I. COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course advances students’ theoretical knowledge and clinical practice skills in working with children, adolescents and their families. This course will explore the process of child psychotherapy by focusing upon helping children, adolescents, and their families who are experiencing a variety of biopsychosocial dilemmas that exist within diverse and complex urban environments. A framework for assessing children and adolescents utilizing a generalist approach to Social Work, inclusive of psychodynamic and cognitive-behavioral approaches, will be applied.

Emphasis will be placed on the development and enhancement of knowledge, skill, theories, values and ethics specific to working with children, adolescents and their families. Various child development theories will be reviewed while introducing various play therapy models. Several specific issues commonly faced by children and adolescents who live in Southern California will also be examined.

II. COURSE OBJECTIVES

Upon completion of the course, students will be able to:

1. Develop a broad context for understanding and practicing Play Therapy.

2. Demonstrate knowledge of Play Therapy that integrates elements of several existing theories and techniques.
3. Demonstrate clinical and leadership abilities while combining theory and practice as a professional Social Worker who utilizes Play Therapy with children, adolescents, and their families.


5. Expand the knowledge and initial skills introduced in advanced practice courses in Mental Health and Children and Family concentrations.

6. Develop needed clinical skills to assess, diagnose and intervene with children and adolescents dealing with a variety of mental health related problems.

7. Demonstrate an understanding of the use of varied play therapy techniques with diverse clientele.

8. Enhance clinical skills as it relates to children presenting with issues of loss, abandonment, abuse, neglect and behavioral difficulties.

9. Develop clinical skills and social work strategies for developing clinically relevant treatment plans.

10. Develop analytic skills to critically evaluate theories that pertain to child psychotherapy.

III. COURSE FORMAT

The class format consists of a combination of didactic lecture, class discussion, and experiential exercises. **Students will also utilize blackboard for course information, announcements and handouts.** Experiential exercises include role-play, small group discussion, use of videotapes, etc. Students will be invited to share case materials from field placement to illustrate and deepen content of class discussion, and to integrate knowledge and experience between the classroom and the field. Confidentiality of information shared in class is always to be observed.

IV. COURSE EVALUATION AND GRADING

All students are expected to regularly attend class and be on time. **A student with more than two unexcused absences during the course of this class may receive a no credit. A student who is tardy three or more times to class may receive a grade of no credit.** If a student receives a no credit grade in this seminar, they will be required to repeat this class.

Grades in the School of Social Work are determined based on the following standards that have been established by the faculty of the School:
A Grade of A or A- are reserved for student work which not only demonstrates strong mastery of content but which also shows that the student has undertaken a complex task, has applied critical thinking skills to the assignment, and/or has demonstrated creativity in her or his approach to the assignment. The difference between these two grades would be determined by the degree to which these skills have been demonstrated by the student.

A grade of B+ will be given to work that is judged to be very good and demonstrates a more-than-competent understanding of the material being tested in the assignment.

A grade of B will be given to student work, which meets the basic requirements of the assignment and demonstrates work that meets course expectations at an adequate level.

A grade of B- will indicate that a student’s performance was less than adequate on an assignment and reflects only moderate grasp of content and/or expectations.

A grade of C would reflect a minimal grasp of the assignments, poor organization of ideas and/or several areas requiring improvement.

Grades between C- and F will denote a failure to meet minimum standards, reflecting serious deficiencies in all aspects of a student’s performance on the assignment.

Note: Please refer to the Student Handbook and University Catalogue for additional discussion of grades and grading procedures, and for discussion of academic integrity.

Class grades will be based on the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3.85 – 4</td>
<td>A</td>
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<tr>
<td>3.60 – 3.84</td>
<td>A-</td>
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<tr>
<td>3.25 – 3.59</td>
<td>B+</td>
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<td>2.90 – 3.24</td>
<td>B</td>
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<td>2.60 – 2.87</td>
<td>B-</td>
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<td>2.25 – 2.50</td>
<td>C+</td>
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<tr>
<td>1.90 – 2.24</td>
<td>C</td>
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Final Grade:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>90 – 92</td>
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<td>87 – 89</td>
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<td>77 – 79</td>
<td>C+</td>
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<tr>
<td>73 – 76</td>
<td>C</td>
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<tr>
<td>70 – 72</td>
<td>C-</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class Participation</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group Presentation</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Assignment</td>
<td>50%</td>
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II. Attendance Policy

Students are expected to attend every class and to remain in class for the duration of the session. Failure to attend class or arriving late may impact your ability to achieve course objectives which could affect your course grade. Students are expected to notify the instructor by telephone or email of any anticipated absence or reason for tardiness.

University of Southern California policy permits students to be excused from class, without penalty, for the observance of religious holy days. This policy also covers scheduled final examinations which conflict with students’ observance of a holy day. Students must make arrangements in advance to complete class work which will be missed, or to reschedule an examination, due to holy days observance.

VI. Course Expectations and Guidelines

Students are expected to read the assigned readings for each class and to use them as the basis for informed participation in class discussions. Evaluation of classroom participation and written assignments will be based on the quality of ideas presented as well as responsiveness to guidelines for assignments.

CLASS PARTICIPATION: (10%) Your involvement in this class is considered essential to your growth as a social work practitioner. You will be asked to discuss the material assigned, provide questions related to your field experiences, and offer feedback to your colleagues’ questions. Knowing the “right” answers is not nearly as important as being willing to risk exploring your ideas and being open to new information and additional ideas. Your presence in class, your preparation for class (reading and considering the assignments), and your participation in class discussion is essential to your learning experience.

GROUP PROJECT-CLASS PRESENTATION: (40%) Due weeks 9, 10, 11, 12
As a small group you will be asked to select a challenge area (surviving abuse, anxiety, trauma, loss, depression, foster care, ADHD, Oppositional Defiant Disorder, gangs, divorce, etc.) that diverse children and adolescents face. Each individual within the group will pick a specific Play Therapy technique from one of the course texts and demonstrate how this technique helps children/adolescents dealing with the specific challenge area. Please specify specific theoretical models the technique flows with and specific diagnostic symptoms the technique helps clients with. A handout for the class, summarizing your presentation, is due on the day of your presentation. Your presentation should be educational, informative and demonstrate the utility of the techniques selected. Details will be discussed in class and posted on blackboard.

Students will meet the following course objectives:
1. Develop a broad context for understanding and practicing Play Therapy.
2. Demonstrate knowledge of Play Therapy that integrates elements of several existing theories and techniques.
3. Demonstrate clinical and leadership abilities while combining theory and practice as a professional Social Worker who utilizes Play Therapy with children, adolescents, and their families.


5. Expand the knowledge and initial skills introduced in advanced practice courses in Mental Health and Children and Family concentrations.

6. Develop needed clinical skills to assess, diagnose and intervene with children and adolescents dealing with variety of mental health related challenges while living within a complex urban environment.

7. Demonstrate an understanding of the use of varied play therapy techniques with diverse clientele.

8. Enhance clinical skills as it relates to children presenting with issues of loss, abandonment, abuse, neglect and behavioral difficulties.

9. Develop analytic skills to critically evaluate theories that pertain to child psychotherapy.

**FINAL ASSIGNMENT: (50%) Due December 9, 2009**

The final paper is to be an examination of a case of your choosing. The assignment has 3 parts: (1) Biopsychosocial Study, Assessment and Diagnosis; (2) Review of the disorder based upon your assessment of your client; (3) Discussion demonstrating your application of Play Therapy techniques. Details will be discussed in class and written guidelines will be posted on blackboard. Paper will be 10-12 pages. Use American Psychological Association (APA) referencing style.

Students will meet the following course objectives:

1. Develop a broad context for understanding and practicing Play Therapy.

2. Demonstrate knowledge of Play Therapy that integrates elements of several existing theories and techniques.

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**VII. REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS**


Recommended

APA. (Most current edition) DSM-IV


VIII. ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATIONS AND INTEGRITY

Any student requesting academic accommodations based on a disability is required to register with Disability Services and Programs (DSP) each semester. A letter of verification for approved accommodations can be obtained from DSP. Please be sure the letter is delivered to the instructor as early in the semester as possible. DSP is located in STU 301 and is open from 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. The phone number for DSP is (213) 740-0776.

USC seeks to maintain an optimal learning environment. General principles of academic honesty include the concept of respect for the intellectual property of others, the expectation that individual work will be submitted unless otherwise allowed by an instructor, and the obligations both to protect one’s own academic work from misuse by others as well as to avoid using another’s work as ones own. All students are expected to understand and abide by these principles. SCampus, the Student Guidebook, contains the Student Conduct Code in Section 11.00, while the recommended sanctions are located in Appendix A: http://www.usc.edu/dept/publications/SCAMPUS/gov/. Students will be referred to the Office of Student Judicial Affairs and Community Standards for further review, should there be any suspicion of academic dishonesty. The Review process can be found at: http://www.usc.edu/student-affairs/SJACS/.

IX. EMERGENCY RESPONSE INFORMATION

To receive information, call main number (213)740-2711, press #2. “For recorded announcements, events, emergency communications or critical incident information.”
If it becomes necessary to evacuate the building, please go to the following locations carefully and using stairwells only. Never use elevators in an emergency evacuation.

University Park Campus
MRF – Lot B
SWC – Lot B
WPH – McCarthy Quad
VKC – McCarthy Quad

City Center
Front of the building (12th & Olive)

Orange County Campus
Faculty Parking Lot

Skirball Campus
Front of building

Do not re-enter the building until given the “all clear” by emergency personnel.

**X. COURSE OUTLINE AND ASSIGNMENTS**

**August 27, 2009**

**Session 1**

**Introduction**

**Historical Overview of Play Therapy**

**Theoretical Base of Play Therapy**

Students will:

1. Develop a broad context for understanding and practicing Play Therapy.
2. Demonstrate an enhanced knowledge base of developmental theory and its relationship to clinical practice with children, youth and their families.
3. Develop analytic skills to critically evaluate theories that pertain to child psychotherapy.

**Required Readings**

“The Child Therapies: Application in Work with Abused Children”

Preface

Chapter 1
Chapter 2

**September 3, 2009**
Session 2  Understanding Diverse Children and Adolescents Living in a Complex Urban Environment - Theoretical Explanations  Countertransference

Students will:
1. Develop a broad context for understanding and practicing Play Therapy.
2. Demonstrate knowledge of Play Therapy that integrates elements of several existing theories and techniques.
4. Develop needed clinical skills to assess, diagnose and intervene with children and adolescents dealing with variety of mental health related challenges while living within a complex urban environment.
5. Develop analytic skills to critically evaluate theories that pertain to child psychotherapy.

Required Readings

Review Bowlby, Attachment Theory
Review Erikson, Psychosocial Stages of Development
Review Piaget, Stages of Cognitive Development

“Special Issues” (pp. 192-196)

Chapter 2: “Theories of Adolescent Development”

VanFleet, Rise. “Short-term Play Therapy for Adoptive Families: Facilitating Adjustment and Attachment with Filial Therapy”


September 10, 2009
Session 3  Relevant Legal and Ethical Issues  Practical Implications and Applications  Leadership

Students will:
1. Develop a broad context for understanding and practicing Play Therapy.
2. Demonstrate clinical and leadership abilities while combining theory and practice as a professional Social Worker who utilizes Play Therapy with children, adolescents, and their families.
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7. Develop clinical skills and social work strategies for developing clinically relevant treatment plans.

Required Readings


Mandated Reporting Laws, Child Abuse Reporting Laws, NASW Code of Ethics

Search [www.ddfs.co.la.ca.us/](http://www.ddfs.co.la.ca.us/)
Search [www.socialworkers.org/](http://www.socialworkers.org/)

September 17, 2009

Session 4 Environment and Materials of Child Psychotherapy
Getting Starting as a Play Therapist
Essential Tools of the Trade
Play Therapy Techniques
Sand tray Therapy
Fantasy
Dream Analysis
Storytelling
Art Therapy
Cognitive/Behavior Methods

Students will:
1. Develop a broad context for understanding and practicing Play Therapy.
2. Demonstrate knowledge of Play Therapy that integrates elements of several existing theories and techniques.
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7. Develop clinical skills and social work strategies for developing clinically relevant treatment plans.

Required Readings

Chapter 3

Techniques 1-50

Carey, Lois. “Short-Term Family Sandplay Therapy.”
Hunter, Linda B. “Group Sandtray Play Therapy”

September 24, 2009
Session 5 Environment and Materials of Children and Adolescents
Getting Starting as a Play Therapist
Essential Tools of the Trade
Play Therapy Techniques
Sand tray Therapy
Fantasy
Dream Analysis
Storytelling
Art Therapy
Cognitive/Behavior Methods

Students will:
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Required Readings


Techniques 50-101

October 1, 2009
Session 6  Culturally Competent Assessment and Diagnosis
Building Relationships with Children or Adolescents
Initial Contact and Observation
Mental Status

Students will:
1. Demonstrate knowledge of Play Therapy that integrates elements of several existing theories and techniques.
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9. Develop analytic skills to critically evaluate theories that pertain to child psychotherapy.

Required Readings

APA, DSM (most current edition)
Disorders Usually First Diagnosed in Infancy, Childhood, or Adolescence
   Chapter 7-15

   Read each section related to the major disorders presented.
   Review Case Summaries presented.
   Select Topics of Interest for reading.

   “Sharlene: A Child Traumatized by Chronic Sexual Abuse”

   Chapter 4: “Assessment and Treatment”
   Chapter 7: “Treatment Modalities”

**October 8, 2009**
**Session 7**  **Trauma**

Students will:
1. Develop a broad context for understanding and practicing Play Therapy.
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**Required Readings**

APA, DSM (most current edition)
PTSD
Borderline Personality Disorder


   “Antony: A Child with Multiple Traumas”
   “Leroy: A Child Traumatized by Severe Parental Neglect”
   “Laurie: A Neglected Child Traumatized by a Hospitalization”


**October 15, 2009**
**Session 8  Play Therapy with Survivors of Abuse**

Students will:
1. Develop a broad context for understanding and practicing Play Therapy.
2. Demonstrate knowledge of Play Therapy that integrates elements of several existing theories and techniques.
3. Demonstrate clinical and leadership abilities while combining theory and practice as a professional Social Worker who utilizes Play Therapy with children, adolescents, and their families.
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9. Develop clinical skills and social work strategies for developing clinically relevant treatment plans.

**Required Readings**

“The Abused Child: Treatment Issues”
“The Treatment of Abused Children”
“Johnny: A Child Traumatized by Sexual Abuse”
“Gabby: A Child Traumatized by a Single Episode of Sexual Abuse”


Gallo-Lopez, Loretta. “A Creative Play Therapy Approach to the Group Treatment of Young Sexually Abused Children”

October 22, 2009
Session 9  Grief and Loss
Group Presentation

Students will:
1. Develop a broad context for understanding and practicing Play Therapy.
2. Demonstrate knowledge of Play Therapy that integrates elements of several existing theories and techniques.
3. Demonstrate clinical and leadership abilities while combining theory and practice as a professional Social Worker who utilizes Play Therapy with children, adolescents, and their families.
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8. Enhance clinical skills as it relates to children presenting with issues of loss, abandonment, abuse, neglect and behavioral difficulties.
9. Develop clinical skills and social work strategies for developing clinically relevant treatment plans.

Required Readings


Ludlow & Williams. “Short-Term Group Play Therapy for Children Whose Parents are Divorcing”
October 29, 2009

Session 10  Strategies for Specific Mental Health Challenges
Separation Anxiety
School Phobia
Autism and Asperger’s
Group Presentations

Students will:
1. Demonstrate knowledge of Play Therapy that integrates elements of several existing theories and techniques.
2. Demonstrate clinical and leadership abilities while combining theory and practice as a professional Social Worker who utilizes Play Therapy with children, adolescents, and their families.
4. Expand the knowledge and initial skills introduced in advanced practice courses in Mental Health and Children and Family concentrations.
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8. Develop clinical skills and social work strategies for developing clinically relevant treatment plans.
9. Develop analytic skills to critically evaluate theories that pertain to child psychotherapy.

Required Readings

APA, DSM (most current edition)

Pervasive Developmental Disorders
Separation Anxiety
Specific Phobia
Social Phobia
Obsessive Compulsive Disorder


Knell & Dasari. “Cognitive-Behavioral Play Therapy for Children with Anxiety and Phobias”

Blundon & Schaefer. “The Use of Group Play Therapy for children with Social Skills Deficits”

November 5, 2009
Session 11  Strategies for Specific Mental Health Challenges
ADHD
ODD
CD
Group Presentations

Students will:

1. Demonstrate knowledge of Play Therapy that integrates elements of several existing theories and techniques.
2. Demonstrate clinical and leadership abilities while combining theory and practice as a professional Social Worker who utilizes Play Therapy with children, adolescents, and their families.
4. Expand the knowledge and initial skills introduced in advanced practice courses in Mental Health and Children and Family concentrations.
5. Develop needed clinical skills to assess, diagnose and intervene with children and adolescents dealing with variety of mental health related challenges while living within a complex urban environment.
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8. Develop clinical skills and social work strategies for developing clinically relevant treatment plans.
9. Develop analytic skills to critically evaluate theories that pertain to child psychotherapy.

Required Readings
APA, DSM (most current edition)

ADHD
Oppositional Defiant Disorder
Conduct Disorder

Riviere, Scott. “Short-Term Play Therapy for Children with Disruptive Behavior Disorders”

Kaduson, Heidi Gerard. “Short-Term Play Therapy for Children with Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder”

McNeil, Bahl & Herschell. “Involving and Empowering Parents in Short Term Play Therapy for Disruptive Children”

**November 12, 2009**  
**Session 12** Strategies for Specific Mental Health Challenges  
**Depression**  
**Group Presentations**

Students will:
1. Demonstrate knowledge of Play Therapy that integrates elements of several existing theories and techniques.
2. Demonstrate clinical and leadership abilities while combining theory and practice as a professional Social Worker who utilizes Play Therapy with children, adolescents, and their families.
4. Expand the knowledge and initial skills introduced in advanced practice courses in Mental Health and Children and Family concentrations.
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7. Enhance clinical skills as it relates to children presenting with issues of loss, abandonment, abuse, neglect and behavioral difficulties.
8. Develop clinical skills and social work strategies for developing clinically relevant treatment plans.
9. Develop analytic skills to critically evaluate theories that pertain to child psychotherapy.

**Required Readings**

APA, DSM (most current edition)  
Major Depressive Disorder  
Dysthymic Disorder  

Newman. “Short Term Play Therapy for children with Mood Disorders”

November 19, 2009
Session 13  Family Play Therapy

Students will:

1. Develop a broad context for understanding and practicing Play Therapy.
2. Demonstrate knowledge of Play Therapy that integrates elements of several existing theories and techniques.
3. Demonstrate clinical and leadership abilities while combining theory and practice as a professional Social Worker who utilizes Play Therapy with children, adolescents, and their families.
5. Expand the knowledge and initial skills introduced in advanced practice courses in Mental Health and Children and Family concentrations.
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9. Develop clinical skills and social work strategies for developing clinically relevant treatment plans.
10. Develop analytic skills to critically evaluate theories that pertain to child psychotherapy.

Required Readings


November 26, 2009  Happy Thanksgiving

December 3, 2009
Session 14  Group Play Therapy
Termination

Students will:

1. Develop a broad context for understanding and practicing Play Therapy.
2. Demonstrate knowledge of Play Therapy that integrates elements of several existing theories and techniques.

3. Demonstrate clinical and leadership abilities while combining theory and practice as a professional Social Worker who utilizes Play Therapy with children, adolescents, and their families.


5. Expand the knowledge and initial skills introduced in advanced practice courses in Mental Health and Children and Family concentrations.

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**Required Readings**


*ADDITIONAL READINGS FOR THE COURSE WILL BE HANDED OUT IN CLASS OR POSTED ON BLACKBOARD*