

GROUP COUNSELING

EDP 381
Mondays 4:30- 7:30

Fall, 2017
SZB-268

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Or by appointment

COURSE SYLLABUS

Overview

This graduate-level course has as its purpose the exploration and understanding of a wide range of group therapy and treatment interventions. It is a "survey" course in the sense that it will address two major categories of group counseling interventions and their associated principles, therapeutic factors, design considerations, and leadership issues.

Course Methodology

Our primary course methodologies will be a combination of experiential learning, lecture, discussion of assigned reading and leadership skills practice.

Rationale for Course

As a professional counselor or psychologist, you will be called upon to help people cope with and resolve a wide range of problems and dilemmas. For some of these difficulties, group counseling will be the treatment of choice, meaning that it is the treatment modality with the greatest chance of providing effective and lasting assistance. Through this course, it is hoped that you will become more resourceful and effective in applying the appropriate group treatment to the needs of people who utilize your services.

Course Aims and Objectives

To help you acquire the foundational knowledge essential to effective group counseling

To provide the experiences that will enable you to acquire the functional competencies associated with successful group leadership

To deepen understanding of group functioning through your participation in an in-class or alternate experiential growth group

To help you acquire the basic skills essential to develop and lead each of the two categories of groups covered in this course

To cover the unique ethical dilemmas group leaders encounter

To address special cultural and diversity considerations essential to attuned practice and other best practice guidelines

Behavior elements required for satisfactory learning in this course

Include:

Timely reading of assignments

Collaborative participation in creation and maintenance of a learning environment within the class

Evidence of integration of foundational knowledge with functional competencies

Beliefs that Influence how I teach

My role as the instructor is primarily as a course organizer, knowledge and skills consultant, and facilitator to the learning process.

Problem-based learning helps us understand abstract ideas and conceptual models more clearly than an approach that is based strictly on lectures.

Collaborative learning, as compared to competitive and isolated learning, produces superior results in terms of both process and acquired skill and knowledge.

Trust and respect are central ingredients to a healthy classroom environment in which ideas can be freely exchanged, confusion clarified, and beliefs examined.

Class Requirements

Attendance is Essential

Since much of what we learn in this course will occur in class, it is vital that you attend and be mentally present in class. In the course, I plan to use a variety of instructional methodologies, including discussion of assigned readings, lectures, team presentations, and skill building activities. Due to the experiential nature of this course and the variety of methodologies utilized, it will be difficult to "make up" missed

opportunities and your absence will interfere with the development of an inclusive, cohesive classroom and group environment.

Experiential Group

As part of this course, you will have the opportunity to participate in an in-class experiential group designed help you gain personal insight into group process and the experience of being a group member. Should you choose not to participate in the in-class group, please initiate a discussion with me to work out an acceptable alternative group experience. If you choose to participate in the in-class experiential group, it is important to note that it will be “growth centered” and focus on issues important to your development as a person and an emerging professional therapist. Of course, you will establish your own personal goals. I, therefore, recommend that each of you begin the group experience with a self-selected interpersonal goal that is related to your development as a professional and can be addressed within the group format. Examples of goals might include:

- To become more self accepting and/or more accepting of others
- To explore trust issues that could interfere with your professional work
- To increase comfort in exploring aspects of yourself in the presence of others
- To become more self aware through shared group experience
- To become more comfortable with giving feedback and disclosing feelings

Your in-class group experience will be consistent with the professional training guidelines, objectives and ethical standards of the American Counseling Association and the American Psychological Association. During the first class, you will be asked to review a statement about your rights and responsibilities before deciding to participate in the in-class or an alternate group experience.

Learner Evaluation and Grading

Due to the nature of this course, students will be evaluated on a credit/no credit basis. Assignment of grades will be based on satisfactory performance in each of three areas: a) commitment to the work of the course, b) journal entries, and c) your team project. To receive credit, you must demonstrate satisfactory performance in all three areas.

While your participation in the in-class experiential group or an alternative group experience is important to your development as a group leader, the nature of your participation will **NOT** be considered in the assignment of grades.

Major Performance Elements

In lieu of any exams, your performance will be evaluated on the following performance elements:

Class participation

Your score on this performance measure will reflect the quantity and quality of your in-class participation, your preparedness, attendance, and contribution to developing a productive classroom environment in which respect and trust abound.

Journal Entries

A commitment to making thoughtful deliberative entries on a weekly basis in your journal is an important learning activity for the class. While each journal entry should be important to your development, the primary purposes of the journal are:

To reflect on what you are learning about the intricacies and complexities of group counseling,

To record your thoughts and feelings about the ethical, legal and personal issues involved in the type(s) of interventions under discussion, and

To help consolidate and integrate what you are learning.

Team Projects

During the semester you will team up with three or four other class members to develop a leader's manual for a theme group. A portion of three class periods have been reserved so that each team has an opportunity to make a presentation to the class describing the group's purpose, goals, and change strategy, as well as to lead the class through several key experiential activities.

Course Text

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

Course Schedule

The schedule and tasks elucidated in this syllabus may be revised as required by either judgment or circumstances. Changes will be announced in class. It is your responsibility to make note of all changes.

Date	Topic	Assignments
9-11-17	Course overview, format and experiential group participation. Differences between theme and interpersonal groups	No assignment
.	Module 1: Theme Groups	
9-18-17	Theme groups: design and change strategies	Read the Drum and Knott article supplied by professor
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9-25-17	Selecting and planning your Theme group project	Read Body Acceptance Group Manual Yalom: Chapter-1
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10-2-17	Theme group planning time	Yalom: Chapters 2 & 3
.	Module 2: Interpersonal Psychotherapy Groups	
10-9-17	Therapeutic Factors at the heart of the Change Process	Yalom: Chapters 4 & 5
10-16-17	Guiding the Interpersonal process in groups: what the leader must "do" and "be"	Yalom: Chapters 6 & 7
	Module 3: Theme Group Leadership practice	

10-23-17	Lead Theme Group Session-1	Yalom: Chapter 8
10-30-17	Lead Theme Group Session-2	Yalom: Chapter 9
11-6-17	Lead Theme Group Session -3	
11-13-17	Lead Theme Group Session-4	Yalom: chapters 11&12
11-20-17	Student Theme Group Presentations	Group 1 presents
11-27-17	Student Theme Group Presentations	Group 2 presents
12-4-17	Student Theme Group Presentations	Group 3 presents
12/11/17	Course review & final group meeting	Student Theme Group manuals due

Important Statements and Policies

The University of Texas Honor Code

The core values of The University of Texas at Austin are learning, discovery, freedom, leadership, individual opportunity, and responsibility. Each member of the University is expected to uphold these values through integrity, honesty, trust, fairness, and respect toward peers and community. Academic Integrity

Each student in the course is expected to abide by the University of Texas Honor Code: “As a student of The University of Texas at Austin, I shall abide by the core values of the University and uphold academic integrity.” Plagiarism is taken very seriously at UT. Therefore, if you use words or ideas that are not your own (or that you have used in previous class), you must cite your sources. Otherwise you will be guilty of plagiarism and subject to academic disciplinary action, including failure of the course. You are responsible for understanding UT’s Academic Honesty and the University Honor Code which can be found at the following web address:

http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/sjs/acint_student.php

Q Drop Policy

If you want to drop a class after the 12th class day, you’ll need to execute a Q drop before the Q-drop deadline, which typically occurs near the middle of the semester. Under Texas law, you are only allowed six Q drops while you are in college at any public Texas institution. For more information, see:

<http://www.utexas.edu/ugs/csacc/academic/adddrop/qdrop>

University Electronic Mail Notification Policy (Use of E-mail for Official Correspondence to Students)

All students should become familiar with the University's official e-mail student notification policy. It is the student's responsibility to keep the University informed as to changes in his or her e-mail address. Students are expected to check e-mail on a frequent and regular basis in order to stay current with University-related communications, recognizing that certain

communications may be time-critical. It is recommended that e-mail be checked daily, but at a minimum, twice per week. The complete text of this policy and instructions for updating your e-mail address are available at <http://www.utexas.edu/its/policies/emailnotify.html>.

In this course e-mail will be used as a means of communication with students. You will be responsible for checking your e-mail regularly for class work and announcements. Note: If you are an employee of the University, your e-mail address in Blackboard is your employee address.

Accommodations for students with disabilities

In compliance with the UT Austin policy and equal access laws, I am available to discuss appropriate academic accommodations that may be required for student with disabilities. Requests for academic accommodations are to be made during the first three weeks of the semester, except for unusual circumstances, so arrangements can be made. Students are encouraged to register with Student Disability Services to verify their eligibility for appropriate accommodations.

Documented Disability Statement for Syllabus

Students who require special accommodations need to get a letter that documents the disability from the Services for Students with Disabilities area of the Office of the Dean of Students (471-6259- voice or 471-4641 – TTY for users who are deaf or hard of hearing). This letter should be presented to the instructor in each course at the beginning of the semester and accommodations needed should be discussed at that time. Five business days before an exam the student should remind the instructor of any testing accommodations that will be needed. See Web site below for more information:

<http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/ssd/providing.php>

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Religious Holidays

Religious holy days sometimes conflict with class and examination schedules. If you miss an examination, work assignment, or other project due to the observance of a religious holy day you will be given an opportunity to complete the work missed within a reasonable time **after**

the absence. It is the policy of The University of Texas at Austin that **you must notify each of your instructors at least fourteen days prior to the classes scheduled on dates you will be absent** to observe a religious holy day.

FEEDBACK

Feedback is an important part of any learning. Without feedback on how well you understand the material or your proficiency in a skill, it is more difficult to make significant progress. During this course I will be asking you to give me feedback on your learning in informal as well as formal ways. Please let me know when something we discuss is not clear. It will enable me to provide additional information when needed or to explain a concept in different terms.

University Resources for Students

Your success in this class is important to me. We will all need accommodations because we all learn differently. If there are aspects of this course that prevent you from learning or exclude you, please let me know as soon as possible. Together we'll develop strategies to meet both your needs and the requirements of the course. There are also a range of resources on campus:

Services for Students with Disabilities

This class respects and welcomes students of all backgrounds, identities, and abilities. If there are circumstances that make our learning environment and activities difficult, if you have medical information that you need to share with me, or if you need specific arrangements in case the building needs to be evacuated, please let me know. I am committed to creating an effective learning environment for all students, but I can only do so if you discuss your needs with me as early as possible. I promise to maintain the confidentiality of these discussions. If appropriate, also contact Services for Students with Disabilities, 512-471-6259 (voice) or 1-866-329-3986 (video phone). <http://ddce.utexas.edu/disability/about/>

Counseling and Mental Health Center

Do your best to maintain a healthy lifestyle this semester by eating

well, exercising, avoiding drugs and alcohol, getting enough sleep and taking some time to relax. This will help you achieve your goals and cope with stress.

All of us benefit from support during times of struggle. You are not alone. There are many helpful resources available on campus and an important part of the college experience is learning how to ask for help. Asking for support sooner rather than later is often helpful.

If you or anyone you know experiences any academic stress, difficult life events, or feelings like anxiety or depression, we strongly encourage you to seek support.

<http://www.cmhc.utexas.edu/individualcounseling.html>

The Sanger Learning Center

Did you know that more than one-third of UT undergraduate students use the Sanger Learning Center each year to improve their academic performance? All students are welcome to take advantage of Sanger Center's classes and workshops, private learning specialist appointments, peer academic coaching, and tutoring for more than 70 courses in 15 different subject areas. For more information, please visit <http://www.utexas.edu/ugs/slc> or call 512-471-3614 (JES A332).

Undergraduate Writing Center: <http://uwc.utexas.edu/>

Libraries: <http://www.lib.utexas.edu/>

ITS: <http://www.utexas.edu/its/>

Student Emergency Services: <http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/emergency/>

Important Safety Information:

If you have concerns about the safety or behavior of fellow students, TAs or Professors, call BCAL (the Behavior Concerns Advice Line): 512-232-5050. Your call can be anonymous. If something doesn't feel right – it probably isn't. Trust your instincts and share your concerns.

The following recommendations regarding emergency evacuation from the Office of Campus Safety and Security, 512-471-5767,

<http://www.utexas.edu/safety/>

Occupants of buildings on The University of Texas at Austin campus are required to evacuate buildings when a fire alarm is activated. Alarm activation or announcement requires exiting and assembling outside.

- Familiarize yourself with all exit doors of each classroom and building you may occupy. Remember that the nearest exit door may not be the one you used when entering the building.
- Students requiring assistance in evacuation shall inform their instructor in writing during the first week of class.
- In the event of an evacuation, follow the instruction of faculty or class instructors. Do not re-enter a building unless given instructions by the following: Austin Fire Department, The University of Texas at Austin Police Department, or Fire Prevention Services office.
- Link to information regarding emergency evacuation routes and emergency procedures can be found at: