

Group Counseling and Interventions
EDP 384D Spring, 2017 Unique #11000
W 1 – 4 p.m. SZB 268

Instructor: Chris McCarthy, Ph.D.
Office: SZB 504B
E-mail/Telephone: cjmccarthy@austin.utexas.edu
Office Hours: by appointment

Services for Students with Disabilities

The University of Austin provides upon request appropriate academic accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. For more information, contact the Office of the Dean of Students at 471-6259, 471-6441 TTY.

Required Readings

Jacobs, E. E., Harvill, R. L., & Masson, R. L. (2016). *Group Counseling: Strategies and skills*. (8th ed.). Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole.

Shakoor, Muhyiddin. (2011). On becoming a group member: Personal growth and effectiveness in group counseling. New York: NY: Taylor and Francis.

****Additional Readings are included on CANVAS**

Optional Readings

Yalom, I. D., & Leszcz (2005). *The theory and practice of group psychotherapy*. (5th ed.). New York: Basic Books.

Group activity books on reserve at UT PCL Library

DeLucia-Waack, J. L., Bridbord, K. H., Kleiner, J. S., & Nitza, A. (Eds.). (2006). *Group work experts share their favorite activities: A guide to choosing, planning, conducting, and processing (Rev.)*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Specialists in Group Work.

Foss, L. L., Green, J., Wolfe-Stiltner, K., & DeLucia-Waack, J. L. (Eds.) (2008). *School counselors share their favorite activities: A guide to choosing, planning, conducting, and processing*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Specialists in Group Work.

Salazar, C. (Ed.). (2010). Group work experts share their favorite multicultural activities: A guide to diversity-competent choosing, planning, conducting, and processing (pp. 163-165). Alexandria, VA: Association for Specialists in Group Work.

Course Objectives

- 1) Principles of group dynamics - Students will demonstrate an understanding of group process components, developmental stage theories, group members' roles and behaviors, and therapeutic factors in group work.
- 2) Group leadership skills - Students will demonstrate an understanding of the role of the group leader, including the characteristics of various leadership styles and approaches, and how they are relevant to various types of groups and group members.
- 3) Theories of group counseling - Students will demonstrate an understanding of the commonalities and distinguishing characteristics of different types of group work, as well as pertinent research.
- 4) Group methods - Students will demonstrate an understanding of group methods by writing a description of a group that is relevant to their professional goals, and including group leader orientation and behaviors, appropriate selection criteria and methods, and methods of evaluation.
- 5) Experiential group participation - In order to learn about the experiences of group members, students will participate for in a small group experience over the course of the academic term.

Course Requirements

1. **Attendance:** Due to the experiential nature of the course, attendance for group meetings and class discussion is extremely important. **My expectation is that students will be present for all class meetings and that students will contact me if they have to miss class.** Students who miss a class meeting will be expected to complete a satisfactory thought paper of approximately three pages on that day's readings to make up for that absence due by the end of the week in which the class is missed (Friday, 5pm). Students who miss one experiential group meeting are required to make up that absence by attending an appropriate group meeting in the community (see instructor for guidelines). **Missing two experiential groups or more than two class meetings is usually considered unacceptable;** under those circumstances, the student needs to immediately initiate a discussion with the instructor about whether to continue in the experiential component of the group and/or drop the class. In extraordinary circumstances such as internship interviews, medical emergencies, close family illness, etc., the instructor reserves the right to alter these policies to ensure students are treated fairly and equitably.

2. **Readings:** The class schedule provides an outline of when readings will be covered in class. Students will be given a list of learning objectives to aid in their preparation for the oral exam (see below). For the Shakoor book, students will be asked to post a discussion comment on CANVAS by **Tuesday 11:59pm the day before class.** *Students who miss the posting deadline will be required to complete an additional assignment of one page in which they integrate their*

group experience with that course material by Friday of that week. Failure to complete this activity is treated as a class absence, requiring a longer thought paper.

3. Development of specialized group: Students will be responsible for planning a group based on their professional interests. Students will be assigned in pairs and will plan the group, develop and lead a role-play based on one of the group sessions, and write a description of the group using the format suggested by Falco and McCarthy (see course readings). This assignment has the following components (see course schedule below for due dates):

Group Proposal: One paragraph describing your group and its theoretical foundation, one paragraph describing the session you will role-play, and a list of 5 citations that support the use of the group.

Draft of Group Roleplay: One to two pages describing the sessions, one to two pages describing each member and their role in the group.

Introduction Section: Approximately 5 pages detailing the rationale for the group.

Methods Section: Approximately 5 pages describing the methods of the group.

Final Group Project: Approximately 15 pages incorporating instructor feedback on the introduction and methods, as well as 2 – 3 pages of both results and discussion.

Note: Students are required to develop the group proposal and role-play in pairs as assigned. Students may choose to write the paper on their own. Guidelines for writing each section, and sample papers from previous semesters, will be provided.

The UT Austin counseling center clearinghouse catalogue is a valuable resource:
www.cmhc.utexas.edu/clearinghouse/

4. Oral exam: An evaluation of students' comprehension of course material will be conducted with an oral exam. Students will be randomly assigned to teams for this purpose and given a list of questions to be covered. For the oral exam, each team will meet with the instructor for approximately 30 minutes to answer and discuss randomly selected questions across the various course topics covered. Each team will be evaluated as a group (pass/fail). Evaluation of group responses will include: a) the accuracy and completeness of the answer, and b) consideration of group functioning and coordination (for example, equal contributions from all members, balancing discussion among members, etc.). If a group does not pass, they will be given one more opportunity to pass the oral exam at the end of the semester.

5. Experiential Group: As part of the course, students will have the opportunity to participate in an experiential group designed to provide insight into group process and the experiences of group members. This is a "growth-centered group" in which the focus is on the personal development of students training to be professional helpers. These expectations are in line with the professional training objectives and ethical standards of the American Counseling Association and the American Psychological Association. We will read and discuss Shakoor's

(2011) book, *On becoming a group member: Personal growth and effectiveness in group counseling* to help students gain the most from this experience. Should any student have concerns about participation in the experiential growth group, s/he should initiate discussion with the instructor immediately to work out an alternative group experience. Alternative experiences must be acceptable to the instructor, using professional guidelines.

Meeting Times for Experiential Groups (with a few exceptions)

Didactic: 1:00 – 2:20

Experiential Group: 2:30 – 3:45

6. **Group Journals** – I will write process notes following each group meeting that will be posted by Thursday evening. Students will then have until Sunday at 5pm to write a journal entry each week reflecting on their experience in group and any reactions to the group process notes. These journal entries will be submitted through CANVAS. The purpose of this activity is to provide a basis for discussion following each group and to enhance communication between the facilitator and each member.

Note: Material shared in the journals by individual members will not be brought up in group by the leader. Students who miss the Sunday deadline will be required to complete an additional assignment of one page in which they integrate their group experience with course material by Friday of that week. Failure to complete this activity is treated as a class absence, requiring a longer thought paper.

7. **Technology** – During the didactic portion of the course, I ask that students not use technology that can distract from class participation (laptop, tablets, cell, etc.).

8. **Evaluation:** Students will be graded on a credit/no credit basis. **The course is graded this way to minimize conflicts associated with group participation and grade assignment.**

Assignment of grades will be based on satisfactory performance in each of the course components listed below. To receive a passing grade, students must demonstrate **satisfactory performance in all** areas listed below:

1. All attendance requirements met including journals, posting, assignments, and group attendance.
2. Satisfactory performance on oral exam.
3. Satisfactory performance presenting on group project and leading group role-play.
4. Satisfactory performance on final paper.

Please note that falling significantly behind on multiple course assignments is unacceptable for this course and will result in a grade of no credit for the course.

Class Schedule (Subject to revision)

Note: Readings should be completed before the scheduled class day. *Italicized readings are available on CANVAS.*

Date	Topic	Readings	Assignments Due
Jan 18	Therapeutic Factors	<i>Yalom Ch. 1 – 4</i>	
Jan 25	Group Work Ethics Experiential Growth Groups <i>Growth Group Begins, Students Assigned to Exam Groups</i>	<i>Corey Ch. 3</i> <i>McCarthy, Falco, Villalba</i> <i>Falco & Bauman</i> Shakoor: pp. xi – xxxiv (orientation prologue) and Ch. 1	Discussion Posting Due on Shakoor
Feb 1	Purposes and Types of Groups Growth Group Reading	Jacobs Ch. 3 <i>Drum et al.</i> <i>ASGW Training Standards</i> Shakoor Ch. 2	Journal Entry Due by Sunday 5pm Discussion Posting Due on Shakoor
Feb 8	Group Stages and Process Growth Group Reading	Jacobs Ch. 2, 5 Shakoor Ch. 3 – 4	Journal Entry Due Sunday by 5pm Discussion Posting Due on Shakoor
Feb 15	Group Leadership Fundamentals	<i>Yalom Ch. 5 & 6</i>	Journal Entry Due Sunday by 5pm
Feb 22	Group Leadership Skills <i>Organization for Oral Exam and Group Projects</i>	Jacobs Ch. 6,7,8	Journal Entry Due Sunday by 5pm
Mar 1	Multicultural Group Work	<i>ASGW Multicultural and SJ Standards</i> <i>Okech et al.</i> <i>Bemak & Chung</i>	Journal Entry Due Sunday by 5pm

Mar 8	Oral Exam Times: 1:00 - 1:30 1:30 – 2:00 2:00 – 2:30		<i>Oral Exam</i> <i>Group Proposal Due</i> Journal Entry Due Sunday by 5pm
Mar 15	Spring Break		
Mar 22	Group Exercises Developing and Planning a Group <i>Finalize role-play schedule</i>	Jacobs 9, 10, 11 <i>Falco & McCarthy</i> <i>Reiser, Murphy, & McCarthy</i>	
Mar 29	Groups with Children and Adolescents Guest Speaker: Allison Sallee, Ph.D.	Jacobs 17 (pp. 414-424) <i>Falco & Bauman</i> <i>Gerrity and Delucia-Waack</i> <i>Veatch & Gladding</i>	Draft of Group Role-Play Due
Apr 5	Groups in Middle Stages and Problem Situations Guest Speaker: Ryan Sutton, Ph.D. Hogg Foundation/UT Austin DDCE	Jacobs Ch. 12,16	Intro section due for group project
Apr 12	Group Endings Group Role Plays Begin	Jacobs Ch. 15	
Apr 19	Group Therapy and Theories	Jacobs 13, 14	Methods section due for group project
Apr 26	Group Role Plays		
May 3	Group Role Plays/Final Class		Final version of group projects due today

Appendix

Statement about Group Participation

Student Rights

- a clear statement regarding the purpose of the group;
- a general description of the group format and procedures;
- an opportunity to seek information about the group, to pose questions, and to explore concerns;
- information about the psychological risk involved in group participation;
- the exercise of reasonable safeguards on the leader's part to minimize the potential risks of the group;
- respect for member privacy with regard to what the person will reveal as well as to the degree of disclosure;
- freedom from undue group pressure concerning participation in group exercises, decision making, disclosures of private matters, or acceptance of suggestions from other group members;
- observance of confidentiality on the part of the leader and group members;
- knowledge of the limitations of the confidential character of the group - that is, of circumstances in which confidentiality must be broken because of legal, ethical, or professional reasons;
- the freedom to say, "I don't want to go further for now" or "I choose not to discuss this matter";
- a clear understanding of the division of responsibility between leader and participants
- opportunities to discuss what one has learned in group and to bring some closure to the group experience, so that the participant is not left with unnecessary unfinished business;
- a consultation with the group leader during the group or after its termination, should a crisis arise as a direct result of participation in the group, or a referral to other sources of help if further help is not available from the group leader.

Student Responsibilities

- *confidentiality* : Students will be asked to sign a confidentiality agreement at the beginning of the group in which they agree to keep all group discussions confidential.
- *participation*: Students have the right to not participate in any activities or discussions which make them uncomfortable, but it is expected that members will attend all group meetings, be punctual, and be an active group member.
- *respect for others*: While all interpersonal exchanges present at least the possibility for disagreement, conflict, or negative feelings, group members are expected to make every effort to act in the best interests of other members.