

INTERDISCIPLINARY FIRST YEAR SEMINAR

NOT JUST FOR CHILDREN: THE MEANING OF PLAY

Human Development 198    Fall 2009    Gen Ed SS1 & WE  
Course Number 11789

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Office:    MAC C325

Office Hours:    MW: 9:00 – 11:00; TuTh 4:00 – 5:00

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Class Time: Tuesdays and Thursdays 12:30 – 1:50                    MAC224

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Course Description:

It has been said that play is the work of childhood, but is work the play of adulthood?? This course will examine play in its myriad of forms and in the way it is expressed in animals and humans at different stages of the life span. Because there are so many ways of studying play, it is essential that an interdisciplinary approach be applied to the definition of play, theories of play and research findings that have added to our knowledge of play. This means that this course will strive to integrate perspectives from a number of disciplines, such as human development, biology, history, anthropology and perhaps even marketing and business as we come to understand the significance and adaptational value that play may have for living creatures. Play as an intervention for social ills, in terms of its therapeutic value and enhancement of learning and creativity will also be considered.

Required Readings:

Textbooks:

Chudacoff, H.P. (2007). *Children at play. An American history*. New York: New York University Press.

Hughes, F.P. (2010). *Children, play, and development* (4<sup>th</sup> ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

**Reserve readings accessed via the course D2L website:**

- Aune & Wong (2002) Antecedents and consequences of adult play in romantic relationships. *Personal Relationships*, 9, 279-286.
- Burghardt, G. M. (2005). A guide to the diversity of play. Chapter 4 (pp. 83-110) in *The genesis of animal play*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- Eisen, G. (1988). *Children and play in the holocaust. Games among the shadows*. Amherst, MA: University of Massachusetts Press.
- Maccoby, E. E. (1990). Gender and relationships: A developmental account. *American Psychologist*, 45, 513-520.
- Munsey, C. (2008). Bring back old-fashioned play. *Monitor on Psychology*, 39.
- Panksepp (2008). Play, ADHD, and the construction of the social brain: Should the first class each day be recess? *The American Journal of Play*, 1.
- Singer, D.G. & Singer, J.L. (2005). *Imagination and play in the electronic age*. Chapter 3. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Strain, L.A., Crabusic, C.C., Searle, M.S. & Dunn, N.J. (2002). Continuing and ceasing leisure activities in later life: A longitudinal study. *The Gerontologist*, 42, 217-223.
- Williams, A. (May 20, 2007). Putting the skinned knees back into playtime. *New York Times Magazine*.

## The First Year Seminar Program

This class is part of the *First Year Seminar Program* that is designed to provide you with active engagement with the material and high quality interactions with me and your classmates in a small seminar environment.

There are three main components of this course:

1. The First Year Seminar Program (FYS) was designed to introduce students to their college career with an eye towards making it a successful and rewarding learning experience. We will work towards meeting the specific objectives of the First Year Seminar Program, which are to:
  - Promote engagement (in class, with faculty, with peers, with the university) and a positive adjustment to college.
  - Develop critical thinking and problem solving skills.
  - Develop oral communication (both written and oral) skills.
  - Increase information literacy.

2. UW-Green Bay's special mission is to promote interdisciplinary education. This means that students will learn how to critical analyze and solve problems from multiple perspectives and bodies of knowledge. The content of this course, and the special FYS learning experiences are designed to start students, in their first semester, along the path of interdisciplinary thinking.
3. The specific content of this course is about play across the life span (see the course description). The course is a part of the Human Development program, which examine the growth and development of humans from biological psychological and cultural contexts. We will work towards meeting the specific **content** goals of this course, which are:
  - **To Provide you with knowledge of the field of Human Development --** To help you achieve the UWGB general education learning outcome of having a fundamental understanding of the Social Sciences with an emphasis on the developmental approach. Specifically, you will learn about the multiple determinants of play and use a developmental contextual model to examine how the nature of play changes over the life span.
  - **To Develop Methodological and Observational Skills --** We will use the example of play to help you learn how to: think critically and use various methodologies to ask and answer questions about the value and purpose of play, and especially to develop a critical attitude about contemporary issues regarding play such as attention deficit disorder, creativity and play, play under stressful conditions, play and the environment, play as a form of therapy, and lack of play in the adult years..
  - **To Aid Personal Development --** To help increase your understanding of the behavior of others as well as your own. To enhance your curiosity about the internal and external factors that influence play, and better understand individual differences. To promote an open acceptance of the diversity of human nature and functioning by understanding the role that play has in difference cultural settings.

### **How Do You Demonstrate Your Learning?**

- I. **Exams** will consist of a combination of short answer and essay questions. **NO make-up exams will be given.** Because exam dates are specified well in advance you are expected to be able to take all of them. Exceptions for catastrophic cases will be reviewed individually.

**II. Short Paper Assignments:** You will write 2 short papers. Specific guides to writing and on each of these assignments are on the class D2L website. All papers must be grammatically correct, error-free, stapled, concise, well-written, follow good writing etiquette, use page numbers, be double-spaced, and be without cover pages or report covers.

- 1. How do you play? (10% + 5% for two paragraph rewrite).** Due end of week 2 of class. Not to exceed two pages, with thesis and topic sentences (see online guides on how to write well). You will be graded on the depth of your self examination, the organization of the paper (including the basic elements of writing and composition), and the extent of critical thinking demonstrated by your writing.

When I grade your paper, I will select two paragraphs for more detailed comments. You will be asked to rewrite the identified paragraphs using the feedback given, and submit the rewrite (plus original paper) during Week 3.

- 2. Interdisciplinary Exercise: TBA (15%).** To help you apply your critical thinking skills to a real life problem, you will be taking part in an Interdisciplinary exercise. On the basis of what you have learned about the Interdisciplinary mission of UW-Green Bay (Sept. 8), and what you have learned from the Waterman presentation (Sept. 23), you will be required to write a 1 page response to the Waterman program (5% of final grade) and to complete a University Mission Paper (10% of final grade). Additional guidelines will be forthcoming.

**III. Small Project (25%):** Students will be given a list of potential projects, all of which involve an observational and/or data gathering component. Options will include observations of play behavior across different age groups, animal play, design of playgrounds and other spaces of play, interviews about attitudes towards play, service learning in a facility or organization that promotes play behavior. Guidelines will be forthcoming. Students will write up their findings as well as present these to class.

**IV. Participation:**

**Co-curricular activities (5%):** The university offers a number of extra and co-curricular activities that can enhance your overall education. You are required to attend at least **four** (one of these should be the Waterman lecture, which is mandatory) from a complete listing of all the options and to submit an evaluation in the course D2L dropbox.

**Class participation (5%):** Seminars work best when students contribute their opinions and ideas. What you say in class will be noted and valued.

### How Does It All Add Up?

<u>Exam 1 -</u>	15%
<u>Final Exam -</u>	20%
<u>Short Paper Assignment</u>	15%
<u>Interdisciplinary Exercise</u>	15%
<u>Project</u>	25%
<u>Co-curricular Participation</u>	5%
<u>Class Participation</u>	5%

### **Grades will be assigned in the following manner**

A: 93-100	A/B: 88-92	B: 84-87	B/C: 79-83
C: 75-78	C/D: 68-74	D: 60-67	F: <60

**THERE IS NO CURVE!** My philosophy on grading is that individual effort rather than competition results in a more productive and successful learning environment.

**LATE POLICY:** You lose 1 point for every day the paper is late (weekend days too).

**NOTE ON EMAIL:** I will be using your UWGB student email addresses to send you updates and information. Please *check it often* (set your account to forward your email to what you check).

### **A Framework For Class**

- Class will be devoted introducing, clarifying, and summarizing topics fully dealt with in the different books rather than repeating all the material in there. Bring your books to class. Mark them up while you are reading so you can find what you want in them easily. Highlight different paragraphs or concepts you disagree with. **ENGAGE** the material. **You are responsible for all the material in the assigned readings even if not covered in lectures.**
- If you do not agree with material, if something I say raises a question in your head, or if you think of something that contributes to current topic, **PLEASE RAISE YOUR HAND** and let me hear you. I **REALLY** appreciate, and your **CLASSMATES BENEFIT** from your personal contributions.
- Use my office hours. Come to my office and chat before or after class with questions. I am here to help you do well in this class and here at UWGB.
- Work with your peer mentor. Shannon Feil will also be holding office hours and is another valuable resource for you.
- **Give Learning Your Time, Energy, and Commitment:** Supplement each hour of in-class work with approx. 2 hours of course related study for optimal performance and understanding.

- *If you have a disability please contact and wish to discuss special accommodations please contact UWGB's Disability Services (SS1500) or 465 2849 as soon as possible.*
- **GET YOUR MONEY's WORTH:**
  - Please be on time, and stay the full time.
  - Please do not chat during class, or pack before we are done.
  - Courteous behavior in class and in web postings will be appreciated by all.
  - Please *turn off your cell phones* before each class.
  - Please **DO NOT READ/SEND** text messages during class.
  - **Come to all classes. Stay focused till the end.**

### **How do you Maximize Your LEARNING (and get a GREAT grade)?**

- 1. Come to class prepared and stay focused.**
  - a. Read the assigned readings before you come to class.
  - b. Identify difficult areas in the readings to discuss in class.
- 2. Read Mindfully.**
  - a. Set aside blocks of time to read.
  - b. Read for at least 30-45 minutes at a stretch.
  - c. Minimize distractions (computer, music, T.V.) during reading.
  - d. **QUESTION** the readings and write down the questions.
- 3. Take good notes.**
  - a. Re-write key material from the readings/class in your own words.
  - b. Don't just copy PowerPoint slides—write down additional comments and points that are made in class.
  - c. Write down examples and stories.
  - d. Leave space (use one side of a notebook or leave extra lines between topics/subtopics).
- 4. Study well for exams.**
  - a. Start studying early and study often (review text/notes after each class).
  - b. **PLAN** your studying and break down the task into subtasks.
  - c. Use different techniques; study with a friend.
  - d. **TEST** yourself well to see what you do not know and spend time restudying.
  - e. Come see me/call me/email me, if you do not understand something.

## Class Schedule

Week 1: Sept 3

**Topic:** What is play?

**Reading:**

- 1) Hughes (2009): Chapter 1 (pp. 3-21)
- 2) Chudacoff (2007): Introduction
- 3) Munsey (2008)

Week 2: Sept 8 – Sept 10

Sept. 8: Interdisciplinary Exercise (Meet in Phoenix B and C)

Sept. 10: Theories of play

**Reading:**

- 1) Hughes (2009): Chapter 1 (pp. 21 – 34).
- 2) Williams (2007)

Week 3: Sept 15 – Sept 17

**Topic:** Ethological and Cultural Issues in Play  
How Do You Assess Play?

**Reading :**

- 1) Hughes (2009): Chapter 2
- 2) Burghardt, G. M. (2005).

**Assignment Due Sept 17: How well do you play?**

Week 4: Sept 22 – Sept 24

**Topic:** Play During Infancy and Early Childhood

**Reading:**

- 1) Hughes (2009): Chapters 3 & 4

**Waterman Presentation: Sept. 23 at 8:00 in Phoenix Rooms.  
All students required to attend!**

Week 5: Sept 29 – Oct 1

**Topic:** Childhood, Adolescence and play  
The Effects of Television on Play

Library resources for project (Oct. 1) Meet 12:30 in CL304

**Reading:**

- 1) Hughes (2009) Chapter 5
- 2) Singer & Singer (2005).

**Assignment Due Sept 29: Revision of paragraphs on “How well do you play?”**

Week 6: Oct 6 – Oct 8

Topic: Gender and Play  
Observations at campus 4-year old kindergarten

Reading:

- 1) Maccoby (1990)
- 2) Hughes (2009) Chapter 6

Week 7: Oct 13 – Oct 15

**Topic:** The Historical Context of Play (**Oct 13**)

**Reading:**

- 1) Chudacoff (2007) Chapters 1 & 2

**Topic:** Observations for small project: **Data collection day: (Oct 15)**

Week 8: Oct 20 – Oct 22

**Topic:** 1) Discussion of data collections  
2) The History of Play  
3) Exam Review

**Reading:**

- 1) Chudacoff (2007) Chapters 3 & 4

**Midterm on Oct 22**

Week 9: Oct 27 – Oct 29

**Topic:** The Historical Context of Play  
*“The Boy in the Striped Pajamas”*

**Reading:**

- 1) Chudacoff (2007) Chapters 5 & 6
- 2) Eisen (1988) Chapter 4

Week 10: Nov 3 – Nov 5

**Topic:** Play in Adulthood

**Reading:**

- 1) Aune & Wong (2002) Antecedents and consequences of adult play in romantic relationships. *Personal Relationships*, 9, 279-286.
- 2) Strain, L.A., Crabusic, C.C., Searle, M.S. & Dunn, N.J. (2002). Continuing and ceasing leisure activities in later life: A longitudinal study. *The Gerontologist*, 42, 217-223.

Week 11: Nov. 10-12

**Assignment Due Nov. 10: Small Project Paper**

Student presentations of projects

Week 12: Nov 17-19

**Nov. 17: Topic:** The Cultural Context of Play

**Guest lecture:** Dr. Fergus Hughes, Professor Emeritus, Human Development

**Topic:** Play in Special Populations

**Reading:**

1) Hughes (2009) Chapter 7

Week 13: Nov 24

**Topic:** Play and Attention Deficit Disorder

**Reading:** Panksepp (2008)

Thanksgiving Break—November 26 – November 29

Week 14: Dec 1 – Dec 3

**Topic:** Contemporary Issues in Play:  
Play Therapy

**Dec 3:** Guest Lecture: Colleen Ducke and Ashley Zimmerman, Child Life Specialists,  
St. Vincent Hospital, Green Bay

**Reading:**

1) Hughes (2009) Chapter 10

**Assignment Due Dec 1: University Mission Paper**

Week 15: Dec 8 – Dec 10

**Topic:** Play: Final Thoughts

- 1) The Future of Play
  - 2) Revisiting Play as a Life Span Concept
- Final Exam Review

**Reading:**

Chudacoff (2007) Chapter 7 & Conclusion

Note: Scheduling of topics and requirements may be revised

**FINAL EXAM**

**Dec. 17 (Thursday) 10:30 – 12:30 pm**