I. COURSE PURPOSE
Building on the foundation year, this course deepens students’ understanding and application of concepts, processes, and techniques of clinical social work in preparation for practice with the child as the primary unit of attention for therapeutic intervention. Against the backdrop of psychosocial, cognitive, and relational development, childhood strengths, resiliencies, and environmental and individual problems in living are examined. Psychodynamic, cognitive, and behavioral theories are applied to the assessment and treatment of various biopsychosocial challenges for the child client. The understanding of play as purposeful, meaningful communication for and with children is integrated into the clinical methodology. A continuum of directive and non-directive play and talk therapies serve as a basis for the process of therapeutic alliance, assessment, goal setting, planning, intervention, and practice evaluation with pre-school and grade school children.

II. EDUCATIONAL OBJECTIVES

Upon completion of this course, students will be able:
1. To understand the history of therapeutic work with children, including play therapy from its early roots to its present application within a continuum of directive to non-directive techniques.

2. To understand the role of developmental tasks and relationships in the formation and termination of an appropriate therapeutic relationship with children.

3. To develop skill in interviewing child and parent clients.
4. Building on the foundation knowledge of human behavior in the social environment, to apply psychodynamic, cognitive, and behavioral theories to the process of assessment of a child’s problems within a family, school, and community context.

5. To recognize the impact of human diversity on the development of children in the application of social work treatment models.

6. To develop skills in treatment through a balance of theories that treat deficit conditions while utilizing the child’s strengths and resilience, using promising, evidence-based and outcome-based treatment methods.

7. To recognize the impact of one’s own values, biases, and experience on the understanding and treatment of child and parent clients.

8. To translate presenting problems into co-jointly developed goals and measurable objectives for treatment.

9. To understand the differential application of a variety of modalities, including both directive and non-directive interventions, that address the unique needs of individual child clients, with particular attention paid to children at risk for problems associated with poverty, violence, and mental illness.

10. To develop skills in the differential application of non-directive and directive play and talk techniques to attachment issues, developmental problems, behavioral problems, learning difficulties, reactive disorders, and affective disorders.

11. To produce a review of current peer-reviewed professional literature in APA style that draws upon theoretical and empirical social work and related literature to explain and treat learning, behavioral, developmental, or affective problems in children.

III. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

A. Required Texts


B. Recommended Texts


C. Other Recommended Resources (Journals)
   *Child and Adolescent Social Work Journal*
   *Child Welfare*
   *International Journal of Play Therapy*
   *Social Work in Schools* (was *Social Work in Education*)

D. Course Assignments
   1. Written assignment; choose one:  
      a. Scholarly paper applying theory to the assessment and treatment of an issue within a particular child population that would be appropriate for clinical social work intervention.
      
      b. Annotated bibliography summarizing scholarly social work and related literature of an issue within a particular child population that would be appropriate for clinical social work intervention.

   2. Final Exam

E. Grading
   Assignment 40%
   Final Exam 40%
   Class Attendance and Participation 20%
F. **Attendance and Participation**
Students are required to attend classes having prepared in advance by reading the assigned materials. They are expected to participate meaningfully in class discussions, and other class activities. The class participation grade will be determined by the instructor’s perception of the student’s preparation for and contributions to class discussion/activities. Different students will make different kinds of contributions. Some will have an easy time with spontaneous interactions while others will be more comfortable making planned statements about key ideas from the readings or other sources. Both types of contributions are valued. **Unexcused absences will lower the attendance and participation grade. More than three unexcused absences will result in a grade of F.**

G. **Course and Instructor Evaluation**
NCSSS requires electronic evaluation of this course and the instructor. At the end of the semester, the evaluation form may be accessed at [http://evaluations.cua.edu/evaluations](http://evaluations.cua.edu/evaluations) using your CUA username and password. Additional, informal written or verbal feedback to the instructor during the semester is encouraged and attempts will be made to respond to requests.

IV. **CLASS EXPECTATIONS**

A. **Scholastic Expectations**
Please refer to NCSSS Announcements or appropriate Program Handbook for Academic Requirements, including scholastic and behavioral requirements. All written work should reflect the original thinking of the writer, cite references where material is quoted or adapted from existing sources, adhere to APA format, and should be carefully proof read by the student before submission to the instructor for grading.

B. **Academic Honesty**
Joining the community of scholars at CUA entails accepting the standards, living by those standards, and upholding them. Please refer to University Policy and appropriate Program Handbooks.

C. **Accommodations**
Students with physical, learning, psychological or other disabilities wishing to request accommodations must identify with the Disability Support Services (DSS) and submit documentation of a disability. If you have documented such a disability to DSS that requires accommodations or an academic adjustment, please arrange a meeting with the instructor as soon as possible to discuss these accommodations.
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<th>Class</th>
<th>Topics and Readings</th>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td><strong>Historical Context of Clinical Social Work with Children</strong>&lt;br&gt;Historical background of therapeutic work including early roots of play therapy and current applications of assessment and treatment along a continuum of talk vs. play and directive vs. non-directive techniques.  &lt;br&gt;&lt;br&gt;<strong>Required Reading:</strong>&lt;br&gt;Van Fleet, et al, Chap. 1, <em>The Importance of Play</em> (pp. 3-10); Chap. 2, <em>A Brief Overview of Play Therapy</em> (pp. 11-19); Chap. 3, <em>History, Theory, Principles, and Variations of Child-Centered Play Therapy</em> (pp. 20-42)</td>
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Therapeutic Alliance and Developmental Change
Introduce play as a child’s first language, and as purposeful, meaningful method of communication. Discuss play therapy across treatment stages including alliance, narrative themes, therapeutic growth, and termination, and view video of play as symbolic expression of feeling. Goals of interventions include the restoration of appropriate developmental sequencing, self-understanding, and self-regulation.

Required Reading
Davies, Chap. 13, Conclusion: Developmental Knowledge and Practice (pp. 415-419).

Play Therapy Tools and Techniques
Discussion and practice of non-directive play therapy principles and skills including structuring, boundaries, levels of reflective interventions, and cultural competence. Video of non-directive interventions.

Required Reading
Van Fleet et al, Chap. 5, The Four Skills of Child-Centered Play Therapy (pp. 59-87); Chap. 6, Recognition and Interpretation of Play Themes (pp. 88-102).

Advanced Play Techniques and Parent Participation
Discussion and practice around advanced non-directive techniques including setting limits, cultural competence, responding to questions, demands, and externalizing and internalizing play expression.

Required Reading
Van Fleet et al, Chap. 7, Engaging Parents (and Teachers) in Child-Centered Play Therapy (pp. 105-126), Chap. 8, Filial Therapy (pp. 127-135); Chap. 9, Child-Centered Play Therapy with Different Presenting Problems (pp. 139-166).

Integration of Directive and Cognitive-Behavioral Theories and Techniques
Presentation of directive play and talk interventions, focusing on cognitive and behavioral techniques and their applicability to internalizing and externalizing behaviors. Compare and contrast non-directive and directive methods.

Required Reading:
Timberlake & Cutler (on reserve), Chap. 8, Integrating Cognitive-Behavioral Theory with Play Therapy (pp. 195-214).
Clinical Application: Attachment
Discussion of continuum of caregiver/child attachment, the biopsychosocial gifts of strong attachments, early assessment of Reactive Attachment Disorder and disordered attachments. Introduction of Theraplay™ and similar directive play interventions for children and parents who may struggle with attachment issues.

Required Reading: TBA

Clinical Application: Childhood Anxiety and Depression
Discussion of normative childhood fears and anxieties at various ages. Determination of when anxiety results in stalling of developmental growth and how to intervene. Introduction of art therapy for use as an assessment and intervention with those who employ internalizing behaviors as a coping strategy. Identification of and intervention in childhood depression. Discussion of childhood losses and strategies to improve coping.

Required Reading:
Kaduson & Schaefer, Chap. 2, *Cognitive-Behavioral Play Therapy for Children with Anxieties and Phobias* (pp. 22-50); Chap. 4, *Short-term play Therapy for Children with Mood Disorders* (pp. 71 – 100)

Clinical Application: Environmental Issues: Divorce and Trauma
Supportive interventions for children and their parents regarding communication and renegotiation of roles during and after divorce. Discussion of childhood trauma, physical abuse, sexual abuse, and community violence. Directive interventions to support improved coping with violence, address issues of avoidance, increase mastery over positive coping skills, and reduce PTSD symptoms.

Required Reading
Kaduson & Schaefer, Chap. 12, *Short-term Group Play Therapy for Children Whose Parents Are Divorcing* (pp. 304-335).
11 **Challenges with Learning**
Strengths and deficits with a range of learning issues including ADHD and learning disabilities. Assessment and treatment with a focus on supporting a positive self-concept, increased awareness of strengths, and improved coping skills and social functioning.

**Required Reading**
- Kaduson & Schaefer, Chap. 5, *Short-term Play Therapy for Children with Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder* (pp. 101-142).
- Timberlake & Cutler (on reserve), Chap. 10, *Learning Disabilities and Attention-Deficit Disorders* (pp. 239-263).

12 **Clinical Application: Challenges with Oppositionality and Defiance**
Discussion of aggressive and antisocial behaviors as a broad risk factor for children. Non-directive and directive methods for intervention and inclusion of caregivers in supporting increased functioning.

**Required Reading**
- Kaduson & Schaefer, Chap. 3, *Short-Term Play Therapy for Children with Disruptive Behavior Disorders* (pp. 51-70);
- Greene, *The Explosive Child* (pp. 1-191). (This paperback is a quick read meant for parents – please skim for comprehension of his model.)

13 **Cultural Competence and Practice Accountability**
Discussion of professional social work responsibility to monitor clinical methodology and best practices, measure objectives and outcomes, and contribute to the documentation of effectiveness. Discuss ethical considerations and dilemmas in therapeutic work with children.

**Required Reading**
- Gil & Drewes (on reserve), Chap. 1, *From Sensitivity to Competence in Working Across Cultures* (pp. 3-25) ; Chap. 3, *Suggestions and Research on Multicultural Play Therapy* (pp. 72-95).
- Van Fleet et al, Chap. 12, *Cultural and Systemic Considerations in the Practice of Child-Centered Play Therapy* (pp. 192-206).

14 **Clinical Application: Sand**
Discussion and practice of sand therapy techniques for children. Exploration of directive and non-directive uses of sand.