

# ED 240 : PURPOSEFUL LEARNING AND ACTIVE EXPLORATION THROUGH PLAY

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## Transcript title

Learning through Play

## Credits

4

## Grading mode

Standard letter grades

## Total contact hours

60

## Lecture hours

30

## Other hours

30

## Recommended preparation

ED 140.

## Course Description

Explores why open-exploration, discovery, and play are fundamentally important parts of children's development, the role of play in learning, and ways that adults can support and promote play. Considers current research and implications of play, as an important vehicle for developing self-regulation as well as for promoting language, cognition, and social competence, in an era of standards-driven curriculum. Prospective early childhood and elementary educators will grow in their understanding of their role in facilitating children's learning. Focuses on the role of purposeful learning and active exploration through play through the elementary grades.

## Course learning outcomes

1. Explore the role of play as a leading activity in childhood development and learning.
2. Analyze the ways in which play-based learning provides a foundation for academic learning across diverse content areas.
3. Demonstrate the role of educators and adults in scaffolding engaging and authentic learning experiences through play.
4. Assess play-based learning environments for developmentally appropriate practices in early learning and elementary settings.
5. Apply theories and understandings of play to design and implement environments and curriculum that address children's social, emotional, cultural, and cognitive needs.

## Content outline

1. Exploring the definition of play: what counts as truly open-ended exploration; what are the levels of play, and how does each support children's learning across academic content areas.
2. Implications of play on lifelong learning: in what ways does developmentally appropriate practices of play and open-ended

exploration provide a foundation for subsequent academic understandings. What does research tell us about the foundation as children transition between early learning through higher education?

3. What is the role of the educator in scaffolding children's learning through play? How do adults support authentic learning through environmental design and curriculum?
4. How does the value of play, as a foundation for learning, impact policy and practice in a standards-driven curriculum? How do educators successfully advocate for authentic learning through open-ended exploration while also demonstrating academic rigor and commitment to student success?

## Required materials

Students are required to purchase a textbook, have regular access to Blackboard, and must cover field-placement related costs.