**

##### Required Texts:

Axline, Virginia M. (1992). *Dibs in Search of Self*. New York: Ballantine Books.

Gil, E. & Drewes, A.A. (2006). *Cultural Issues in Play Therapy*. New York, NY: The Guilford Press.

Landreth, Garry L. (2002). *Play Therapy: The Art of the Relationship*. Third ed. New York: Brunner-Routledge.

##### Required Readings:

Additional readings are posted on Canvas and assigned dates are located in Section X, Course Schedule.

##### Required Materials:

One package of one or more of the following: markers, colored pencils, or crayons

One pair of large scissors

#### **V. Required University Policies**

**THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS HONOR CODE.** The core values of The University of Texas at Austin are learning, discovery, freedom, leadership, individual opportunity, and responsibility. Each member of the university is expected to uphold these values through integrity, honesty, trust, fairness, and respect toward peers and community.

**PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT AND CIVILITY IN THE CLASSROOM.** The professor expects students to act as professionals in class. This means students should arrive on time for class, be prepared to participate in the class discussion, and show respect for one another's opinions. A course brings together a group of diverse individuals with various backgrounds. Students are influenced and shaped by such factors as ethnicity, gender, sex, physical abilities, religious and political beliefs, national origins, and sexual orientations, among others. We expect to learn from each other in an atmosphere of positive engagement and mutual respect. Social Work also deals with complex and controversial issues. These issues may be challenging and uncomfortable, and it would be impossible to offer a substantive classroom experience that did not include potentially difficult conversations relating to challenging issues. In this environment we will be exposed to diverse ideas and opinions, and sometimes we will not agree with the ideas expressed by others. Nevertheless, the professor requires that students engage one another with civility, respect, and professionalism.

**UNANTICIPATED DISTRESS.** Students may experience unexpected and/or distressing reactions to course readings, videos, conversations, and assignments. If so, students are encouraged to inform the professor. The professor can be responsive and supportive regarding students' participation in course assignments and activities, but students are responsible for communicating clearly what kind of support is desired. If counseling is needed, students may contact a service provider of their choosing, including the UT Counseling Center at 512-471-3515 or online at [www.utexas.edu/student/cmhc/](http://www.utexas.edu/student/cmhc/).

**POLICY ON SOCIAL MEDIA AND PROFESSIONAL COMMUNICATION.** Public social networks are not private. Even when open only to approved or invited members, users cannot be certain that privacy will exist among the general membership of sites. If social work students choose to participate in such forums, please assume that anything posted can be seen, read, and critiqued. What is said, posted, linked to, commented on, uploaded, subscribed to, etc., can be accessed and archived, posing potential harm to professional reputations and prospective careers.

Social work students who use social media (i.e. Facebook, Twitter, etc.) and other forms of electronic communication (i.e. blogs, etc.) must be mindful of how their communication may be perceived by clients, colleagues, faculty, and others. Social work students are expected to make every effort to minimize material which could be considered inappropriate for a professional social worker in training. Because of this, social work students are advised to manage security settings at their most private levels and avoid posting information/photos or using any language that could jeopardize their professional image.

Students are asked to consider the amount of personal information posted on these sites and are obliged to block any client access to involvement in the students' social networks. Client material should not be referred to in any form of electronic media, including *any* information that might lead to the identification of a client or compromise client confidentiality in *any* way. Additionally, students must critically evaluate any material that is posted regarding community agencies and professional relationships, as certain material could violate the standards set by the School of Social Work, the Texas Code of Conduct for Social Workers, and/or the NASW Code of Ethics.

Social work students should consider that they will be representing professional social work practice as well as The University of Texas at Austin School of Social Work program while in the classroom, the university community, and the broader area communities.

**POLICY ON SCHOLASTIC DISHONESTY.** Students who violate University rules on scholastic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary penalties, including the possibility of failure in the course and/or dismissal from the University. Since such dishonesty harms the individual, all students, and the integrity of the University, policies on scholastic dishonesty will be strictly enforced. For further information, the student may refer to the Web Site of the Student Judicial Services, Office of the Dean of Students (<http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/sjs/>).

**USE OF COURSE MATERIALS.** The materials used in this course, including, but not limited to exams, quizzes, and homework assignments, are copyright protected works. Any unauthorized duplication of the course materials is a violation of federal law and may result in disciplinary action being taken against the student. Additionally, the sharing of course materials without the specific, express approval of the professor may be a violation of the University's Student Honor Code and an act of academic dishonesty, which could result in further disciplinary action. This sharing includes, among other things, uploading class materials to websites for the purpose of distributing those materials to other current or future students.

**DOCUMENTED DISABILITY STATEMENT.** Any student who requires special accommodations must obtain a letter that documents the disability from the Services for Students with Disabilities area of the Division of Diversity and Community Engagement (471- 6259 voice or 471-4641 TTY for users who are deaf or hard of hearing). A student should present the letter to the professor at the beginning of the semester so that needed accommodations can be discussed and followed. The student should remind the professor of any testing accommodations no later than five business days before an exam. For more information, visit <http://www.utexas.edu/diversity/ddce/ssd/>.

**RELIGIOUS HOLIDAYS.** By UT Austin policy, students must notify the professor of a pending absence at least fourteen days prior to the date of observance of a religious holy day. If the student must miss a class, examination, work assignment, or project in order to observe a religious holy day, the professor will give the student an opportunity to complete the missed work within a reasonable time after the absence.

**TITLE IX REPORTING.** In accordance with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, the University of Texas at Austin is committed to maintaining a learning environment that is free from

discriminatory conduct based on gender. Students who report incidents of sex discrimination, sexual harassment, sexual violence, or sexual misconduct to faculty, instructors, and/or staff who supervise students, will be provided a list of University resources. If the incident is impacting the academic environment, a report will be provided to the University's Title IX Coordinator. Further information, including student resources related to Title IX, may be found at <https://www.utexas.edu/student-affairs/policies/title-ix>.

**CLASSROOM CONFIDENTIALITY.** Information shared in class about agencies, clients, and personal matters is considered confidential per the NASW Code of Ethics on educational supervision and is protected by regulations of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) as well. As such, sharing this information with individuals outside of the educational context is not permitted. Violations of confidentiality could result in actions taken according to the policies and procedure for review of academic performance located in sections 3.0, 3.1, and 3.2 of the Standards for Social Work Education.

**USE OF E-MAIL FOR OFFICIAL CORRESPONDENCE TO STUDENTS.** Email is recognized as an official mode of university correspondence; therefore, students are responsible for reading their email for university and course-related information and announcements. Students are responsible for keeping the university informed about a change of e-mail address. Students should check their e-mail regularly and frequently—daily, but at minimum twice a week—to stay current with university-related communications, some of which may be time-sensitive. Students can find UT Austin's policies and instructions for updating their e-mail address at <http://www.utexas.edu/its/policies/emailnotify.php>.

**SAFETY.** As part of professional social work education, students may have assignments that involve working in agency settings and/or the community. As such, these assignments may present some risks. Sound choices and caution may lower risks inherent to the profession. It is the student's responsibility to be aware of and adhere to policies and practices related to agency and/or community safety. Students should notify the professor regarding any safety concerns.

**BEHAVIOR CONCERNS ADVICE LINE (BCAL).** If students are worried about someone who is acting differently, they may use the Behavior Concerns Advice Line to discuss by phone their concerns about another individual's behavior. This service is provided through a partnership between the Office of the Dean of Students, the Counseling and Mental Health Center (CMHC), the Employee Assistance Program (EAP), and The University of Texas Police Department (UTPD). Call 512-232-5050 or visit <http://www.utexas.edu/safety/bcal>.

**EMERGENCY EVACUATION POLICY.** Occupants of buildings on the UT Austin campus are required to evacuate and assemble outside when a fire alarm is activated or an announcement is made. Please be aware of the following policies regarding evacuation:

- Familiarize yourself with all exit doors in the classroom and the building. Remember that the nearest exit door may not be the one you used when entering the building.
- If you require assistance to evacuate, inform the professor in writing during the first week of class.
- In the event of an evacuation, follow the professor's instructions.
- Do not re-enter a building unless you are given instructions by the Austin Fire Department, the UT Austin Police Department, or the Fire Prevention Services office.

## **VI. Prof. Sepp's Class Policies**

1. As this is a graduate level class, regular attendance is expected. The professor will be keeping track of how many classes you have attended or missed as part of your semester grade. A sign-in sheet will be passed around at the beginning of each class for students to document their attendance. Students are expected to complete the readings prior to class, and should be well prepared to participate in discussions. Failure to demonstrate through discussions that one has comprehended the readings will be considered when assigning the class participation portion of the final grade. In extenuating circumstances that require an absence, please notify the instructor in advance.
2. Students are expected to be prepared for class. This includes: having read all articles due, being prepared to discuss all articles due, as well as consulting Canvas for other materials that are to be reviewed for the day's class. All Power Point slides will be available in Canvas before each class's lecture. It is your responsibility to print out the handouts for that day in order to take notes and follow along in class.
3. Except under extremely unusual circumstances, assignments must be completed and turned in at the beginning of class on the due date. Late assignments will result in a deduction of five points for each day that the assignment is late (beginning on the assignment due date).
4. Social Work students should consider that they will be representing professional social work practice as well as The University of Texas at Austin School of Social Work while in the classroom, the University community, and the broader area communities. Therefore, it is expected that students will conduct themselves professionally in the classroom, and maintain the same boundaries and standards that they would in a place of employment. This includes proper attire, use of laptops/iPads/tablets, and cell phone use while in the classroom or when communicating with fellow students and Professor Sepp. Cell phones must be silenced and may NOT be in use during class hours under any circumstances, except during a break.
5. Student feedback is welcome. Students are also encouraged to provide feedback during the professor's office hours, by phone, by e-mail, and by appointment if they desire.
6. If students are concerned about their class performance, the professor is more than willing to work with them to help them improve their course grades prior to the end of the semester. Office hours are to be utilized for this purpose. Students must notify professor that they will be attending office hours so that the professor may arrange for use of time.
7. Small groups are expected to resolve challenges within their group context. The professor is willing to serve as a consultant if groups have worked diligently to resolve their difference but have been unsuccessful.
8. Grading on all written assignments must take into account the quality of writing as well as the content. Written material should be carefully proof read and errors (punctuation, typographical, spelling) corrected. Good writing requires a reiterative process that must be followed if quality is to improve. Students are strongly encouraged to read their papers several times and, if possible, have someone else proofread them (before turning them in!).
9. Information shared in the class about community settings and/or client is considered to be confidential according to the NASW Code of Ethics regarding the sharing of information for supervisory and educational purposes. Part of professional accountability includes treating others with respect and courtesy. Within the class setting this respect and courtesy entails listening to the

opinions and concerns of others with openness, offering suggestions and ideas in a positive and respectful manner, and a willingness to promote group cohesiveness in the learning environment.

## VII. Course Requirements

1. **Attendance, Punctuality, Participation** (Objectives 1, 2, 3, 4, 5)- This portion of the final grade consists of three parts: attendance, punctuality, and class participation. This final grade (one-third per category) is divided as follows: **(10% of total grade)**

- Attendance- This reflects the number of classes actually attended. Failure to regularly attend class affects ability to contribute constructively to class discussions and will be considered when determining the one-third value of this section's final grade. In extenuating circumstances that require an absence, the student is to inform the instructor; documentation may be required. Students are responsible for any material (class notes, handouts, etc.) missed due to an absence.
- Punctuality- It is important for social work practitioners to be punctual as this is a reflection of their professionalism. Therefore, students should arrive on time to class and stay until the class is over. Class is officially considered over at 8:15 p.m. At times, during experiential exercise, class may run over a bit. After 8:15 p.m. students may use their own judgment with respect to leaving class or staying for the rest of lecture/discussion. Students should not leave class during the break. Failure to consistently be punctual and stay through the end of class will be considered when determining the one-third percentage of this section's final grade.
- Informed Class Participation- Students are expected to complete the readings prior to class, and to be prepared to demonstrate their familiarity with major concepts and ideas from the readings during class discussions and experiential learning assignments. If students are in a field placement concurrent with this class, informed participation would also include beginning integration of their field work experiences with class discussion and learning (for students not in a field placement concurrent with this class, this integration would not apply). The grade for class participation will be based on the quality and quantity of student contributions to class discussion, and on the degree of critical thinking shown in class discussions.

2. **Class Experiential** (Objectives 3, 4)- In addition to participation in class lectures and discussions of readings, students will be expected to participate in experiential exercises. As play therapy requires adults to relate to children on their level and interests, this course is a good opportunity for students to expand their comfort zone as they take part in some of the exercises. **(15% of total grade)**

3. **Response to Relevant Issues** (Objectives 1, 2, 3, 4, 5)- As a way to stay informed with the current conversations in the play therapy community, students will choose three articles throughout the semester and write a response to them. The articles from the *International Journal of Play Therapy* through the Association of Play Therapy, cover a range of topics, perspectives, approaches, themes, and practices, and are available in Canvas for students to choose from. Once students have chosen their two articles, they will hand in a one page, single spaced, typed (12 pt. font) response per article that can include, but is not limited to, what they learned from the article, what insights they gained, what felt controversial, what left them feeling curious, what they want to keep learning or how the article has better informed their understanding of play therapy. **(15% of total grade)**

4. **Dibs Discussion Paper** (Objectives 1, 2, 3, 4, 5)- Read Axline, V. (1964). *Dibs: In search of self*. New York: Ballantine. Students will turn in 3-5 pages, double spaced, typed (12 pt. font) paper providing thoughtful answers/reflections for the following questions: **(15% of total grade)**

- Provide a brief synopsis of the book.
- What did you learn about children and human nature through reading this book?
- What did you learn about the therapy process through reading this book?
- What do you consider your top three "learnings" from this book?

- How will you apply the knowledge you gained from reading this book to your counseling practices with your desired client population?
- Would you recommend this book to other social workers? Why or why not?

**5. Play Therapy Explanation (Objectives 1, 2, 3, 4, 5)- (20% of total grade)**

- Part 1: Explain and discuss what play therapy is and how it works, as if you were convincing a parent how it will be helpful to his or her child. Use words and language a parent can understand. Be sure to discuss the developmental appropriateness, role of the therapist, your theoretical orientation, address how goals are set, how progress is assessed, and how often you will meet with parents in your paper. Part 1 should be a minimum of 3 pages, double spaced, typed (12pt).
- Part 2: Read the meta-analysis of play therapy literature and Ray Chapter 15 (both posted in Canvas), and write a brief summary (2-4 paragraphs) of the research findings that indicates you understand what you have read and that you can use this research to support play therapy with children. Your summary should be written in a way that explains to a non-play therapist why play therapy is an appropriate intervention for children.

**6. Cultural Issues Presentation (Objectives 1,2,3,4,5)- In small groups, select a culture and present a 30 minute review in class (a sign-up sheet will be posted in Canvas). Major cultural groups from Gil & Drewes' (2006) book include: African American, Hispanic, Native American, Asian. Address the following areas in your presentation: Background Information on Culture & their Values, Attitudes Toward Play & Therapy, Prevalent Therapeutic Issues & Needs, Play Therapy Materials, Research Studies of Play Therapy with your Culture, and Tips to Building a Successful Therapeutic Relationship. Students will utilize at least 2 resources outside of Gil & Drewes' book. (25% of total grade)**

**VIII. Course Grading Criteria**

Class Participation	10%
Class Experiential	15%
Response to Relevant Issues	15%
Dibs Discussion Paper	15%
Play Therapy Explanation	20%
Cultural Issues Presentation	25%
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TOTAL	100%

## IX. Grading Scale

Grades will be posted on Canvas. Students should be able to track their progress throughout the course. Should you have questions about any assignment for this class, please consult with the Professor in advance of the due date.

Grades will be assigned as follows:

94.0-100 points	A
90.0–93.999 points	A- (very good)

To receive an “A” in this course you must have excellent attendance and participation, and you must produce work that is of superior quality.

87.0-89.999 points	B+ (well above average)
84.0 -86.999 points	B (above average)
80.0–83.999 points	B- (slightly above average)

Work earning grades of B+ and B generally exceeds assignment/performance expectations; demonstrates varying degrees of in-depth critical thinking and analysis that resulted in work additional to that laid out in the assignment directions (i.e., coherence and integration of ideas).

77.0-79.999 points	C+ (average)
74.0–76.999 points	C
70.0-73.999 points	C-

Work earning grades of C+, C and C- may substantially to minimally meet requirements, have minor to more significant gaps, and lack evidence of in depth thinking and analysis. MSSW Students must make a C or above to avoid having to repeat the course.

67.0-69.999 points	D+ (below average)
64.0-66.999 points	D
60.0-63.999 points	D-

Grades in the D range reflect work that has important gaps in the assignment both in terms of not meeting the requirements and lacking critical thinking and analysis.

Below 60.0	F (failing)
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## X. Course Schedule

<b>Date</b>	<b>Discussion Topics</b>	<b>Reading Assignment Due</b>
1/25/16	Introductions, Class Overview, Syllabus, History of Play Therapy	Axline: Dibs Landreth: ch 2 Gil & Drewes: ch 2
2/1/16	Brain Development, Play & Socialization by Developmental Ages, Powers of Play	Axline: Dibs Landreth: ch 4, 5 Perry Article (Canvas)
2/8/16	Crucial C's, Directive vs Nondirective, Person of the Therapist, Dibs Discussion <b><i>Dibs Discussion Paper Due</i></b>	Landreth: ch 6, 9
2/15/16	Toys & Materials, First Play Session, Facilitative Responses	Landreth: ch 8, 10
2/22/16	Limit Setting, Challenging Behaviors Process of Play Therapy <b><i>Response to Relevant Issues 1 Due</i></b>	Landreth: ch 11, 12
2/29/16	Themes, Diagnosis, Treatment Plan, Consulting with Parents, Termination	Landreth: ch 7, 15
3/7/16	Ethical & Legal Considerations, Family Play Therapy <b><i>Response to Relevant Issues 2 Due</i></b>	Landreth: ch 13 Gil & Drewes: ch 3
3/21/16	Activity Therapy, Art Therapy	Hall et al Article (Canvas)
3/28/16	Sand Tray Therapy, Case Studies <b><i>Response to Relevant Issues 3 Due</i></b>	Homeyer Article (Canvas)
4/4/16	Child Parent Relationship Therapy <b><i>Cultural Issues Presentations: African American, Hispanic</i></b>	Landreth: ch 16 Gil & Drewes: ch 5, 6
4/11/16	Additional Theoretical Models of Play Therapy <b><i>Cultural Issues Presentations: Native American, Asian</i></b>	Landreth: ch 3 Gil & Drewes: ch 7, 8
4/18/16	Additional Theoretical Models of Play Therapy	Carroll Article (Canvas)
4/25/16	Additional Theoretical Models of Play Therapy Play Therapy with Traumatized Children <b><i>Play Therapy Explanation Due</i></b>	
5/2/16	Course Evaluation, Wrap Up	