

Texas A&M University-San Antonio
EDEC 5349: Play in the Early Years
HB Syllabus Fall 2026

A. MAJOR COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course will extend the students' understanding of play theory and include relevant research in order to advocate for the value of play in the early years.

B. STUDENT LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

At the successful completion of this course, the student will:

1. Describe differing conceptualizations of play and their theoretical underpinnings.
2. Identify key points and materials for incorporating play in the curriculum.
3. Articulate the importance of using active learning curriculum and learning centers.
4. Identify research related to the field of early childhood and understand its significance.

C. LECTURE OR DISCUSSION TOPICS:

- Developmental Perspectives on Play
- Sociocultural Perspectives on Play
- Leadership Pathways, Equity, Justice, and Advocacy
- A Leadership Development Ecosystem
- Literature on Play

D. TEXTBOOK AND/OR RESOURCE MATERIALS:

Fleer, M. (2013) Theorising play in the early years. Cambridge University Press. ISBN 978-1107032293. eBook through TAMUSA Library <https://tamusa.on.worldcat.org/oclc/871006008>

Geneser, V. (2022). Scholarly snapshots: The importance of child play as a human right. Rowman & Littlefield. eBook available through TAMUSA Library

Other Required Readings as assigned on Blackboard

E. MAIN ASSIGNMENTS

- Acknowledgement of the syllabus
- My play memories
- Quizzes
- Connections/Extensions/Challenge
- Play across cultures
- Plus, peer responses
- Analyzing children's analog play
Plus, peer responses
- Analyzing children's digital play
Plus, peer responses
- Play Photo Story