

ALD F321: Play in Early Childhood Development Summer 2020 (Session 1)

Unique Number: 73350

June 4 – July 11

Monday – Friday

1:00PM – 2:30PM

Welcome to ALD 321: Play in Early Childhood Development

This course is designed to examine play from a variety of political, anthropological, sociological, educational and social justice perspectives. In an era where play is increasingly disappearing in schools and neighborhoods, it is essential that those who care about or for children have a deep understanding of the connections between play, learning, healthy living and capability expansion. In this course, we critically evaluate research on play and try to better understand the role of play in our lives and in the lives of children. We investigate how society and culture shape the ways we think about play and how much/what kind of access to play we have in our daily lives. We talk about play experiences for children on the Autism spectrum as well as for children who have experienced trauma. We address whether video games count as play and how to support principles of play in an increasingly digital world.

There are two goals for this course. The first goal is to help each student value play for children and for themselves and to understand a range of theory and evidence to advocate for play. The second goal is for students to expand their capabilities to support children's play in ways that increase their agency rather than try simply to control them.

This course carries the Independent Inquiry flag. Independent Inquiry courses are designed to engage you in the process of inquiry over the course of a semester, providing you with the opportunity for independent investigation of a question, problem, or project related to your major. You should therefore expect a substantial portion of your grade to come from the independent investigation and presentation of your own work.

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Class Zoom link: <https://utexas.zoom.us/j/92615071321>

Meeting ID: 926 1507 1321

Required Text

All Course Readings are available on Canvas. You can find the weekly assigned readings under Modules.

Zoom and Technology Etiquette

To access our Zoom class, login into you UT Zoom account and then login to your Canvas Dashboard. Go to our class home page and click the Zoom link on the left of the page below the HOME tab.

There are so many ways you **could** distract yourself in this format, please stay with us because your voice is wanted in discussion. We expect that your use of laptop/tablet/phone will be in appropriate ways and at appropriate times. Posting on social media any pictures or quotes from students or teachers is prohibited. Class is a place for sharing ideas without worrying about people posting it.

Please be mindful that our Zoom classes are an opportunity to nurture challenging and thoughtful conversations. We welcome and look forward to your voices in the chat and through your microphone. Attend each Zoom class as though you were in class - dressed, prepared to be on camera (if you feel comfortable) and ready to contribute to class conversations. Please keep in mind that your engagement will be reflected in your participation points.

Course Assignments

I. Participation & Engagement and Attendance (60 points)

Participation includes being prepared for online classes, reading the articles assigned, participating during break out groups, participating via chat, completing polls, completing asynchronous assignments, and completing periodic online attendance assignments. Cognitive flexibility and respect for divergent perspectives are expected in this course. Engagement happens as students read, probe, and discuss the materials and topics of this course. Additional questions and moments of uncertainty may arise, which is entirely normal and acceptable. Students are expected to be self-reflective and to show thoughtful diplomacy with others.

We understand that in the age of COVID-19, some circumstances may prevent you from engaging in learning in the same ways as you usually would. Please talk to me and your TA if you have concerns. We will do our best to accommodate your needs. We ask that you also do your best to engage depending on your circumstances. Please share with us one or two days before the day if you will not be able to join a Zoom class, so we can make the necessary accommodations.

Regular attendance at all class meetings is an expectation of this course. Please share if you are not able to attend a class session. You have **two Emergency Release (ER) days**. This day excuses you from two class sessions with no penalty. **To use your ER, you must notify the instructor and TA by email BEFORE class. If you do not contact the instructor and**

TA before class, you ER will not count, and you will lose points. All other absences are unexcused and will affect your grade.

II. Reading Reflections (60 points total)

On course days with assigned readings, you will post a reflection of the readings by 1:00PM on Canvas under the Discussion tab. To post, students will reply to the discussion board created. Once your response is posted you will be able to see your other classmates' responses as well and respond to them. You are free to discuss and respond to one another, but that is not a requirement. However, glancing over each other's work may enhance the conversation within class. Please see below for a few reflection guidelines:

Your post will have **three parts**: a reading reflection, a robust question, and a short self-reflection on how you view play and young children. Each post should be approximately 250-300 words.

1. **Your reading reflection** should synthesize the weekly readings, not summarize (200-250 words). Please refrain from including long quotes/ too many quotes. Your reading reflection can include responses to one of the following:
 - What are your reactions to the major arguments/thesis of each reading? what supporting evidence, facts, experiences, or data do the authors provide to support their arguments? Are you convinced, why or why not?
 - What are specific strengths and weaknesses of the ideas in the readings? Were there any perspectives missing in the reading?
 - How do the authors' perspectives compare and contrast across readings?
2. Create **1 robust question** based on the readings to ask our learning community. It can be a question you still have after the readings that relates to the theme of the week/course OR a specific question that relates directly to what you read for that week. Include page numbers and direct quotes where appropriate. This question will guide discussions during our meetings.
3. Finally, **EVERY week you will answer ONE of the following questions**:
 - How have the readings and/or course content changed, deepened, clarified or challenged the way you think about young children?
 - Based on the readings, how do you feel the notion of play has changed for you?
 - Based on the readings, what are the implications in your life?

III. Opening Activity (10 points)

On class days with scheduled Opening Activities, a student or group of students will prepare a 10-minute opening activity that relates to the topic we will be discussing.

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Students will sign-up for an opening activity the first week of class. The link can be found in our Modules.

Try Creative Ways to Engage Each Other! The activity can be (and is not limited to) a game, video clip, discussion questions, etc. You can share your screen on Zoom, use a white board option, show/read/use books, use/show your favorite apps, ask classmates to use items readily available from home, etc.

By 5:00PM the day before you present, email your TA a paragraph about what you are going to do for your opening activity and how it is connected to that week's readings. Though these should be written collaboratively with your group members (if applicable), please select one group member to send your group's paragraph on behalf of the group (only send us 1 paragraph per group).

IV. Play Series (100 points)

1. **Generation Play** (25 points)

Data due in class Friday, June 12th;

Reflection due at 1:00PM on canvas Monday, June 15th

For this project, you will be asked to complete an interview with one adult about his/ her play memories (using guiding prompts that we come up with in class) and one interview with a child (ages 3-12) about his/her/their experiences and ideas about play. **Students will bring data to class** (interviewees' responses) **on June 12th**. Then, write a **1-2 page** (typed, double spaced) **reflection** that draws upon **course readings and interview data** due on canvas **on Monday, June 15th at 1:00PM**.

2. **Observation of Play** (25 points)

Observation Notes due at 1:00PM in class on Friday, June 19th

Paper due on canvas at 1:00PM on Monday, June 22nd

There are two major parts to this assignment: Your Video Observation Notes and your Reflection paper.

Your Video Observation Notes

Film Access: Students will watch the film *Babies: A Focus Feature Film* through UT's Digital Campus provider SWANK. The link is https://search.lib.utexas.edu/permalink/01UTAU_INST/9e1640/alma991004538039706011. You can also access the film by searching UT Library's video database. You must be logged in as a UT student to access the film.

Film Information

Title: *Babies Focus Features*

Director: Balmès, Thomas; Focus Features

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Year: 2010

Time: 79 mins

Observation: Taking observation notes can be challenging. You will have an opportunity to practice in class. Before you start watching the video, make sure you have something to write on or type with. You will take notes on what you see happening in the video. As you watch, observe the play you see children engaging. As we are learning in class, this will look differently for each child. Take careful notes of how children are playing, what they do, say, or show interest.

First, write notes that describe what you are seeing. Helpful questions to answer:

- Where are children playing? (outside, inside, near trees, water, roads)
- Who and what are children looking at and talking to?
- How are they welcoming play? Or not welcoming play?
- Which physical materials do you notice children playing with?
- How are they interacting with plants, animals, water, wind, and other parts of the environment?
- How are children interacting with adults?
- Are there certain items or people encouraging or discouraging play?

Your Reflection

Once you have watched the video and written your observation notes, look over you notes and think about our class discussion and theorists. Analyze this observation using at least one theorist and/or readings from class in a 2-3 page (typed, double spaced) paper. You can use the questions and wonderings from our class discussions, your Generation Play interviews, and class readings in your paper.

3. Environment (re)Design for Play (25 points)

Due Monday, June 29th at 1:00PM

Students will redesign a space for children. You will focus on a space where you have spent time. This can be anywhere, examples include a classroom, family room, hospital, library, outdoor space, supermarket, museum, hallway and more. Think about how you might change the design to allow for play – this includes attention to time and space as well as what people do, what is around for them and how it is regulated. Students can map, draw arrows, stick pictures, create models to illustrate these changes. After you illustrate, then you will briefly describe their explanations for the change by including readings/concepts/theorists/researchers (2 or more) that inspire each change. Students will make 3-5 changes to the space of their choosing and use 2 or more theorists/readings to explain the changes.

4. Equity and Play Development (25 points)

Due on Canvas on Monday, July 6th at 1:00PM

OPTION 1: Create a written piece or some type of a visual/audio demonstration (e.g., poster, ppt presentation, brochure, podcast, Op-Ed, video of yourself, etc.) that explains how play and development are impacted by an equity issue.

Some equity issues discussed in class include, but are not limited to, race, class, ability, gender, sexuality, language or immigration status. You can choose to think through how the particular issue(s) of equity you are interested in exploring for this project is further complicated by the COVID-19 pandemic (for example how specific populations of children are impacted differently with online learning because of access to internet. Select an equity issue and provide three related examples to articulate how play is affected by that particular equity issue. Please cite your sources according to APA style.

You will draw examples from legitimate news sources, articles, reports, or books. **We ask that you find NEW sources NOT from our reading packet although you may use the readings to support the examples you have found from the other sources.** One source can be your own experience. For example, you can choose to write about ONE experience you had as a child, aunt/uncle, or parent and reflect on how that particular equity issue played a part in yours or a child's/children's play and development.

OPTION 2: Autobiography. Write a paper to explain how your personal past or/and present experiences are impacted by **ONE** equity issue by describing in detail 3 experiences.

Reflect on your personal history and experiences in relation to schooling, gender, sexuality, race, class, language, culture, religion, dis/ability, and immigration status. You can choose to think through how the particular issue(s) of equity you are interested in exploring for this project is further complicated by the COVID-19 pandemic (for example how specific populations of children are impacted differently with online learning because of access to internet. Please cite your sources according to APA style.

V. Final Play Advocacy Project (70 points)

All four parts of this project are due on canvas on Monday, July 13th at 1:00PM

Project parts:

1. Product (photo uploaded to Canvas)
2. Coversheet (found on canvas),
3. Reflection (2-3 pages, double-spaced), and
4. Proof of Project Advocacy (screenshot)

This project is meant to demonstrate knowledge of the **importance of play** and your committed effort to **advocating** on behalf of young children. Students will use their Equity and Play projects as an advocacy tool to publicly advocate for the importance of play as it pertains to their equity issue and play. This is meant to be a flexible but high-quality creative project

Using discussions and readings from the class as a guide, students will create an advocacy piece that is meant to publicly explain the importance of play. **You can choose to think through how the particular issue(s) you are advocating for in this project may be further nuanced/complicated by the COVID-19 pandemic (e.g. certain populations/groups of children are impacted differently.** Your advocacy project can be an extension of a previous project. This is meant to be a flexible but high-quality creative project and **requires students to advocate in some way** (for example hanging up flyers, emailing a toy manufacturing CEO, submitting an Op-Ed for publication, meeting with a principal to discuss playground accessibility, and more). Other possible project options include policy brief, podcast, graphics poster, graphic novel, social media campaign. Students will be graded according to the play advocacy project guidelines/ cover sheet found on canvas.

On **Thursday, July 9th** (our last day of class), you will **informally describe your Play Advocacy Project. Prepare to discuss:** what you are advocating for, what you created to advocate with, and how you are advocating.

Assignments

Participation & Engagement and Attendance	30 points 30 points
Reflections	60 points
Opening Activity	10 points
Play Series	100 points
Play Advocacy Project	70 points
Total	300 Points

Class Policies and Grading Criteria

- All papers, assignments, and projects must be completed and submitted through canvas or in person by the start of the class session on which they are due. The grade on any late work will be decreased by 5 percentage points for each day beyond the due date unless arrangements have been made with your Instructor and TA in advance.
- Any students with travelling schedules need to submit their schedules to their Instructor in the first week of class.
- If you leave class early, it will be counted as an absence and attendance points will be deducted unless previously cleared with the instructor and/or TA.

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- Meeting the basic requirements of an assignment neither constitutes nor guarantees an A. Please refer to the University of Texas at Austin's grading system that defines the following letter grades: A (excellent); B (above average); C (average); D (pass); F (failure). In this class A= 93-100; A- =90-92; B+=87-89; B=83-86; B- =80-82; C+=77-79; C=73-76; C- =70-72; D=60-69; F= 59 or below
- 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. You should refer to the Student Judicial Services web site at <<http://www.utexas.edu/depts/dos/sjs/>> for more information about scholastic dishonesty.
- Students with specific learning needs should meet with me within the first week of classes so that all necessary accommodations can be made. Students with disabilities may request appropriate academic accommodations from the Division of Diversity and Community Engagement, Services for Students with Disabilities, 471-6259.
- **Students may work in groups of 2-3 (but are not required to) on the following projects:**
 - Opening Activities
 - Generation Play
 - Observation of Play
 - Environment (re)Design
 - Equity and Play and Play Advocacy Project (these two, if done in a group, must maintain the same group members)
- **If you decide to work in a group on any of these projects, you will be required to submit a paragraph to your instructor about each group member's role and contributions to the work submitted by the group. All group members will receive the same grade.**
- Reading Reflections must be completed individually.
- This syllabus is a live document, and I reserve the right to make changes if the need to do so presents itself.

Services for Students with Disabilities (SSB)

The university is committed to creating an accessible and inclusive learning environment consistent with university policy and federal and state law. Please let us know if you experience any barriers to learning so we can partner to ensure you have an equal opportunity to participate fully in this course. If you are a student with a disability, or think you may have a disability, and need accommodations please contact Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD).

Please refer to SSD's website for contact and more information:

<http://diversity.utexas.edu/disability/> (Links to an external site.).

If you are already registered with SSD, please deliver your Accommodation Letter to the instructor as early as possible in the semester so we can discuss your approved accommodations and needs in this course.

Course Content and Organization

Thursday, June 4 Introduction to the Course – What is Play? (Session 1)

- Overview of the course
- Introduction to the Course Community
- Class Details; Communication, Texas email, Canvas, Weekly activity sign-up
- Play Genealogy Maps
- Opening Activity sign up
- Discuss Reading

READING (to be done before class)	Play and Ambiguity (Sutton Smith)
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Friday, June 5: How do we listen carefully to young children? (Session 2)

- **Due on canvas at 1:00PM:** Reflection of Today's Readings (see readings below)
- Principles for taking children seriously
- Importance of listening and observation when working with children
- **Introduction to Generation Play project**
- Discuss Readings

READINGS (to be done before class)	"We're Many Members, but One Body": Fostering a Healthy Self-Identity and Agency in African American Boys (Wright, Counsell & Tate)
	On Listening to What the Children Say (Paley)

Monday, June 8 What does play have to do with development? Part One (Session 3)

- **Due on canvas at 1:00PM:** Reflection of Today's Readings (see readings below)
- Gopnik, Montessori, and Piaget
- Discuss Readings

READINGS (to be done before class)	Theories of Childhood – Piaget (Harhart)
	Playful Learning and Montessori Education (Lillard)
	Scientist in the crib (Gopnik, Meltzoff & Kuhl)

Tuesday, June 9 What does play have to do with development? Part Two (Session 4)

- **Due on canvas at 1:00PM:** Reflection of Today's Readings (see readings below)
- Vygotsky and Erikson
- Discuss Readings

READINGS (to be done before class)	Vygotskian and Post-Vygotskian Views on Children's Play (Bodrova & Leong)
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	Play as the Precursor to Literacy Development (Genishi & Dyson)
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Wednesday, June 10 What does play have to do with development? Part Three (Session 5)

- **Due on canvas at 1:00PM:** Reflection of Today's Readings (see readings below)
- Discussion of Readings
- Culture(s) and Development
- Impact of cultures, nationalities, and experience on play

READINGS (to be done before class)	Using Postcolonial Theory to Critically Reframe the Child Development Narrative (Gupta)
	Children's Play as a Cultural Activity (Gaskins)
	Preschool in Three Cultures Revisited (Tobin)

Thursday, June 11 Theorist Review (Session 6)

- Theorist Review
- Theorist Activity – Ages & Stages/Context & Environment

Friday, June 12 Generation Play work day (Session 7)

- **Due in Class: Generation Play Data**
- Group sharing of Generation Play Data
- In-class work day on Generation Play reflection
- Instructor and TA available for Questions

Monday, June 15 How do agency and control impact play? (Session 8)

- **Due on canvas at 1:00PM: Generation Play Reflection**
- **Due on canvas at 1:00PM:** Reflection of Today's Readings (see readings below)
- **Introduce Observation of Play project – observation notes completed by the beginning of class (1:00PM) on Friday, June 19th**
- How agency works
- International development and children's development
- Unequal access to play

READINGS (to be done before class)	Children's Need to Know: Curiosity in Schools (Engel)
	Making a Stink About the "Ideal" Classroom (Souto-Manning)

Tuesday, June 16 How do agency and control impact play? (Session 9)

- **Opening Activity**

- Discuss yesterday's readings

Wednesday, June 17 How does policy and equity impact children's play and development?
(Session 10)

- **Due on canvas at 1:00PM:** Reflection of Today's Readings (see readings below)
- Disappearance of play
- Advocacy for play and early childhood

READINGS (to be done before class)	Is Kindergarten the New First Grade? (Bassok)
	NAEYC Policy Statements (Skim this reading)
	Inserting Child-Initiated Play into an American Urban School District after a Decade of Scripted Curricula Complexities and Progress (Nicholson, Bauer & Woolley)

Thursday, June 18 How do policy and equity impact children's play and development?
(Session 11)

- **Opening Activity**
- Discuss yesterday's readings
- DAP changes over time – where did play go?

Friday, June 19 Observation of Play work day (Session 12)

- **Due in class: Observation of Play observation notes (not reflection paper)**
- Group sharing of Observation of Play experience
- In-class work day on Observation of Play reflection
- Instructor and TA available for Questions

Monday, June 22 How can technology limit or extend play? (session 13)

- **Due on canvas at 1:00PM: Observation of Play Paper**
- **Due on canvas at 1:00PM:** Reflection of Today's Readings (see readings below)
- **Introduce Environment (re)Design Project**
- Play vs. Entertainment
- Tech for young children

READINGS (to be done before class)	"I'm Just Playing Ipad" (Moore & Adair)
	Young people, online gaming culture, and education (Beavis)
SKIM	National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAYEC) Position Statement

Tuesday, June 23 How can technology limit or extend play? (Session 14)

- **Opening Activity**
- Discuss yesterday's readings
- Technology Apps activity

Wednesday, June 24 What is different about playing outdoors? (Session 15)

- **Due on canvas at 1:00PM:** Reflection of Today's Readings (see readings below)
- Relationships with More-than-human
- Loose Parts
- Privilege and outdoor play

READINGS (to be done before class)	The Genius of Childhood: How nature nurtures creativity (Louv)
	Unruly Raccoons and Troubled Educators: Nature/Culture Divides in a Childcare Centre (Pacini-Ketchabaw & Nxumalo)
	Quality Outdoor Spaces for Young Children (Spencer & Wright)

Thursday, June 25 What is different about playing outdoors? (Session 16)

- **Opening Activity**
- Discuss yesterday's readings
- Outdoor Experiences

Friday, June 26 Environment (re)Design Project work day (Session 17)

- Group sharing of Environment (re)Design Project experience
- Work day on Environment (re)Design Project
- Instructor and TA available for Questions

Monday, June 29 Does gender affect how we play? (Session 18)

- **Due on canvas at 1:00PM: Environment (re)Design Project**
- **Due on canvas at 1:00PM:** Reflection of Today's Readings (see readings below)
- **Introduce Equity and Play project**
- Internalized Gender Roles
- Queer Theory and Play

READINGS (to be done before class)	How to play like a girl (LaFrance)
	Using Queer theory to rethink gender equity in early childhood education (Blaise & Taylor)

Tuesday, June 30 Does gender affect how we play? (Session 19)

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- **Opening Activity**
 - Discuss yesterday's readings
 - Applying Queer Theory to children's literature

Wednesday, July 1: What kinds of racial conversations happen during play? (Session 20)

- **Due on canvas at 1:00PM:** Reflection of Today's Readings (see readings below)
- Examples of racial conversations that happen during play
- **Opening Activity**

READINGS (to be done before class)	The impact of race and culture on play in early childhood (Adair & Doucet)
	How children learn about racism and enact anti-racism (Derman-Sparks)
	Teaching about Racial Equity Issues in Teacher Education Programs (Boutte)

Thursday, July 2: What kinds of racial conversations happen during play? (Session 21)

- Discuss yesterday's readings
- Literature Analysis

No Class Friday
Have a great long weekend!

Monday, July 6 How does play make sense for children with special needs/abilities? (Session 22)

- **Due on canvas at 1:00PM: Equity and Play Project**
- **Due on canvas at 1:00PM:** Reflection of Today's Readings (see readings below)
- **Introduce Play Advocacy Project**
- **Opening Activity**
- Play and Autism
- Play for children with different abilities
- Discuss Readings

READINGS (to be done before class)	Emancipating play: Dis/abled children, development and deconstruction (Goodley & Runswick-Cole)
	Preferred Play Activities of Children with Autism Spectrum Disorder in Naturalistic Settings (Doody & Mertz)

SKIM	Therapeutic Advantages of play (Goncu & Gaskins)
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Tuesday, July 7 Identities, Families, and Communities (Session 23)

- **Due on canvas at 1:00PM:** Reflection of Today's Readings (see readings below)
- **Opening Activity**
- Family panel
- Identity development in young children
- Intersectionality and identity
- Discuss readings

READINGS (to be done before class)	Preschoolers' funds of knowledge displayed through sociodramatic play episodes in a bilingual classroom (Riojas Cortes)
	Learning to be a child (Brooker)

Wednesday, July 8 How experiencing trauma can affect children's play and development? (Session 24)

- **Due on canvas at 1:00PM:** Reflection of Today's Readings (see readings below)
- Trauma and resilience
- **Opening Activity**
- Discuss Readings

READINGS (to be done before class)	Learning to laugh (Wright)
	Ordinary Magic: Lessons from Research on Resilience in Human Development (Masten)

Thursday, July 9 Review, Future Directions, and Play Advocacy Project Sharing (Session 25)

- Review of course
- Future directions
- Advocacy Project Sharing
- Course evaluations

**Play Advocacy Projects are due on Canvas
on Monday July 13th at 1:00PM**