I. Descriptive Information

A. Course Number and Title: EDEC 750 - Play Theory and Early Learning

B. Catalog Description: Analysis and discussion of the theory, research, and practice related to the play of young children in various ecological settings.

C. Course Credit: Three (3) hours

D. Prerequisites: None

E. Intended Audience: Graduate Students in Early Childhood Education and related fields.

F. Instructor: Early childhood faculty with appropriate expertise

II. Statement of Course Goals and Learning Outcomes

A. Cite the theories of play and trace the normal development of play behaviors in young children.

B. Identify the various factors which influence children's play such as family, culture, television, schools, exceptionalities, etc.

C. Explain the interrelationship of the play process to social, emotional, cognitive, and physical development of young children.

D. Explain the play process as a route of young children's learning.

E. Identify the characteristics of various program models and curricula which enhance or hinder children's play.

F. Design developmentally appropriate strategies to enhance children's learning through play, with emphasis on creating learning environments that reflect the social/cultural contexts of children and families.

G. Employ diagnostic procedures for the purpose of assessing children's development through play.

III. Required Readings


**IV. Academic Course Requirements**

A. Maintain a play journal of observations of children’s play behaviors and your interpretation of those behaviors.

B. Cooperative learning team membership and participation.

C. Successful completion of the mid-term examination.

D. Paley Response paper on *You can’t say you can’t play*. Each student will examine the dynamic occurring in Paley’s classroom and described by children in other grades. Particular attention will be focused on examples that represent bullying behavior or may lead to bullying behavior. (Safe Schools Act)

E. Research project - each student will participate in a research project. Research projects may replicate or be original in nature. Research projects will be presented in class using presentation software and incorporating digital photos, sounds and videos.

F. Successful completion of a final examination.

G. Write a 10 page APA style research paper on a topic approved in advance by the instructor.

**V. Administrative Course Requirements**

A. Regular attendance and participation in class. Students are allowed one cut. Additional cuts and/or tardiness will result in a grade penalty.

B. Completion of all academic requirements.

**VI. Evaluation and Grading**

A. Administrative Requirements.
   - Play Journal 35%
   - Cooperative learning team participation 5%
   - Research project 15%
   - Mid-term Examination 15%
Paley Paper 5%
Final exam 15%
Final 10 page APA research paper 10%

VII. Major Topics of the Course

See Attached