

*University of Texas Dallas*  
*Graduate Course*  
*HDCD 5350-501: Introduction to Child Life: Theory and Practice*

---

*Fall 2016*  
*GR 4.208*  
*Tuesday 10:00-12:45 pm*

**Contact Information**

Jill B Cook M.S. CCLS  
Professor I of Psychology  
School of Behavioral and Brain Sciences  
The University of Texas at Dallas  
800 West Campbell Road  
Richardson, TX 75080  
E-mail: Jill.Cook@utdallas.edu  
Cell phone: 405-269-6757

Office hours are available as needed. I will be available prior to class or by appointment. Please email me to schedule a meeting.

**Course Description**

This course is designed to allow students interested in Child Life to acquire some of the fundamental skills in helping children and families cope with the stress of a health care experience. Child Life programs strive to promote optimum development of children, adolescents and families, to maintain normal living patterns, and to minimize psychological trauma. Child Life specialists, as members of the health-care team, maintain, enhance, and maximize normal growth and development through play, education, advocacy, and therapeutic interventions. At the completion of this course, students will be able to promote the essential child life goals of minimizing stress and anxiety, promote coping, and promote normal development. The following objectives will help the student meet those goals.

1. To examine current research literature and methodology concerning children and health care;
2. To acquire an understanding of the nature of childhood illnesses;
3. To research therapeutic techniques that enable children and their families to prepare for and cope with health care experiences.

Students will understand the skills and education needed to:

1. Provided developmental assessments
2. Use age-appropriate preparation for procedures, treatments and diagnosis teaching
3. Help develop coping strategies
4. Utilize therapeutic play and activities
5. Promote family-centered care, highlighting the support for siblings
6. Help decrease stress of hospitalization
7. Gain understanding of procedural support and alternative focus
8. Identify grief, bereavement, trauma and other issues the will need debriefing

## **Child Life information**

*To become a certified child life specialist, you must have completed an approved internship supervised by a certified child life specialist. The completion of the course nor University of Texas Dallas will guarantee that you will obtain an internship. It is a competitive process based on GPA, hours completed in a hospital setting, knowledge of child development and child life, and interviewing skills.*

*Almost all hospitals require that their child life staff have certification. Computer-based administration (CBT) is \$325 for members, \$475 for non-members. This exam is given twice a year at selected sites around the United States.*

*Before you can take the exam you must have completed a total of 10 college-level courses in child life or a related department/subject including a minimum of one child life course taught by a Certified Child Life Specialist (CCLS). The required child life course must have a focus on children in the health care environment and must be taught by a CCLS. ALL of the following applied areas of study must be included in the course:*

1. Child Life Documents
2. Scope of Practice
3. Family-Centered Care
4. Impact of illness, injury and health care on patients/families
5. Therapeutic play
6. Preparation

## **Required Textbooks and Materials**

Gaynard, L (et al). 1998. Psychosocial Care of Children in Hospitals. Child Life Council. Rockville MD.

Thompson, R. H. (Ed.). 2009. The Handbook of child life: A guide for pediatric psychosocial care. Springfield: Charles C. Thomas.

Thompson, R. H. and Stanford, G. 1981. Child Life in Hospital, Theory and Practice. Springfield: Charles C. Thomas.

## **Suggested Textbooks and Materials**

Kuttner. 2010. A Child in Pain, What Health Professional can do to Help. Vancouver, BC. Hartley and Marks.

## **Tentative Schedule**

### **Assignments & Academic Calendar**

*Topics, Reading Assignments, Due Dates, Exam Dates*

#### **August 23—Introductions & Syllabus**

- Course requirements – Syllabus
- Navigate website (www.childlife.org)
- Child Life video

#### **August 30— Building supportive relationships and Communication with Children**

- Thompson Chapter 1
- Thompson/Stanford Chapter 1
- Thompson Chapter 5
- Gaynard Chapter 6

#### **September 6— Assessments: Theory and Development**

- Thompson Chapter 2
- Gaynard, Chapter 2
- Read EBP statement of child life- assessment

#### **September 13—Assessment: Planning Child Life Care, Documents**

- Thompson Chapter 7
- Gaynard Chapter 4
- Thompson/Stanford Chapter 2
- *Review for Exam 1*

**\*\*September 17— Child Life 101 \*Extra cost applies\* At Medical City Childrens Hospital  
(November 5 at Childrens Health Dallas)**

#### **September 20— NO CLASS**

---

#### **September 27—Exam 1**

**Class time for activity and diagnosis project**

#### **October 4—Other Psychosocial professional**

- Film
- Thompson/Stanford chapter 7 & 8
- Gaynard Chapter 3 (pp 28-32)

#### **October 11— Therapeutic Relationships, Introducing Child Life Services**

- Thompson Chapter 4
- Gaynard Chapter 5

#### **October 18— Interventions: Play and the hospitalized child**

- Thompson Chapter 8
- Read EBP statement of child life- on therapeutic play
- Gaynard Chapter 7
- Thompson/Stanford 4 & 5

**October 25— Interventions: talking to children about health care experience, Preparation**

- **Individual Activity assignment is due**
- Thompson Chapter 9
- Thompson/Stanford Chapter 6
- Read EBP statement of child life- Preparation
- Gaynard Chapter 9

**November 1— Interventions: parents and siblings**

- **Group activity assignment due**
- Thompson Chapter 6
- Thompson/Stanford Chapter 3
- Gaynard Chapter 8

---

**November 8— Exam 2**

**Special Populations: Chronic Illness, Rehabilitation and School**

- Thompson Chapter 13, 14 & 15
- Gaynard Chapter 10

**November 15— Critical Care- Environment, Care of the dying child**

- Thompson Chapter 11 & 12

**November 22—Fall Break- No Class**

**November 29— Culture and Families, Ethnics in Child Life**

- Thompson Chapter 15 & 16
- Gaynard Appendix B
- Read the “Child life certifying committee code of professional practice”

**December 6— Program Administration and Supervision, Child life Archives**

- **Research paper due**
- Thompson Chapter 10
- Review for final exam

**December \_\_\_\_—Final Exam**

## Assignments

- **ALL assignments are expected to be typed**
- **Double-spaced**
- **Citing all resources in APA format.**

## Child Life 101 and 102 attended

- a. A recorded of your attendance needs to be summited along with a paper discussing
  - What you learned.
  - What did you not know?
  - What was unexpected?
  - What did you observe from area child life specialist?
  - Has your thoughts and opinions of child life changed
  - Etc.

## Activity Plans- Use the “Plan for Therapeutic Activity” form

- a. An example of the activity will be present in class (3 min or less presentation)
  - b. 2 Resources articles will be used for each activity to support for therapeutic goals
  - c. You are not expected to do this with a child however it does assist you when writing up the activities
1. Individual activity plan: Each student will submit a developed activity plan for a individual child who cannot get out of bed/leave the hospital room. This plan will address specific therapeutic goals for the patient.
  2. Group activity plan: Each student will submit a developed activity appropriate for a hospital playroom group setting. Remember, there could easily be children from age 3 to age 10 in playroom at the same time. Plan accordingly.

## Research Paper

The research paper will contain detailed information about a specific disease/chronic condition. It is expected that the paper will include how the disease/chronic condition affects the patient from infancy to young adulthood, and how the child life specialist provides services for each developmental stage. Do not forget that child life specialists provide family-centered care so remember to include interventions for family, siblings, etc.

- Summary of physiological aspects of the disease (30 points)
- Summary of psychological aspects of the disease (30 points)
- Summary of child life objectives and, (40 points)
- Plans for interventions (40 points) and intervention activity (40 points)
- Use of minimum 4 references (20 points)

Paper should be at approximately 6 pages.

Examples of diseases/chronic conditions: Spina Bifida, Guillain- Barre Syndrome. Hypospadias, Trecher Collins Syndrome, Asthma, Muscular Dystrophy, Cerebral Palsy, Gastroschises, Crohn’s Disease, Osteogenesis Imperfecta, Cancers (ALL, AML, Neuroblastoma, Medulloblastoma, Lymphomas, Wilms’s Tumor, Retinoblastoma, Rhabdomyosarcoma, Osteosarcoma, Ewings’s Sarcoma), etc. **If you have another disease/condition of interest, this MUST be discussed with the instructor prior to writing your paper.**

**Points**

Attendance	(20 points)
Child Life 101	(50 points)
Individual Activity	(80 points)
Group Activity	(100 points)
Diagnosis research paper and activity	(200 points)
Exam 1:	(150 points)
Exam 2:	(150 points)
Final Exam:	(250 points)

**Total of 1000 points offered in class.**

**Grading Policy**

A	900-1000
B+	860-899
B	800-859
C+	760-799
C	700-759
D	600-699
F	Below 599

**Course Policies***Late Work:*

All assignments are due at the beginning of the class on the date specified on the course outline. Request for extensions must be based on significant extenuating circumstances and must be discussed with the professor before the assignment is due. **Each DAY the assignment is late 5 points will be deducted. The assignment will not be accepted after one week.**

*Class Attendance:*

A significant part of the learning in this course is interacting and participating in class lectures. **Class attendance is required!!** If an unusual situation or major illness occurs please email me at the earliest possible time and determine whether it is possible to arrange appropriate supplemental assignment to make up the work. Missing any classes may impact your class participation grade. Absence from classes reduces your learning opportunities and negatively affects the interactive process with other students. Students who miss 4 or more class meetings of this course will not achieve a passing grade.

*Expectations:*

Students are expected to participate in class discussions and share their ideas openly but no student will be required to share personal information or information that they are not comfortable discussing. Students are encouraged to voice any concerns with topics to the professor in or out of class.

*Make-up assignments and exams:*

Request for make-up assignments and exams will be granted on a case-by-case basis. Make ups should not be expected and are rare. All scheduling and question are to be address prior to the exam, no exceptions will be made after the exam has started. If special situations apply (death or hospitalization) the assignment/exam must be taken/turned in the first day back. Medical note is needed.

*Classroom Citizenship:*

Classroom will consist of lecture, discussion, student-led training presentations, videos, and guest with the potential of on and off campus meetings

**UT Dallas Syllabus Policies and Procedures**

The information contained in the following link constitutes the University's policies and procedures segment of the course syllabus. Please go to <http://go.utdallas.edu/syllabus-policies> for these policies.

***The descriptions and timelines contained in this syllabus are subject to change at the discretion of the Professor.***

---