

CHILD LIFE SPECIALIST (CLS)

CLS 500. Therapeutic Play for the Hospitalized Child. (3 Credits)

This course provides an introduction to utilizing play as a therapeutic modality to help children cope with the stressors of illness and healthcare experiences, as well as planning therapeutic play opportunities by the child life specialist as a member of the healthcare team.

CLS 505. Supporting the Child and Family Affected by Death. (3 Credits)

This course examines the impact of the last stage of life on children and their families while providing skills for supporting children and families during death, dying, and grieving. The child life student will study current theories and practices related to death and dying from the standpoint of developmental and learning theory. The child life student will learn intervention methods and skills for working with children who are dying, bereaved children, and ways that loved ones can support the bereaved child.

CLS 506. Child Development. (3 Credits)

Child life specialists utilize their fluency in child development to design and implement interventions that serve to promote resiliency within patients and families. Therefore, students seeking certification as child life specialists must demonstrate competency in major theoretical approaches to the study of child development, specifically within the domains of physical, cognitive and social-emotional development. Students must also be able to identify the role of ecological and environmental factors as mediating factors within child development. This course will examine theories of human development that are especially relevant to infants and children in early and middle childhood. Students will learn psychoanalytic, social learning, behaviorist, ecological, humanistic and psychosexual theories and will apply these theoretical perspectives to child growth and development. This course is also designed to present research and evidence-based practice concerning the physical, cognitive, emotional and social development of children.

CLS 508. Family Systems: The Hospitalized Child and Family. (3 Credits)

Child life specialists help children and families cope with a broad range of challenging experiences, particularly those related to healthcare and hospitalization. Utilizing their understanding of family systems, child life specialists assess the needs of children and families to identify and promote family strengths and to develop plans of care to support both the child and the family throughout these experiences; to help minimize the stress often associated with healthcare. This course will provide students with in-depth training regarding family systems and their importance when working with children and families in healthcare settings. Focus will be placed on the family as a social system. We will discuss family relationships; the historical and contemporary theories related to family structure and functions; adaptations in family structure and interaction patterns; diverse family systems; parenting, caregiving and family life from a cross-cultural perspective; adult-child interactions; and exploration of current research and theory as it applies to family systems.

CLS 510. Clinical Ethics in Healthcare. (3 Credits)

This course will study basic concepts influencing pediatric patients and families in the healthcare environment. Concepts will include genetic testing and therapy, stem cell research, organ transplantation, blood transfusions, end of life care, and access to healthcare. Students will examine how healthcare providers address clinical ethic issues. Child life students will be enabled to articulate their perspectives and make informed decisions compatible with the Christian faith.

CLS 515. Medical Terminology for the Child Life Professional. (3 Credits)

This course examines medical terminology currently used in the medical field to prepare child life students for providing developmentally appropriate education and preparation for the pediatric patient and family. Students will focus on breaking down complex words into their individual components and exploring medical terms relevant to each body system in order to explain medical terms to children of varying developmental levels using child friendly language.

CLS 520. Research in the Child Life Profession. (3 Credits)

This course introduces research methodology pertinent to the evaluation of child life (psychosocial) services, examining the research process, the rationale for conducting evaluations, the relationship of evaluative efforts to program evaluation, and the relationship of evaluative efforts to program design and implementation, as well as synthesis of research findings and application of evidence in practice.

CLS 525. Professional Issues in Child Life. (3 Credits)

This course will examine professional issues relevant to the child life profession. Child life students will develop skills for nurturing oneself while providing effective psychosocial care for others.

CLS 530. The Child with Special Healthcare Needs. (3 Credits)

This course will examine the impact of having a child with developmental differences in the healthcare environment and will also examine having a child with complex medical needs and its impact on the child and family. This course will provide the child life student with the fundamental skills to adapt therapeutic activities to accommodate the child with both developmental differences and medically complex needs.

CLS 535. Childhood Trauma: Resiliency in Children. (3 Credits)

This course will examine both protective and risk factors influencing the development of resiliency in children and will study hospitalization as a potential trauma affecting childhood. Child life students will focus on identifying the strengths and protective factors of the pediatric patient and family to encourage the development of resiliency.

CLS 538. Development of the Adolescent. (3 Credits)

Child life specialists utilize their fluency in adolescent development to design and implement interventions that serve to promote resiliency within patients and families. Therefore, students seeking certification as child life specialists must demonstrate competency in major theoretical approaches to the study of adolescent development, specifically within the domains of physical, cognitive and social-emotional development. Students must also be able to identify the role of ecological and environmental factors as mediating factors within adolescent development. This course will examine theories of human development that are especially relevant to adolescence. Students will learn psychoanalytic, social learning, behaviorist, ecological, humanistic and psychosexual theories and will apply these theoretical perspectives to adolescent growth and development. This course is also designed to present research and evidence-based practice concerning the physical, cognitive, emotional and social development of adolescents.

CLS 540. Pediatric Psychosocial Assessment. (3 Credits)

This course will examine utilization of pediatric psychosocial assessment by the child life professional as a means to assess pediatric patient needs and to develop an individualized plan of care. Students will develop skills in conducting psychosocial assessment.

CLS 545. Child Life Documentation. (3 Credits)

This course will prepare students for clinical assessment and various types of writing and documentation pertaining to child life services. The course will provide child life students with the opportunity to develop skills in identifying and gathering pertinent information about patients and their families, assessing patient and family emotional vulnerability and coping skills, chart writing (including electronic medical records), narrative progress and procedural note formats, student journals, case studies, grant proposals and research studies. Students will learn to apply developmental, stress and coping theories to their assessments and interventions, including family centered care and cultural considerations in all observations, recordings and writings.

CLS 550. Child Life Program Administration. (3 Credits)

This course will introduce child life students to the skills needed to provide effective leadership for child life programs, including budgeting and finances, health and safety issues, volunteer management and cultivation, staff management and development, staff retention, and ongoing program improvement.

CLS 553. Child Life Program Administration II. (3 Credits)

CLS 555. Diversity in the Healthcare Setting. (3 Credits)

This course will explore racial, ethnic, religious, social economic status, and gender diversity in the United States and will build skills in the child life student in working with people from these diverse areas within the healthcare environment through an understanding of culture, psychology, communication, prejudice, discrimination, and stereotyping.

CLS 570. The Child Life Practicum Experience. (3 Credits)

Child life students will spend a minimum of 100 hours in a supervised volunteer/practicum position in a setting serving children and families impacted by illness, injury, and healthcare experiences with a Certified Child Life Specialist preceptor. Child life students will engage in observation of the Certified Child Life Specialist, examining the role and psychosocial services provided by the specialist.

CLS 575. The Child Life Internship. (12 Credits)

This course is the capstone of the Family Life experience for the student in the Child Life minor. This internship occurs during the fourth year and is full time internship. Child life students use learned academic information and field experiences to serve in a hospital or other medical setting with children for a minimum of 600 hours during one semester under the supervision of a Certified Child Life Specialist.