

DEPARTMENT of EDUCATION

COURSE OUTLINE – Winter 2026

CD 1330 (A3): Understanding Children's Play – 3 (3.75-0-0) 45 Hours for 12 Weeks

Northwestern Polytechnic acknowledges that our campuses are located on Treaty 8 territory, the ancestral and present-day home to many diverse First Nations, Metis, and Inuit people. We are grateful to work, live and learn on the traditional territory of Duncan's First Nation, Horse Lake First Nation and Sturgeon Lake Cree Nation, who are the original caretakers of this land.

We acknowledge the history of this land and we are thankful for the opportunity to walk together in friendship, where we will encourage and promote positive change for present and future generations.

INSTRUCTOR:
Amanda Young
OFFICE: HS216

PHONE: N/A

E-MAIL:
ayoung@nwpolytech.ca

OFFICE HOURS:
By Appointment.
Available
Monday and
Wednesday.

CALENDAR DESCRIPTION: This course provides an introduction to the central role of play in early learning and child care settings, with an emphasis on developmentally appropriate, culturally-sensitive practices. This course focuses on a number of topics including the nature, value, and types of play, as well as important theories and issues regarding play. Students will also learn about the role of the practitioner in play, including the use of appropriate observation and documentation to understand and support children's development through play.

PREREQUISITE(S): None

COREQUISITE(S): None



REQUIRED MATERIALS: Bertrand, J. (2026). *Becoming and Being an Early Childhood Professional*, 2nd Canadian Edition, Toronto, Canada. Cenegage Learning Canada, Inc. Additional Costs: Material for Loose Parts Kits and Documentation Panels

DELIVERY MODE(S): Lecture in addition to interactive learning opportunities presented in class. Audio-visual materials and additional readings will supplement the textbook.

LEARNING OUTCOMES: Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Explain how attitudes, perceptions, and theories of play have changed over time and how they have influenced practice in Early Learning and Child Care.
- Define play and identify examples of play and non-play experiences.
- Explain how play-based programs meet children's developmental needs.
- Classify children's play episodes, using the categories of play identified by Parten and Piaget.
- Use appropriate observation and documentation tools and techniques to understand and interpret children's play.
- Articulate the role of the practitioner in facilitating, supporting, and extending children's play.
- Discuss current issues regarding children's play.

TRANSFERABILITY:

Please consult the Alberta Transfer Guide for more information. You may check the transferability of this course at the Alberta Transfer Guide main page <http://www.transferralberta.alberta.ca>.

**** For courses with alpha (letter) grading, a grade of D or D+ may not be acceptable for transfer to other post-secondary institutions. Students are cautioned that it is their responsibility to contact the receiving institutions to ensure transferability.**

EVALUATIONS:

Tests: 21% (2 total 11% each)

Learning Activities 29.5%: (4 total 7.3% each)

Assignments 37.5% (3 total 12.5% each)

Attendance: 12% (~1 % per week)

GRADING CRITERIA:

Please note that most institutions will not accept your course for transfer credit IF your grade is less than C-.

Alpha Grade	4-point Equivalent	Percentage Guidelines	Alpha Grade	4-point Equivalent	Percentage Guidelines
A+	4.0	95-100	C+	2.3	67-69
A	4.0	85-94	C	2.0	63-66
A-	3.7	80-84	C-	1.7	60-62
B+	3.3	77-79	D+	1.3	55-59
B	3.0	73-76	D	1.0	50-54
B-	2.7	70-72	F	0.0	00-49

COURSE SCHEDULE/TENTATIVE TIMELINE:

Class #	Date	Topic/Assignment/Test	Readings
1	January 7 th	Course Introduction and History of Play P.1	Chapters 1 and 2
2	January 12 th	Processes of Play and Understanding Play Based Learning P.1	Chapters 1 and 2
3	January 14 th	Process of Play and Understanding Play Based Learning P.2 and Outdoor Play	Chapters 3 and 4
4	January 19 th	Understanding Children's Play Spaces Learning Activity #1	Chapter 7
5	January 21 st	Tentative Date for Visiting a Childcare Center	
6	January 26 th	Current Issues Looking Ahead with Debate Learning Activity #2	Chapter 12
7	January 28 th	Play and Development: Developmentally Appropriate Practices Test #1 Review Assignment #1 Due	Chapter 5
8	February 2 nd	Test #1	



9	February 4 th	Loose Parts Play and Class Activity Learning Activity #3	Chapter 4 and Additional Readings
10	February 9 th	Creating Response Environments and Holistic Play-Based Goals. Observing, Documenting and interpreting Children's Play	Chapter 6 and Early Learning Frameworks
11	February 11 th	Loose Parts Class Activity Assignment #2	
12	February 16 th – 20 th Reading Week		
13	February 23 rd	Special Class: Observation. Learning Stories Learning Activity #4	
14	February 25 th	Documentation Panels and Learning Stories	
15	March 2 nd	Documentation Panel Class Activity	
16	March 4 th	Documentation Panel Class Activity Assignment #3	
17	March 9 th	Semester	
18	March 16 th	Quality Matters and The Role of the Practitioner: Intentional Teaching	Chapters 9 and 10
19	March 18 th	Play and Developmental Patterns: Social Development and Principles of ECE.	Chapter 1
20	March 23 rd	Test #2 Review	

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES:

STATEMENT ON ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT:

Academic Misconduct will not be tolerated. For a more precise definition of academic misconduct and its consequences, refer to the Student Rights and Responsibilities policy available <https://www.nwpolytech.ca/about/polytechnic-leadership/policies-directory>.

****Note:** all Academic and Administrative policies are available on the same page.

Additional Information:

It is the right of the student and of the instructor to a favourable learning/teaching environment. It is the responsibility of the student and the instructor to engage in appropriate adult behaviours that positively support learning. This includes treating others with dignity and respect and following the expectations outlined below. Ensure to review all rubrics to understand how you will be evaluated. Rubrics will be found in MyClass as released.

A participation mark of 12% is attributed to this class and will reflect your engagement in the areas below. Class begins promptly on time, and it is expected that students arrive on time for class and leave only when class is finished.

To receive full marks for participation and attendance students are expected to:

- Sign in at the start of class. Attendance sheet will only be available for the first 5-10 minutes of class. Failure to sign in will result in an absent mark from the class.
- Be on time for class start and stay until the end.
- Turn off/put away technology not being used for instruction, that could be a distraction (phones, other computers, tablets). Studies indicate that cell phones not only interfere with your learning, but also the students around you.

- Students should choose courses with class times that work with their employment and personal commitments, and arrange medical/dental appointments, job interviews, full or part-time employment, child care and any other personal commitments around their course schedule, as students will not generally be excused from class for such activities.
- If you are unable to make class, communication is key. If your absence is for a legitimate reason (illness, family crisis), please let me know as soon as possible **before class** via email. Please send a new e-mail for each class missed for a legitimate reason, or clearly state which days will be missed. E-mailed notices of absence do not automatically "roll over" for future missed dates.

- Students are responsible for all missed material, including material missed due to legitimate/excused absences. Slideshows are posted to MyClass, and further information can be obtained from classmates. If, after you have reviewed the class materials, you have questions, please contact me and I'll be pleased to assist you.

Student Attendance and Participation:

You are expected to comment, respond to questions, interact with classmates, and otherwise contribute to the class dialogue. Questions are welcomed and encouraged. If you're wondering about something, most likely several classmates are as well, only they're afraid to speak up, so ask! To participate effectively, you should have the day's reading completed before class begins. This will allow you to comment, answer questions, and ask questions. Some classes will have quizzes as part of the participation grade while others will have discussion posts. Ensure to complete the quiz or discussion post to gain marks for your participation grade when required.

Test(s)

You must be present in CD 1330 to write the test(s). If an absent is marked during dates where there will be a test and no communication has been made, then a resulting mark of zero will be recorded. To maintain academic integrity, respect students who are writing, and to conduct professionalism the door will be shut and locked at the start of the test. If the student is not in the class by the time the door is shuts the student will not be writing the test and will receive a grade of 0. Ensure to arrive early on test days and to sort out transportation to campus prior to test dates to ensure you arrive early or on time. No technological devices (i.e. smart watches, headphones, phones, tablets, laptops etc.) will be permitted when the test is taking place and must be placed on a table at the front of the classroom turned off. Students are only permitted to have a home water bottle or coffee cup, pens and pencils on their desk space when writing tests. Tests end 5 minutes before the end of the class to ensure tests are handed in on time and there is no delay for the following class. Warnings will be provided to students. If a student is still writing after the end time is called 5 points will be deducted from the test. The instructor will come to you to collect tests.

Assignments:

Assignment details will be discussed in class and provided on MyClass. Assignments must be submitted in the dropbox on MyClass. Assignments must be submitted as a PDF or Word file to be accessible to the instructor and follow the templates provided in MyClass.



ALL assignments MUST be completed and turned in to pass the course. It is the students' responsibility to review marking rubrics to understand how they will be evaluated.

Unless arrangements have been made with the instructor 48 hours prior to the due date, late assignments will be docked 10% per day. If the assignment is not received within 5 days of the due date, a grade of 0 will be given.

Students must express concerns or questions 48 hours before the due date by emailing the instructor. I am here to support your success. You may book office hours to review concerns or questions. Please note I do not pre-grade assignments.

Extensions will be granted on an instructor's discretion. Valid reasons for asking for an extension include technological failure (may be used 1 time during the course), extreme illness or injury (doctors note will be required to verify at students' expense within 48 hours of notification), family or individual emergency or crisis. Extensions will not be granted due to poor time management, work schedule conflicts, or granted the due date of the Learning Activity or Assignment.

AI & Turnitin

- Completing assignments is a critical part of learning and essential to the development of your professional practice as an educator. Therefore, in this course, all learners will pledge to use AI tools in ethical and appropriate ways.
 - For example, it would not be ethical or appropriate to use Generative Artificial Intelligence applications such as ChatGPT to write a draft of a assignment and submit it as your own work.
 - In comparison, it would be ethical and appropriate for you to use AI tools such as Spell Check or Grammarly to identify spelling and grammar errors in your own work so you can correct them before submission.
 - The use of Generative Artificial Applications such as ChatGPT without proper citation will be considered plagiarism and treated as such using Northwestern Polytechnic's Academic Misconduct Procedures. Assignments found to have been created using AI/bots will not be graded and no resubmissions will be accepted. Additional penalties may also be applied to your participation grade.
 - If you require additional clarity on the use of AI in this course, please reach out to your instructor.

Assignments suspected or found to be created by AI will receive a mark of 0 with no opportunity to resubmit.

Student Supplies and Personal Items

- Please be advised some courses in the ELCC program require materials for assignments. If you purchase items or bring items from home for your assignments, projects, or any other academic activities, please be aware that



NWP is not responsible for any loss, damage, or theft that may occur. We advise you to take appropriate measures to safeguard your belongings.

Additional Information

- **Names/Pronouns:** At the start of the course, my list of students' names is based on the register. If you would prefer to be called something else, please let me know, and I will adjust my list accordingly, and use your preferred name from that point on. You should feel free to use your preferred given name on all essays and submitted assignments. (If your preferred surname varies from the name under which you are registered, I may need occasional reminders.) If you want to tell me your pronouns, you should feel free to do so. I will respect your pronouns. All students are expected to respect their classmates' preferred names and pronouns.
- **Office Hours:** My office hours are based on appointments booked via email. Around important due dates (i.e. assignments) I will verbally communicate when I will be available for drop-ins during lectures. I meet with students in the order that they show up. This is your time, as much as class is. Please don't feel you're imposing, I am here to support your success and learning in the course. Office hours are cancelled if the instructor is sick. But I'll post an announcement to that effect, and re-schedule when I'm better. Generally, meeting times vary based on the reason for the appointment. Typically, appointments range from 10 minutes to 30 minutes depending on the reason. Usually I allocate 15 minute time blocks for meetings.
- **Communication:** Please keep communication lines open. Ask questions, email me, seek me out and let me know if you are struggling with class content or deadlines. I am more than willing to help you in your learning so you can soak up all that there is to learn. However, I cannot help you if I do not know you need help. Communication is key!
- **Crisis Management:** I'm not a monster, but I'm not psychic, either. If something goes wrong in your life, I won't automatically know. If you let me know, I will work with you to help you keep up/catch up in the course. You are human and crises happen to us all. I will happily work with you to ensure they don't derail your academic career.
- **Grades:** How you do on assignments and in class has no bearing on how I view you as a person. Although marking can often be subjective, I do my utmost to grade the quality of the work based on the rubrics that are included. You are separate from your work, and we are entitled to bad days. Please understand that I am more interested in your learning/growth than your grades, as you should be too.
- **Students will be allowed to make one re-submission during the duration of the course. Re-submissions can only be completed for only assignments #1 and #2. There is only one resubmission. Resubmissions will only be accepted during the last week of the course from March 23rd, 2026, to March 27th, 2026, for assignments, not for Learning Activities, Attendance, or Tests. The**



resubmission is in place to help you apply feedback directly and increase your grade in the course. Students must notify the instructor via email when a re-submission is made so the instructor knows the student has resubmitted. In the email, the student must include the course number, the student's full name, the assignment details, and date of re-submission. Resubmissions will not be accepted after March 17th, 2026, even by a few minutes. Resubmissions are to be made individually.