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***EDMA Power of Play: Learning, Communicating and Engaging Learners***

**EDMA 261:800, CRN 12097**

**Synchronous Meeting Dates: TBD each semester. There are usually 4 meetings for this course.**

**Course Description:**

The purpose of this one-credit online experiential course is to explore the importance of play in learning.  To the observer, students look like they are "just playing", but together we will unravel the big picture to find the underlying learning taking place through play.  Participants will acquire tools on how to observe play, while learning techniques to interact and respond to play themes.  Attendees will understand concurrently about the rationale behind the importance of play in child development and in education settings, how students use play as part of their social-emotional language and how to effectively observe and respond to messages in play.

**Instructor Information:**

Rebecca Spiess

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* BA/BS: Psychology/Biochemistry – University of Northern Iowa
* MS: Clinical Mental Health Counseling/School Counseling (K-12) – Drake University
* Licensed Mental Health Counselor and Registered Play Therapist

**Required Materials:**

1. Axline, V. (1986). *Dibs in search of self*. New York, NY: Ballentine Books.

This book is available to purchase online and via Kindle (see Amazon link below).

[https://www.amazon.com/Dibs-Search-Self-Renowned-Emotionally/dp/0345339258/ref=sr\_1\_1?crid=377GTAN2FVFTD&keywords=Dibs+in+search+of+self&qid=1665633064&qu=eyJxc2MiOiIxLjAxIiwicXNhIjoiMC41NCIsInFzcCI6IjAuNTEifQ%3D%3D&sprefix=dibs+in+search+of+self%2Caps%2C427&sr=8-1](https://www.amazon.com/Dibs-Search-Self-Renowned-Emotionally/dp/0345339258/ref%3Dsr_1_1?crid=377GTAN2FVFTD&keywords=Dibs+in+search+of+self&qid=1665633064&qu=eyJxc2MiOiIxLjAxIiwicXNhIjoiMC41NCIsInFzcCI6IjAuNTEifQ%3D%3D&sprefix=dibs+in+search+of+self%2Caps%2C427&sr=8-1)

1. Sahlberg, P. & Doyle, W. (2019). *Let the children play: How more play will save our schools and help children thrive*. Oxford, England: Oxford University Press.

This book is available to purchase online and via Kindle (see Amazon link below).

[https://www.amazon.com/Let-Children-Play-Schools-Thrive/dp/0190930969/ref=sr\_1\_2?crid=2W4AWT5CUE9DM&keywords=let+the+children+play+sahlberg&qid=1579124065&s=books&sprefix=let+the+children+play%2Cstripbooks%2C152&sr=1-2](https://www.amazon.com/Let-Children-Play-Schools-Thrive/dp/0190930969/ref%3Dsr_1_2?crid=2W4AWT5CUE9DM&keywords=let+the+children+play+sahlberg&qid=1579124065&s=books&sprefix=let+the+children+play%2Cstripbooks%2C152&sr=1-2)

1. The decline of play | Peter Gray | TEDxNavesink

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=64&v=Bg-GEzM7iTk&feature=emb_logo>

1. How Children Process Grief and Loss Through Play

<https://www.edutopia.org/article/how-children-process-grief-and-loss-through-play>

1. 33 Reasons to Choose a Play-Based Preschool, Not an Academic One

<https://wehavekids.com/education/Preschoolers-Learn-Best-Through-Play>

1. When education goes wrong: Dr. Nancy Carlsson Paige at TEDxTheCalhounSchool

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=267&v=BZzFM1MHz_M&feature=emb_logo>

1. Neville, M. (Producer), & Neville, M. (2018). *Won’t you be my neighbor*. United States of America: Tremolo Productions.

The above documentary can be streamed on Netflix, YouTube, Google Play Movies, Apple TV, Vudu, and Amazon Prime.

1. When Fred Met Margaret: Article and Video

<https://www.pittmed.health.pitt.edu/story/when-fred-met-margaret>

1. Clinical Practice Activities: Students will be asked to have a specific toy(s) to utilize in a play activity at each class. Students will complete a reflection sheet in class regarding the skill that was worked on and their reflection on the skills.

**Attendance Policy:**

This course includes four synchronous meetings with readings, viewings, and assignments expected before and after these meetings. Regular and punctual attendance to these meetings is of prime importance. Students are **expected to attend all synchronous meetings**. When a student is unable to attend a synchronous meeting, it is a courtesy to notify the course instructor in advance using the e-mail or phone information provided at the top of this syllabus.

**Synchronous Meeting Dates:**

**Course Objectives:**

1. Understand the purpose of play in child development and will be able to express what play is and how educators can utilize the natural process of play.
2. Understand the history and psychological aspects of play and identify the most widely accepted theoretical models of play therapy in relation to education.
3. Identify “tools” to use when interacting in play. Identify how to establish a relationship with a child, the basic stages of play interaction, and demonstrate basic skills.
4. Understand and explore special issues in play – including but not limited to: role of play in education, assisting parents/society in understanding the importance of play, respecting diversity in the play, and the future of play in education.

**Course Outline (One Module per Week):**

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| **Complete Pre-Class Survey** | Due Date-  |

**Module 1 Purpose of Play & Defining Play Therapy**

1. Demonstrate the ability to express what play is, its role in education, and how it is beneficial to students of all ages.
2. Understand how play impacts the brain and can “re-wire” brain when it has been through neglect or trauma.
3. Process the barriers to play in education and identify the risks of play deprivation in education-society.
4. Understand the difference between Directive, Non-directive, and Integrated play interactions.
5. Understand the history and timeline of play therapy and how this relates to education.
6. Begin to develop a sense of how play can work best for you as an educator.

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| Complete the following viewings & readings before the synchronous meeting on  Assignments (see the next section) are also to be completed.  |
|  Viewings: |
| 1. Watch Lecture/PPT: Module 1
2. Watch assigned videos while viewing Lecture/PPT for Module 1
3. Before Meeting: Watch information on Margaret McFarland with attached link: <https://www.pittmed.health.pitt.edu/story/when-fred-met-margaret>
4. The decline of play | Peter Gray | TEDxNavesink <https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=64&v=Bg-GEzM7iTk&feature=emb_logo>
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|  Readings: |
| 1. Chapters 1-2 in Let the Children Play: “Foreword”, “The Coming Age of Childhood”, “A Tale of Two Fathers”
2. Dibs in Search of Self – 1st Half of book
3. Read information on Margaret McFarland – *When Fred Met Margaret*
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| Synchronous Meeting: |
| 1. Review Outline and Questions for Meeting prior to connecting
2. Items to have: several buttons – any variety
3. Complete “Practice Activity 1” during Synchronous meeting
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**Module 2 Establishing a Relationship and Interacting in Play**

1. Logistical aspect of setting up for play interactions – how to choose materials to encourage play interactions.
2. Understand aspects related to respecting culture, gender, and developmental level when choosing play materials.
3. Understand the logistical aspects of play, how to invite the child to play, and materials that can be incorporated into your setting.
4. Understand how to recognize play themes.
5. Understand and demonstrate how to track, restate content, and reflect feelings.
6. Understand and demonstrate basic assessment skills in play and differentiate the stages of play.
7. Understand and demonstrate how to reflect feelings in play.
8. Understand and demonstrate how to use encouragement in play.
9. Understand and identify the “art” of play; how to choose what skill to use and when, and when to move into the different stages.

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| Complete the following viewings & readings before the synchronous meeting on Assignments (see the next section) are also to be completed.  |
| Viewings: |
| 1. Watch Lecture/PPT: Module 2
2. Watch Documentary: Won’t You be My Neighbor
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| Readings: |
| 1. Chapters 3-5 in Let the Children Play: “The Learning Power of Play”, “The GERM that Kills Play”, “Why Don’t Children Play in School Anymore”
2. Dibs in Search of Self – 2nd Half
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| Synchronous Meeting:  |
| 1. Review Outline and Questions for Meeting prior to connecting
2. Complete “Practice Activity 2” during Synchronous meeting
3. Items to have: a ball and a toy with wheels
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# Module 3 Intervention, Skills and Metaphors

1. Conceptualize students’ goals of misbehavior, crucial C’s, personality priorities, and lifestyle based on observation of play.
2. Understand and demonstrate how to use encouragement in play.
3. Understand and demonstrate meta-communication in play.
4. Identify how to introduce and incorporate skills training in Play.
5. Recognize and understand the meaning of metaphors in play and what it means to “stay in the metaphor”.

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| Complete the following viewings, readings before the synchronous meeting on: Assignments (see the next section) are also to be completed.  |
| Viewings: |
| Watch Lecture/PPT: Module 3 |
| Readings: |
| 1. Chapters 6-7 in Let the Children Play: “An American Tragedy: The Death of Recess”, “The Global War on Play”
2. How Children Process Grief and Loss Through Play <https://www.edutopia.org/article/how-children-process-grief-and-loss-through-play>
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| Synchronous Meeting:  |
| 1. Items to have: Nurturing Toys
2. Review Outline and Questions for Meeting prior to connecting
3. Complete “Practice Activity 3” during Synchronous meeting
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**Module 4 Issues Unique to Play in Education**

1. Recognize and understand the unique issues related to working with parents and society to understand the importance of play.
2. Understand and recognize global play issues and issues of diversity. Able to understand how global and cultural issues impact view of play and individual interactions in play
3. Identify and recognize the evolving body of qualitative and quantitative play research and the future of play in education.
4. Able to discuss the future of play in education with other educators, administrators, and other stakeholders.

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| **Module 4** | Complete the following viewings, readings before the synchronous meeting on:Assignments (see the next section) are also to be completed.  |
|  Viewings:  |
| 1. Watch Lecture/PPT: Module 4
2. When education goes wrong: Dr. Nancy Carlsson Paige at TEDxTheCalhounSchool <https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=267&v=BZzFM1MHz_M&feature=emb_logo>
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| Readings: |
| 1. Chapters 8-10 “Finland Experiment”, “Great Global Experiments”, “Play in Schools of Tomorrow”
2. 33 Reasons to Choose a Play-Based Preschool, Not an Academic One <https://wehavekids.com/education/Preschoolers-Learn-Best-Through-Play>
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| Synchronous Meeting:  |
| 1. Items to have: puppet or stuffed animal
2. Review Outline and Questions for Meeting prior to connection
3. Complete “Practice Activity 4” during Synchronous meeting
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**Course Assignments:**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Assignment or Activity** | **Due Date** | **Point Value** | **Course Outcome Addressed** |
| **Presentation on Play in Education – Round 1**3-6 Minute Speech: 1-2 PagesWrite a 3–6-minute speech explaining play and the reason it is important to learning. Share it with someone who is not an educator. Ask for feedback. Type up the ***speech and the feedback*** you received in a summary page. Is there anything you would change/add at this time?  |  | 5 Pts. | Understand the purpose of play in child development and will be able to express what play is and how educators can utilize the natural process of play. *Objective 1* |
| **Paper – Theories and Techniques; 2-3 Pages** Include: A compare/contrast reflection on Virgina Axline’s book Dibs in Search of Self as compared to Mr. Rogers documentary “Won’t You Be My Neighbor” What were your reactions to the Axline & Rogers, what did you find most impactful, what were the similarities and differences between Axline and Rogers approach to children’s emotional needs, what did you agree with the most in both of their approaches, what did you disagree with and why? |  | 10 Pts. | Able to understand the history of psychological aspects of play and identify the most widely accepted theoretical models of play therapy in relation to education. *Objective 2* |
| **Paper – Stocking the Room:** **2-3 Pages**In Excel or Word document. Your school was given a grant of $1,000.00 to stock your room with play supplies – what “tools” do you prioritize in your purchase and why, include list prices. Identify what “category” you feel the toys go under, based on Terry Kottman’s list of categories, and why they fit in that category. Explain how you picked the toys to be respectful of diversity issues.  |  | 10 Pts. | Identify “tools” to use when interacting in play. Identify how to establish a relationship with a child, the basic stages of play interaction, and demonstrate basic skills. *Objective 3* |
| **Clinical Practice Activities**Students will be asked to bring a specific toy(s) from home to utilize in a play therapy activity at each class. Students will use a reflection worksheet during class as a guide to discuss skill that was worked on and their reflection on the skills. Reflection sheet only needs to be submitted if you miss class.  |  | 5 Pts/ea Total of 20 Pts. | Identify “tools” to use when interacting in play. Identify how to establish a relationship with a child, the basic stages of play interaction, and demonstrate basic skills. *Objective 3* |
| **Presentation on Play in Education – Round 2**3-6 Minute Speech: 1-2 PagesReview your 3-6 minute presentation explaining play. Revise it based on what you have learned and share it again with another person who is not an educator and get feedback. Write a summary of your speech and how this experience differed from the first time.  |  | 5 Pts. | Understand the purpose of play in child development and will be able to express what play is and how educators can utilize the natural process of play. *Objective 1* |
| **Video of Basic Skills– 15-20 Minutes; Paper 1-2 Pages (see below for more details)**Write a summary of your perception of the interaction, what do you feel you “did well” and what would you like to increase your ability in, include what you feel the child’s themes and world view are – consider personality priorities, goals of misbehavior, crucial C’s, and mistaken beliefs (you don’t need to cover each specifically but need to demonstrate your thought process on how you perceive their themes and world view and why).  |  | 50 Pts. | Identify “tools” to use when interacting in play. Identify how to establish a relationship with a child, the basic stages of play interaction, and demonstrate basic skills. *Objective 3* |

***Video of Basic Skills***
**Due:**

Create a Video of you interacting with a child who is developmentally on target. Please do not tape a child who is known to have significant trauma/mental health history. It can be your own child, a relative, or the child of a friend. You will need a signed release – release will be provided in class.

In the tape you should demonstrate at least 4 basic skills – this may include structuring, tracking, reflection of content and process, returning responsibility, facilitating self-advocacy, answering/asking a question, and/or limit setting. It needs to also include at least one encouraging comment.

Write a summary of your perception of the interaction, what do you feel you “did well” and what would you like to increase your ability in, include what you feel the child’s themes and world view are – consider personality priorities, goals of misbehavior, crucial C’s, and mistaken beliefs (you don’t need to cover each specifically but need to demonstrate your thought process on how you perceive their themes and world view and why).

**Confidentiality of Subjects:**

The nature of this course is to help teachers learn more about observing students. In order to learn this skill, there must be practice. However, we are committed to the ethical and legal responsibility of protecting the privacy of the individuals referred to in the assignments and conversation. Therefore, please do not use a child’s real name in conversations or in written form.

**Grading Criteria:**

For Drake graduate credit the grading scale is based on letters and submitted by the instructor as an *A, B, C, D* or *F*. There are no (+) plus or (-) minus grading scale options due to our system.

Grades of either an *A* or *B*are considered passing. Graduate courses assign a letter grade. Not passing grades are *C, D* and *F*. This means the educator DOES NOT have enough content or understanding of the coursework to transmit the information on to student learners.

Incompletes are when an educator has an extenuating circumstance beyond their control (hospitalization, bereavement, jury duty, etc.) and cannot complete the required assignments/coursework. If the instructor gives an extension for coursework to be completed beyond when grades are due an “*I”* grade will be assigned. If the work is not completed by the assigned date, then the grade submitted will reflect the coursework that has been completed.

**90-100 % (90-100 points) A**

 **80-89 % (80-89 points) B**

 **70-79 % (70-79 points) C**

 **60-69 % (60-69 points) D**

 **Below 60 % (59 points and below) F**

**Additional Resources:**

1. *International Journal of Play Therapy* for research articles and *Play Therapy Magazine* for popular articles on play therapy.
2. Kottman, T. (2014). *Play Therapy: Basics and Beyond*. Hoboken, New Jersey: Wiley.
3. Gil, E. & Drewes, A. A. (2006). *Cultural Issues in Play Therapy*. New York, NY: Guilford Press.
4. Articles: “Paper on Touch” and “Play Therapy Best Practices” found on the website, A4PT.org

**Statement of Plagiarism:**

The penalty for plagiarism, cheating, and other forms of academic dishonesty will vary from incident to incident, depending upon the scope and magnitude of the offense and the circumstances in which it occurred. Give credit where credit is due.  For additional information, such as definitions and policies regarding plagiarism, cheating, academic dishonesty, and the appeal process click on the following link: <http://www.drake.edu/studentlife/handbook-resources/handbook/academic/#ed>

**Accommodations Clause:**

If you have a disability and will require academic accommodations in this course, please contact your instructor at the beginning of the course or prior to the first official day of class. Accommodations are coordinated by Michelle Laughlin with Access & Success.

Michelle Laughlin, Access and Success Director 515-271-1835

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**Nondiscrimination Statement:**

The principles of equal access and equal opportunity require that all interactions within the University be free from invidious discrimination. Drake University therefore prohibits discrimination based upon race, color, national origin, creed, religion, age, disability, sex, pregnancy, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, genetic information, veteran status or any characteristic protected by law in its educational programs and activities, admissions, or employment.

**Title IX Policy:**

The University has resources available for students who have experienced sexual harassment which can include sexual assault, sexual violence, sexual exploitation, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking. Some resources are legally confidential, which means personal information will not be shared with anyone else. Other non-confidential (yet still private) resources can explain how to locate support resources, file a complaint within the University, or file criminal charges – these non-confidential resources need to share incidents of sexual harassment with the Title IX Coordinator. As an instructor, I am non-confidential; however, please know that sharing with the University does not mean the individual must participate in a formal University or criminal process; an individual could request confidentiality through the University, for example. Other services the University can provide include safety planning, counseling, disability or immigration services and assistance in academic and

housing accommodations as needed.

University contacts:

Resources and reporting options can be found on the Title IX webpage at [www.drake.edu/titleix](http://www.drake.edu/titleix).

Violence Intervention Partner (V.I.P.) provides peer-based 24/7 confidential support and advocacy services. To access a V.I.P. advocate call or text 515-512-2972. Jessica Morgan-Tate, Title IX Coordinator: 271-4956 or titleix@drake.edu

**Course Evaluation:**

Once the course is completed, you will receive an emailed Course Evaluation. Your feedback is appreciated.