SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

FALL 2012

ADVANCED GENERALIST PRACTICE WITH SMALL GROUPS

SWK 509-01E

Mondays 9:00 AM – 12:00 PM

HENDERSON HALL: 302

INSTRUCTOR: Chris Stewart, Ph.D.
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OFFICE HOURS: TBA

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This direct practice theory course provides students with advanced group work theory and skills necessary to carry out social work interventions with small groups.
GOAL & COMPETENCIES:

1. Prepare MSW graduates for professional advanced generalist practice that reflects application and integration of critical thinking, theoretical frameworks, and differential interventions. Graduates will be able to demonstrate the following competencies:

   C 1.1 Apply critical and independent analysis of practice situations and effectively communicate their judgments, reasoning and decision-making processes (2.1.3)

   C 1.2 Apply and contribute to evidence-based and best practice approaches to continuously assess and improve the efficacy and effectiveness of practice (2.1.6)

   C 1.3 Differentially apply theories and frameworks of HBSE and critique interactions between and among biological, psychological, social, spiritual and cultural systems and their reciprocal relationships with HBSE. (2.1.7)

   C 1.4 Demonstrate autonomy in dynamic practice activities that involve (2.1.10):

      C. 1.4 (a) Effective relationship-building interactions at all levels of systems focused on enhancing client choice, motivation, and hopefulness in the change process

      C. 1.4 (b) Use of a variety of multi-dimensional evidence-based assessment tools and intervention approaches

      C. 1.4 (c) Effective intervention with complex problems and multi-level systems that provides amelioration as well as prevention strategies

      C. 1.4 (d) Response to the evaluative feedback process for interventions implemented with client systems

2. Enable MSW graduates to apply ethical reasoning to advance equality, justice, and social change. Graduates will be able to reflect the following competencies:

   C. 2.2 Apply social work ethical principles to resolve dilemmas and create positive change among individuals, families, groups, organizations & communities (2.1.2)

   C. 2.3 Demonstrate the ability to build strengths based on mutual engagement with diverse populations (2.1.4)

3. Promote leadership and service that is relevant to individual contexts of practice and enhances well-being and quality of life. Graduates will be able to reflect the following competencies:

   C. 3.1 Exemplify and model professional social work standards and strive to enhance their professional growth and development (2.1.1)

   C. 3.2 Use leadership skills indicative of an advanced generalist practitioner to proactively respond amidst changing contexts (2.1.9)

   C. 3.4 Effectively intervene with individuals, families and groups, and provide administrative leadership and direction in organizations and communities as advanced generalist practitioners. (** New AGP Objective)
COURSE OBJECTIVES:

1. Develop an understanding of the advanced generalist strengths perspective as it relates to group work theories, knowledge, and skills.
2. Understanding community needs and the application of group work skills.
3. Use of critical thinking skills to evaluate one’s own knowledge, skills, and values in utilization of group work in a culturally diverse society.
4. Understanding the implications of cultural diversity (i.e., age, race, gender, ethnicity, income, sexual orientation, disability, setting) on the functioning and use of groups.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES:

By the end of the semester, students should be able to demonstrate the following knowledge areas in their class assignments, term papers, examinations, and group projects:

The course aims at enabling students to:

1. Enhance knowledge of group process, research and theory related to advanced generalist strengths perspective in relationship to social group work.
2. Develop the ability to understand and translate group concepts into operational principles and practice skills in work with groups.
3. Develop the ability to identify, evaluate and apply small group theory and research findings to the analysis of groups.
4. Acquire a working knowledge of selected theoretical and empirical orientations related to ways in which (1) individuals affect group process, (2) group affects individual behaviors, (3) group influences group processes, and (4) the interactional effect of group and individual exchanges on the group process, and on individual change.
5. Develop the ability to translate theoretical and empirical knowledge into practice principles and techniques for understanding, analyzing and implementing systematic planned change in groups, and through groups.
6. Acquire through simulations and role-playing, an enhanced competence in group leadership skills, and experience how role in groups affects individual status.
7. Demonstrate an increased understanding of the role of ethnic, racial, socio-economic, gender and political factors on group behavior, and be able to practice in the context of human diversity.
8. Learn to use feedback in group communication and communicate with clarity in receiving and giving feedback.

RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER COURSES

This course builds upon foundation content that provides knowledge of human behavior and social systems. It builds upon foundation exposure to professional values and ethics, particularly the NASW Code of Ethics.

This course draws upon SWK 595 to engage research methods and skills in evaluation; critical thinking skills utilize research and empirical evidence: It works in conjunction with SWK 507 in relating social groups to community context; it relates individual functioning to group processes drawing on SWK 505.
TEXT:

Required Text (This book needs to be purchased from the Texas A&M Commerce Bookstore):

Recommended Texts:

CLASS ATTENDANCE:

Students are expected to be on time and prepared to participate when class begins as well as be present throughout the entire class meeting. Classroom exercises, discussions, role plays, guest speakers and other in-class experiential exercises are essential for a student’s professional learning and continued development of self awareness. This form of learning cannot be “made up” once missed. Accordingly, attendance is required at all class meetings. There are no excused absences (except for military leave, jury duty, or religious holidays that are planned in advance). A student is considered absent if he/she arrives more than 30 minutes late to class, leaves 30 or more minutes early or does not come to class. *Students who have more than 2 absences, regardless of the reason, will have their grade lowered by one letter grade for each additional absence, beginning with the 3rd.* Missing 5 or more classes, for whatever reason, will result in a failing grade for the course.

Attendance is generally taken at the beginning of each class; students are responsible for letting the instructor know if they arrive late. Students who arrive for class after the first hour will be given .5 absences for that session. Additionally, students, who choose to leave before the class has concluded, will be given .5 absences for that session.

If assignments are due on the date of an absence, it is the student's responsibility to make sure that the assignment is sent to the instructor on or before the due date. Students are also responsible for material covered in class during an absence and should make appropriate arrangements with a classmate to obtain notes from the material covered in class during their absence.

PARTICIPATION:

Active participation in class lectures, discussions, and exercises is expected. Students should come to class prepared to discuss assigned readings and material presented in lectures. Students are responsible for information contained in the assigned readings, regardless of whether it is discussed in class. Students are required to utilize the required text. Students must come to class prepared to discuss and articulate in detail with critical thinking and analysis, each assigned chapter.

Full participation includes individual contribution to class discussion and respectfully providing thoughtful feedback to classmates. Students are expected to participate actively by drawing from field and other related experiences and by sharing with the rest of us anything of interest you may have
found between classes (e.g., articles, media stories, handouts, etc.). As adult learners with a variety of professional and personal experiences your contributions are valued.

POLICY ON DUE DATES:

All assignments are due at the beginning of the class period on the due date stated in the Course Schedule. Late assignments will automatically have 25 points deducted from the grade per day beginning with the due date and each day thereafter. ASSIGNMENTS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED AFTER ONE WEEK past the due date. (Assignments due at the beginning of class on Monday will not be accepted after class begins the following Monday). Please do not email an assignment to me unless you have received prior permission. It is easy to “lose” an email or have trouble opening attachments.

WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS:

All written assignments must demonstrate acceptable writing style, including the use of Standard English, acceptable grammar, and the use of the American Psychological Association (APA) style of reference citation.

Part of the grading process will include an evaluation of presentation, including clarity, coherence, logic and organization of the assignment. All assignments must be typewritten, using double-spacing and standard margins. It is the student’s responsibility to ensure the paper is in the possession of the instructor by the designated time. Any papers left in the mailbox or any other place are not the instructor’s responsibility. All assignments must be turned in on hard copy, no electronic papers; either e-mail or disks will be accepted. At the discretion of the instructor, it may be required to submit written assignments via “Turn-It-In”, a program utilized to determine instances of plagiarism. Below is a partial list of factors that are addressed in the grading process:

- Any error in APA reference or citation format from the 6th edition
- Lack of quotation marks at the beginning and end of all direct quotes
- Extra or missing punctuation (i.e. commas, semi-colons, colons, periods)
- Incomplete sentences (i.e., sentences without a verb)
- Run-on sentences (i.e., sentences that run together without appropriate punctuation and capitalization delineating each sentence)
- Incorrect spelling
- Inappropriate and inconsistent verb tense
- Lack of noun-verb agreement
- Incorrect use of capitalization (e.g., social work is generally not capitalized)
- Incorrect use of possessives (examples of correct use are Shawn’s book, the parents’ child)
- Any contractions (e.g., I’m, can’t, won’t), except in direct quotes from another source
- Lack of neatness (e.g., hand written corrections, uneven indentions)
- Papers that are not typewritten
- Use of a size other than #12 font
- Lines not double spaced
- Margins that are less than or wider than 1 inch
- Failure to indent the first line of a paragraph
- Incoherent sentences
CORRESPONDANCE:

Students are expected to stay in communication with the instructor of this course either verbally, in writing or via e-mail. The preferred method of contact for the instructor is email. Only Texas A&M-Commerce University email accounts will be used in corresponding with the instructor.

CELL PHONES/PAGERS:

Please turn your cell phone and/or pager (and other electronic devices) off during class. If you are on-call for your work, please place the cell phone or page on silent mode. If you utilize a laptop to take class notes, please be aware of potentially distracting others around you and seat yourself accordingly. Additionally, you may be asked to leave the class if it is determined you are utilizing a computer to do outside work, surf the web inappropriately or communicate personal conversations.

Texting is prohibited and devices will be collected and kept by the instructor until the end of class.

All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. (See Students’ Guide Handbook, Policies and Procedures).

TAPES AND NOTES:

While recordings of this class may be made for personal use recordings may not be sold or distributed to others. While you may make copies of these notes for your personal use, no copy of these notes may be distributed to anyone other than persons currently enrolled in the class; nor may any copies be sold.

UNIVERSITY HONOR CODE:

“All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behaviour conducive to a positive learning environment” (Student’s Guide Book, 1996-97, pp. 64-70). See also: Social Work Department Policies and Procedures, NASW Code of Ethics, and your MSW student handbook. A Departmental Code of Conduct is attached at the end of the syllabus.

Plagiarism is the “[A]ct of appropriating the literary composition of another, or parts of passages of his [or her] writings, or the ideas or language of the same, and passing them off as the product of one’s own mind.” (Black’s Law Dictionary, Abridged Fifth Edition, 1983). When a student gives proper credit to the source, it is not plagiarism.

Some examples of cheating include copying answers from another’s test or assignment, using notes during an exam, giving or receiving help on assignments, and submitting work already submitted for a previous class for credit in another class. If a student suspects cheating is occurring during an exam, the student must immediately notify the instructor, so that the instructor can evaluate the situation while it is occurring.
Law, University policy, and ethical standards all require that students refrain from plagiarism or cheating in any form. Social workers must be honest, trustworthy, and therefore social work students must avoid any behaviour that is dishonest, or impairs the trust of others.

Instances of suspected plagiarism and/or cheating will be thoroughly evaluated. Students found in violation of this policy will be subject to disciplinary action by the Department and University. Violation of the above guidelines will result in a failing grade and possibly dismissal from the program.

ACCEPTABLE CLASSROOM BEHAVIOR:

“Students at Texas A&M University-Commerce are expected to obey all federal, state, and local laws, in addition to the regulations of the University. The standards of Student Conduct including disciplinary rules and procedures are designed to provide and conform to the basic tenets of due process, as developed by institutions of higher education. As such, the University distinguishes these procedures and regulations as an educational and growth process which is not intended to conform to adversary proceedings as in a court of law. (Student’s Guide Book, 2011, p. 35).

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR SOCIAL WORK STUDENTS:

The Department of Social Work expects all social work students to conduct themselves in an ethical, professional manner. Professional ethics are at the core of social work. The profession articulates its basic values, ethical principles, and ethical standards as set forth in the NASW Code of Ethics to guide social workers’ conduct. The Code is relevant to all social workers and social work students, regardless of their professional functions, the settings in which they work, or the populations they serve. Accordingly, we expect social work students to demonstrate courtesy, respect and support for fellow students, instructors, clients, and all other persons.

All students enrolled in BSW or MSW classes are expected to observe the tenets of the NASW Code of Ethics and the Social Work Student Code of Conduct. Our Code of Conduct is reflective of professional and academic expectations – a student who cannot demonstrate appropriate behaviors will not be appropriate for practice in the social work profession. Students who violate these Codes may be asked to meet with appropriate Social Work faculty (instructors or Program Directors). In addition, the department’s Academic and Professional Issues (API) Committee is responsible for dealing with student issues when requested by faculty. A copy of the Departmental code is available at the end of the syllabus.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES:

It is the policy of Texas A&M University-Commerce and the Social Work Department to do everything we can to accommodate students with disabilities, pursuant to federal and state law, and the University’s commitment to providing equal opportunities. Any student with a disability who needs accommodation, for example, in accessibility, seating placement or in arrangements for examinations should not hesitate to inform the instructor. If required, large type, Braille or cassette recordings of
syllabus or assignments can be provided.

Students with conditions that require special attention or accommodation should contact the Director of Disability Resources & Services at 903-468-5150 (located in the Library, Room 132).

OVERVIEW OF ASSIGNMENTS:

GROUP ROLE-PLAY PRACTICE/PARTICIPATION (40 Points):

Students will participate in several role-play exercises (See Class Schedule for Dates). These exercises are designed to allow students to practice skills presented in lectures and demonstrated in video clips. Each student will come to class prepared to participate as either a group leader or group member and demonstrate an understanding of the assigned material. Full participation and cooperation by all members of the class is expected. It is possible that individual grades may be reduced by a lack of effort, preparation or participation in the group role-plays.

Students must be present during role-plays to earn participation points; will not be allowed to make-up points missed during these exercises.

GROUP INTERVENTION PAPER (100 Points):

Students will choose a topic of interest that might be addressed using a group approach. Examples include depression, substance abuse, or crime in a community, any problem or issue that might benefit through group intervention. Once the issue has been identified, students will then plan ten (10) group sessions to address the selected topic. Include in the paper: 1) A description of the topic and how a group approach would be beneficial, 2) Any particular theoretical orientation, or, if no particular theory, why one is not used, 3) Goals and objectives for the overall ten sessions 4) A complete description of each session, including goals and objectives, the more specific, the better, 2) Exercises that will be used for each session, and how they help enhance the session and overall goals/objectives. The paper should be 12 – 15 pages in length and should include five appropriate references other than the class text. The paper is due: 12/03/2012 at the beginning of class.

QUIZZES (60 Points):

Quizzes will be given which reflects content from the weekly assigned material, including lectures, videos and class readings. The format may include multiple choice, true/false, short answer and essay questions.

COMPREHENSIVE EXAM: (50 Points)

A comprehensive final will be given which reflects content from the entire course, including all lectures and class readings. The format may include multiple choice, true/false, short answer and essay questions. Questions may also come from any weekly reading quizzes. The date of the comprehensive exam is 12/03/2012.
GRADING SCALE:

The grading scale is based on a percentage of available points; any change in available points will result in a corresponding change in the grading scale.

225 – 250 points = (90%) A  
200 – 224 points = (80%) B  
175 – 219 points = (70%) C  
> 174 – Don’t go here!

Course Schedule

The following outline is provided as a guide though variations may occur. The Instructor reserves the right to make schedule changes to enhance the presentation of course materials. Readings are to be completed prior to class meeting. Class activities are based on the assumption that readings have been completed. Lecture information is to be considered as supplemental to required readings. Students are responsible for all assigned reading even if it is not discussed during class meetings. Class time will highlight and add to the knowledge gained through assigned reading; it is not intended to replace knowledge gained through reading. Assignments are to be submitted at the beginning of the class period.
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<td><strong>CLASS:</strong> Introduction to Course; Review Syllabus; Course Expectations</td>
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| Week 1 | 08/27/12 | **ONLINE:** Leadership, Stages of Groups; Purpose of Groups; Group Planning | Chapters 1 – 4, *Group Counseling: Strategies and Skills*  
Videos: 1.1, 1.2, 2.1, 2.2, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3 |
| Week 2 | 09/03/12 | **CLASS:** Leadership; Purpose; Planning          | **QUIZ 1**                                      |
| Week 3 | 09/10/12 | **ONLINE:** Beginning Group Stages; Basic Leadership Skills | Chapters 5 & 6, *Group Counseling: Strategies and Skills*  
Videos: 5.1 - 5.3; 6.1 - 6.3 |
| Week 4 | 09/17/12 | **CLASS:** Leadership; Stages                      | **QUIZ 2**                                      |
| Week 5 | 09/24/12 | **ONLINE:** Group Focus; Cutting Off; Drawing Out | Chapters 7 & 8, *Group Counseling: Strategies and Skills*  
Videos: 7.1-7.6; 8.1-8.6 |
| Week 6 | 10/01/12 | **CLASS:** Maintaining Focus; Skills               | **QUIZ 3**                                      |
| Week 7 | 10/08/12 | **ONLINE:** Rounds and Dyads; Exercises            | Chapters 9 & 10, *Group Counseling: Strategies and Skills*  
Videos: 9.1-9.3;10.1-10.4 |
| Week 8 | 10/15/12 | **CLASS:** Exercises                               | **QUIZ 4**                                      |
| Week 9 | 10/22/12 | **ONLINE:** Use of Exercises; Middle Stages of Groups | Chapters 11 & 12, *Group Counseling: Strategies and Skills* |
| Week 10 | 10/29/12 | **CLASS:** Exercises                               | **QUIZ 5**                                      |
| Week 11 | 11/05/12 | **ONLINE:** Counseling Theories; Therapy Groups    | Chapters 13 & 14, *Group Counseling: Strategies and Skills*  
| Week 12 | 11/12/12 | **CLASS:** Theories & Therapies                    | **QUIZ 6**                                      |
| Week 13 | 11/19/12 | **ONLINE:** Closing Groups, Problem Situations, Specific Populations | Chapters 15, 16 & 17, *Group Counseling: Strategies and Skills*  
Videos: 15.1-15.3; 16.1 |
| Week 14 | 11/26/12 | **CLASS:** Closing the deal                         | **TEST**                                        |
| Week 15 | 12/03/12 | **ONLINE:**                                    | Group Intervention Paper Due                    |

Master Syllabus as of Fall 2011
BIBLIOGRAPHY


School of Social Work

Code of Conduct for Social Work Students

The School of Social Work expects all social work students to conduct themselves in an ethical, professional manner, consistent with our profession’s Code of Ethics.

Preamble of the NASW Code of Ethics: The primary mission of the social work profession is to enhance human well-being and help meet the basic human needs of all people, with particular attention to the needs and empowerment of people who are vulnerable, oppressed, and living in poverty. The mission of the social work profession is rooted in a set of core values. These core values, embraced by social workers throughout the profession’s history, are the foundation of social work’s unique purpose and perspective:

- **Service**
- **Social justice**
- **Dignity and worth of the person**
- **Importance of human relationships**
- **Integrity**
- **Competence**

Professional ethics are at the core of social work. The profession has an obligation to articulate its basic values, ethical principles, and ethical standards. The *NASW Code of Ethics* sets forth these values, principles, and standards to guide social workers’ conduct. The *Code* is relevant to all social workers and social work students, regardless of their professional functions, the settings in which they work, or the populations they serve.

Accordingly, we expect social work students to demonstrate courtesy, respect and support for fellow students, instructors, clients and all other persons. While the values of the profession are codified in the NASW Code of Ethics, we feel that the following additional standards of behavior are to be exhibited as well by all students enrolled in our program:

1. **Accountability** – Attend class, arrive on time, return from breaks in a timely manner • Participate in activities and assignments in a level comparable to peers • Complete work in a timely fashion according to directions • Be prepared and engaged in the learning process.

2. **Respect** – Treat your peers, instructors, and all other persons with dignity and respect at all times • Listen while others are speaking • Give constructive feedback when appropriate • Approach conflict in a cooperative manner • Use positive and nonjudgmental language.

3. **Confidentiality and Boundaries** – Treat any personal information that you hear (or read) about a peer or an instructor as strictly confidential • Maintain information shared in class as confidential • Use judgment in self-disclosing information of a personal nature in the classroom (Class time is not therapy or treatment – seek a referral if you need it) • Never use names of clients or disclose other identifying information • Exercise clear and appropriate boundaries between yourself and other students, your instructors and other professional relationships.
4. **Competence** – Apply yourself to all your academic pursuits with seriousness and conscientiousness • Meet deadlines given by your instructors • Constantly strive to learn and improve your abilities • Come to class prepared • Seek appropriate support when having difficulties • Take responsibility for the quality of completed tests and assignments • Strive to achieve greater awareness of personal issues that may impede your effectiveness with clients.

5. **Diversity** – Strive to become more open to people, ideas and creeds with which you are not familiar • Embrace diversity • Maintain speech free of racism, sexism, ageism, heterosexism, stereotyping, etc. • Exhibit a willingness to serve diverse groups of persons • Demonstrate an understanding of how values and culture interact.

6. **Integrity** – Practice honesty with yourself, your peers, and your instructors • Constantly strive to improve your abilities • Commit yourself to the academic discipline of citing other people’s work properly • Acknowledge areas where improvement is needed • Accept and benefit from constructive feedback.

7. **Communication** – Strive to improve both verbal and written communication skills as those skills are the benchmark for effective professional practice and helping relationships • Demonstrate appropriately assertive communication with peers and instructors • Practice positive, constructive, respectful and professional communication skills (both verbal and non-verbal) with peers, instructors and all other persons.

*Adapted from Florida Atlantic University School of Social Work*

All students enrolled in BSW or MSW classes are expected to observe the tenets of the NASW Code of Ethics and the Social Work Student Code of Conduct. Students who violate these may be asked to meet with appropriate Social Work faculty (instructors or Program Directors). In addition, the department’s Academic and Professional Issues (API) Committee is responsible for dealing with academic and non-academic student issues when requested by faculty. The API is comprised of the various program directors and is chaired by the Department Head. The decisions or actions of the API are considered the final say of the department. Students may be disciplined or dismissed from the program for violation of this Code of Conduct. Students have the right to appeal any decision to the Dean of the College of Education and Human Services, as specified by university policy.

By signing below, I verify that I agree to abide by the standards of the NASW Code of Ethics and the Code of Conduct stated above.

__________________________________________________________________________

Print Name

Date

__________________________________________________________________________

Signature

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