COUN 528.401- INTRODUCTION TO GROUP DYNAMICS AND PROCEDURES
Wednesday (7:30-10:00pm)

Instructor: Melissa Blair PhD, LPC
E-mail: Melissa.blair@tamuc.edu
Time: Wednesday (7:30-10:00pm)
Location: Mesquite Campus Rm. TBA first night of class
Office Hours: Available before class or by appointment

CATALOG DESCRIPTION OF COURSE
528. Introduction to Group Dynamics and Procedures. Three Semester Hours.
A study of group development, dynamics, and theories in relation to group guidance, group counseling, and group therapy. Leadership styles, techniques and roles are explored, and ethical and legal issues related to group interventions are discussed. Prerequisite: COUN 510 or consent of instructor with concurrent enrollment in COUN 510.

PURPOSE OF THE COURSE
This course will introduce the basic theories and procedures of group counseling. Lecture, class discussion, demonstration and videotaped material will be utilized. Upon course completion, class participants should be able to demonstrate an understanding of theories and procedures used in group settings.

COURSE OBJECTIVES include, but are not limited to, the following.
The student will:
1. demonstrate understanding of principles of group dynamics, including group process components, developmental stage theories, group members' roles and behaviors, and therapeutic factors of group work;
2. demonstrate understanding of group leadership styles and approaches, including characteristics of various types of group leaders and leadership styles;
3. demonstrate understanding of theories of group counseling, including commonalties, distinguishing characteristics, and pertinent research and literature;
4. demonstrate understanding of group counseling methods, including group counselor orientations and behaviors, appropriate selection criteria and methods, and methods of evaluation of effectiveness;
5. demonstrate understanding of approaches used for other types of group work, including task groups, psychoeducational groups, and therapy groups;
6. demonstrate understanding of professional preparation standards for group leaders;
7. demonstrate understanding of ethical and legal considerations related to group work;
8. become more conscious of his/her personal growth through participation as a group member.

CONTENT AREAS include, but are not limited to, the following:
I. Group dynamics
   A. Group process components
   B. Developmental stage theories
   C. Group members’ roles and behaviors
   D. Therapeutic factors of group work
II. Group leadership styles and approaches
   A. Characteristics of various types of group leaders
   B. Leadership styles
III. Theories of group counseling
   A. Commonalties
   B. Distinguishing characteristics
   C. Pertinent research and literature
IV. Group counseling methods
   A. Group counselor orientations and behaviors
   B. Appropriate selection criteria and methods
   C. Methods of evaluation of effectiveness
V. Approaches used for other types of group work
   A. Task groups
   B. Psychoeducational groups
   C. Therapy groups
VII. Professional preparation standards for group leaders
VIII. Ethical and legal considerations related to group work

TEXES COMPETENCIES THAT RELATE TO THIS COURSE (TEXES is the state examination required for school counselor certification.)

Competency 001 (Human Development)
   The school counselor understands processes of human development and applies this knowledge to provide a developmental guidance program, including counseling services, that meets the needs of all students.

Competency 002 (Student Diversity)
   The school counselor understands human diversity and applies this knowledge to ensure that the developmental guidance and counseling program is responsive to all students.

Competency 006 (Counseling)
   The school counselor understands how to provide effective counseling services to individuals and small groups.

Competency 010 (Professionalism)
   The school counselor understands and complies with ethical, legal, and professional standards relevant to the profession.

REQUIRED TEXT

COURSE REQUIREMENTS
1. Class Participation is expected of each student. If a student misses more than 2 class meetings, I reserve the right to reduce the student’s grade by one letter.

2. Quizzes. It is important that you keep up with the class readings. There will be 2 quizzes during the semester. Each quiz will be comprised of multiple choice, matching pairs, a short essay and/or a selection based on the readings.

3. Group Presentation (approximately 1 hour). Groups of 2-3 students will present a group counseling theoretical orientation (i.e. Gestalt, Psychodynamic, Adlerian, Person-
centered, Cognitive, etc.) or group process with working with a certain population (i.e. Chemical dependency, Children of divorce, Grief/bereavement, etc.) to the class using both didactic and experiential methods. The presenters will present the basics of group process within the chosen orientation or issue. Then the presenters will facilitate a group experience demonstrating how the orientation works. Other class members will serve as resource persons for experiential demonstration groups. Please have handouts of your presentation for class members. Each member’s contribution to the presentation will be recorded and evaluated and a group grade will be given.

4. **Laboratory Group Experience.** This activity involves participation in a group designed to help you learn more about yourself as a group member. This group experience is consistent with the core training standards of the Association for Specialists in Group Work and CACREP requirements. **The purpose of these groups is to teach you about group dynamics, how you perceive others, how others perceive you, how the group process can inform your work in a variety of group settings, and for you to experience what it means to be a member of a group.** These group meetings represent another vehicle for you to learn about groups in action. You are asked to be an active participant and to monitor your level of self disclosure. The learning that comes from being a member of an on-going group can make a valuable contribution to your development as an effective group leader and effective group member. These groups will meet during the last part of class meetings. The group will be led by the instructor. There will be eight (8) group meetings. All participants in these groups will be bound by confidentiality. At the conclusion of these groups you will have the opportunity to provide written feedback to the group facilitator/instructor. You will **not** be formally evaluated in this group although attendance will be noted. If for some reason you do not feel that you can fully participate in the experiential group, you probably should not be enrolled in CO 528 at this time. Please see me if you have concerns about your ability to participate, or if you need a referral to a professional counselor.

5. **Group Process Journal (Due 12/14 in class)** Each group participant (student of the class) will write/type a 1-2 page personal process summary of their group experience. This is intended to be solely about the individual’s personal process in the group meetings. The notebook will be “looked at” by the instructor to validate completion.

**Journal:**
Each week you will turn in a 2-3 page journal on the previous week’s class. The journal will consist of a section for each of the following headings:

**Description of the group as a whole:** identifying
a) The mood (e.g., what changes, if any, did you notice?)
b) Topic of greatest interest to the group, and
c) Activity level (e.g., what changes did you notice?)

**Self-appraisal:** identifying
a) Your mood (e.g., what changes, if any, did you notice?)
b) Topic of greatest interest to you, and
c) Your activity level (e.g., what changes did you notice?)

**Description of one member**
Something you admire or something you noticed as a characteristic (this is not a behavioral description) **Relation of group session to outside experience**
How you might use something we did in class in your future position as counselor

**Group Proposal.** or your final written assignment you will prepare a proposal, This proposal will be approximately 15 pages. **Please follow APA style**
Select a setting in which you want to implement a group program (i.e., groups designed for children, adolescents, college students, older adults). Please select one of the specialization areas (i.e., task, psychoeducation, counseling or therapy). 15-page typed and double-spaced paper using APA style. The paper will include references from at least 7 journal articles and/or texts. You may use no more than one (1) website as a reference. The purpose of the paper is to propose a group the student is likely to conduct. In addition to including information from the related literature, the student should specify the form and content of each group session, stating an objective for each group meeting. The paper should also include selection and screening techniques. The topic of the paper must be approved by the instructor. The paper must address the following:

1) Literature Review:
   - Does it describe the scope of the problem at hand?
   - Does it identify and describe the most important issues faced by group members?
   - Does it identify possible solutions discovered by past research and practice?
   - Does it review and integrate the information from the cited references

2) Group Logistics
   - Is the duration sufficient to cover topic and allow for change?
   - What specific changes will occur as a result of a member’s participation?
   - Is the time sufficient for number of members?
   - What potential barriers to scheduling exist

3) Screening
   - When deciding whom to exclude, what are the criteria?
   - When deciding who to include, which of the following are taken into account: gender, cognitive ability, maturity, duration of issue, frequency of issue, intensity of issue, acceptance and/or completion of issue.

4) Individualized Goals
   - How do you intend to facilitate change for individuals and the group as a whole (i.e., coaching, role play, support for and opportunity to transfer learning to real life)?

5) Does it conform to the 6th edition of the APA style guide?

Something to consider: It would be practical to identify a group you might actually lead in your practicum or internship setting. Do not choose a suicide prevention group for your first group attempt. Also, it might be advantageous to choose a group that is not overly “challenging” for your first group experience (Ex. Bipolar children, bpd group, eating disorders).

Some examples of topics for group papers: Loss-bereavement, children of divorce, building social skills, stepfamily issues, families of alcoholics, test-taking anxiety

EVALUATION
Attendance 15 points
Group Process Notebook     10 points
Group Proposal       25 points
Group presentation on theories (each student)   20  points
Quizzes on readings (2 @ 15 points each)   30 points
Total                  100 points

Grading Criteria:
A  100-90
B  89-80
C  79-70 (not a passing grade)
F  < 69

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES
The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact:
Office of Student Disability Resources and Services
Texas A&M University-Commerce
Gee Library, Room 132
Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835
Fax (903) 468-8148
StudentDisabilityServices@tamu-commerce.edu

CONDUCT AND ACADEMIC HONESTY
"All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment." (See Student's Guide Handbook, Polices and Procedures, Conduct) "Graduate students at Texas A&M University-Commerce are expected to maintain high standards of integrity and honesty in all their scholastic work." (See Section A13.12, Academic Honesty, A&M-Commerce Procedures.)

UNIVERSITY CLOSING DUE TO WEATHER
Check http://www.tamu-commerce.edu/ regarding class cancellations. Also, KETR radio on 88.9 FM and television channels 4, 5, and 8 (channel 7 for Tyler & Longview Area).

Tentative Course Schedule

8/29   Introductions, discuss syllabus, ethical and legal issues, A GROUP!
      Read Chapters 1, 2 & 3 in text for next meeting

9/05   Types of groups, facilitator qualities, group counseling ethics
      Read Chapter 4, 5, in text for meeting next meeting

9/12   History of group, forming a group, screening members
      Read Chapters 6,7 in text for next meeting
      Quiz 1 (Chapters 1-5)

9/19   Initial and transition stages of group
      Read Chapters 8,9 in text for next meeting

9/26   Working and termination stages of group
      Read Chapters 10,11 in text for next meeting
10/05  Working with Children & Adolescents, Group exercise
      Read Chapters 11 & 12 in text for next meeting
      Group 1

10/12  Quiz 2 (6-12)
      Group 2

10/19  Working with Adults Yalom’s presentation of Group Psychotherapy
      Group 3

10/26  Yalom’s presentation of Intensive Outpatient Group
      Group 4

10/31  Group Presentation 1 & 2
      Group 5

11/07  Group Presentation 3 & 4
      Group 6

11/14  Group Presentation 5 & 6
      Group 7

11/21  Thanksgiving Break. No class meeting.

12/05  Group Presentations Due
      Present Group Proposal to Class

12/12  Present Group Proposal to Class
      Wrap up and closing group activity
      Group Logs Due
      Group 8