



*SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK*

**SWK 325: MEZZO PRACTICE**

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**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

This practice course teaches the application of social work skills to work with groups. Students will learn the dynamics of task and process groups and will learn how to apply a systematic approach to the development, implementation, termination, and evaluation of groups. Prerequisites are Social Work 250 and 275.

**GOALS AND COMPETENCIES:**

**1. Prepare BSW graduates for entry-level professional social work practice that reflects generalist social work knowledge and skills. Graduates will be able to demonstrate the following competencies:**

- 1.1 Apply critical thinking and effective communication (2.1.3)
- 1.2 Engage in research-informed practice and practice-informed research (2.1.6)
- 1.3 Apply knowledge of HBSE to practice (2.1.7)
- 1.4 Apply knowledge of policy to practice (2.1.8)
- 1.5 Apply change strategies with all levels of systems (2.1.10)

**2. Enable BSW graduates to practice ethically and apply social work values to promote equality and justice. Graduates will be able to demonstrate the following competencies:**

- 2.1 Apply social work ethics & principles (2.1.2)
- 2.2 Engage diversity in practice (2.1.4)
- 2.3 Promote human rights and social and economic justice (2.1.5)

**3. Provide meaningful contexts through which BSW students engage in leadership, service, and professional excellence. Graduates will be able to demonstrate the following competencies:**

- 3.1 Identify and respond as a professional social worker (2.1.1)
- 3.2 Respond to professional contexts that shape practice, demonstrating qualities of leadership for the profession. (2.1.9)

**COURSE OBJECTIVES AND STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES:**

Upon completion of this course, students will have attained the following competencies:

1. The ability to understand and apply the NASW Code of Ethics and ethical standards in working with groups by completing a group work session critically assessing the standards.
2. The ability to understand and apply a generalist strengths perspective to social work with groups.
3. The ability to understand community needs and apply and evaluate group work skills.
4. The ability to apply a multi-system assessment process to working with various groups (relationship building, treatment, socialization, supervisory, task, organizational, etc.).
5. The ability to critically evaluate one's own knowledge, skills, and values in using a multi-dimensional approach to working with groups.
6. The ability to develop, maintain, and evaluate multiple types of groups and to apply the planned change process to promote social justice when appropriate to ameliorate adverse environmental conditions.
7. The ability to demonstrate and apply an understanding of diversity (age, race, ethnicity, gender, income, sexual orientation, disabilities) and to apply it as it relates to the functioning of groups.

**RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER COURSES:**

SWK 325Mezzp Practice, is a practice course that draws heavily on engagement, assessment and termination skills developed in SWK 329 Practice with Individuals. It is built on the foundation information drawn from SWK 225 Introduction to SWK, SWK 250 Foundations for Practice, and

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SWK 275 HBSE I. Mezzo principles then provide a basis for engaging groups in the treatment venue as well as in agency and community practice.

**TEXT:**

Toseland, Ronald W. and Rivas, Robert F. (2012). *An Introduction to Group Work Practice 7<sup>th</sup> ed.*. Needham Heights, MA. Allyn and Bacon.

**\*\*Other readings may be assigned during this course\*\***

**GRADING:**

Assignment #1	50 points
Assignment #2	100 points
Class Presentation	25 points
Quiz #1	50 points
Quiz #2	50 points
Quiz #3	50 points
Quiz #4	50 points
In-class journal	<u>25 points</u>
TOTAL	400 points

A = 370-400 points

B = 340-369 points

C = 310-339 points

D = 280-308 points

F = 279 and below

**OVERVIEW OF ASSIGNMENTS:**

Assignment #1: Students will write an Annotated Bibliography on a minimum of 3 Social Work journal articles related to work with groups. Students will:

1. Identify methodologies.
2. Identify the model.
3. Evaluate the effectiveness of the interventions.
4. Include a short assessment/opinion of the journal article. Although this is your opinion, it is not appropriate to use first person when writing in APA.
5. Attach the social work article with information used in the paper.  
*highlighted or underlined.*

The paper should be at least five pages long, APA style, typed and double-spaced. The paper will be due on February 12<sup>th</sup>. (3.0, 6.0)

Assignment #2 – Working in assigned groups, select a method of group work and write a **well documented and research supported APA paper** that describes the ideology and application of the method, and how you would apply this method. Research supported and well documented involves a literature review. Describe the client population best suited for

this type of group work, the length of the group and whether or not you would use a co-therapist. Structure the group and establish a method of leadership. Identify the community, organization, or agency which would be used for sponsorship and demonstrate an understanding of the impact it/they would have on the group. Investigate methods of advertising and soliciting members for the group. Provide a screening tool as well as assessment and evaluation tools. Establish clear goals and objectives for your group. Provide a copy of the contract you would use. If you would advertise or use fliers, provide copies of those as well. **Throughout the course, topics for inclusion in the paper will be identified and discussed.** You may ask to see example papers at any time during the semester. This is a difficult and time consuming project. This paper will be due April 19<sup>th</sup>.

**Class Presentation** – Working in your assigned groups, prepare a class presentation on your selected group work method. The presentation will describe the ideology and application of the method of group work selected. You will lead the class in a simulated group activity that demonstrates the method of group work on which you have reported. Each presentation must include a **handout** that outlines the basic ideology of this particular group. Presentations will be scheduled for April 30<sup>th</sup> and May 2<sup>nd</sup>.

**In-class Journal** – Class will consist of group activities, and students are expected to keep a record of their responses to being members of these groups. These interactions are designed to create an atmosphere of group work which will enable students to personally experience group relationships and behaviors. Theory and knowledge gained through the class experience will better enable students to relate to future clients. Students will demonstrate acquisition of this knowledge through their journal writings as well as demonstrate the ability to analyze, critique and synthesize that knowledge into the group interaction. Consider addressing issues of diversity such as age, gender, race, sexual orientation, or disability. This is NOT a time for summarizing readings, but an opportunity to demonstrate growth through the application of theory and knowledge. Specific topics will be assigned throughout the semester. The final journal will be a structured grading of you and your group members as to the overall involvement and contribution to the group experience. Although the journals are turned in and returned to enable the instructor to monitor group interaction, **it is the student's responsibility to maintain the journals which will be submitted in a folder at the end of the semester.**

## **EXAMINATIONS:**

This class provides four opportunities (quizzes) by which to demonstrate knowledge acquisition. **Quizzes cannot be made up.** If a student misses one or more of the quizzes, the student will be required to take a comprehensive final examination. The examination grade will then replace the missed quiz grade.

## **CLASS ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION:**

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Students are expected to attend class, reflecting responsibility which is inherent in the development as a social work professional. Roll will be taken regularly. 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. Tardiness (or early departure) of more than 15 minutes will count as .5 absence (2 tardies/early departures = 1 absence). 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.

The following penalties for absences (unexcused, or excused, according to university policy) will be administered:

Weekly	Up to 2 absences No penalty	3 absences 1 letter grade drop	4 absences Class grade of "F"	
Bi-weekly	Up to 3 absences No penalty	4 absences 1 letter grade drop	5 absences 1 letter grade drop	6 absences Class grade of "F"
Summer 10-week	Up to 1 absence No penalty	2 absences 1 letter grade drop	3 absences Class grade of "F"	

**ONLINE OR WEB-ENHANCED CLASSES:** Just as students are required to attend face-to-face classes, students are required to log in and participate in online components. To receive credit for attendance online via eCollege, students must log in and complete assignments in a timely manner. Not logging in to eCollege (which can be monitored by the instructor) and completing assignments online during the appropriate time is the equivalent of an absence for each week this occurs.

Final evaluation and grades depend on both presence and participation. Students' grades will be significantly impacted by inadequate participation or lack of required time commitment each week. Students are expected to spend a comparable amount of time in the online learning environment as they would in class (3 hours a week in the classroom). In addition, just as in traditional F2F classrooms, students are expected to spend time reading and studying class materials.

**NOTE: PROBLEMS WITH YOUR INTERNET CONNECTION AND/OR COMPUTER ARE NOT CONSIDERED AS REASONS FOR LACK OF PARTICIPATION.** You have access to the university's computer labs (in the social work department AND other campus facilities, including the library) as well as local libraries and other access to computers and ISPs.

If you believe that you are unable to fulfill the requirements for the course you should talk with your instructor about the possibility of dropping or withdrawing.

Class participation has three components: (1) Appropriate interactions with classmates, (2) Attentiveness, and (3) Active involvement in class activities. Evaluation of class participation is based on instructor observation. Students will be given feedback if problems are evident.

## **POLICY ON DUE DATES:**

## **POLICY ON PLAGIARISM AND CHEATING:**

Every student is expected to do his/her own work. Law, ethical standards, university policy, and departmental policy demand that students refrain from plagiarism and any form of cheating. Plagiarism is the "Act of appropriating the literary composition of another, or parts of passages from of his [or her] writings, or the ideas or language of the same, and passing them off as the products of one's own mind." (Black's Law Dictionary, Abridged Fifth Edition, 1983). When using others' words, phrases, or ideas in writing, the original author should be given proper credit.

Cheating may take different forms. These include, but are not limited to, copying others' answers during an exam, using notes or other forms of help during an examination or quiz, except when explicitly permitted by the instructor, giving or receiving help on exams or assignments, or submitting work for one class which has already been submitted for another class for credit. Use of citations from the Internet without paraphrasing content AND proper referencing is regarded as plagiarism. Professors have the right to use electronic review programs (such as Turn It In™) to identify plagiarism.

The department does not tolerate plagiarism or cheating. A student found to be engaging in such illegal and unethical conduct may receive a failing grade in the course and may be subjected to further disciplinary proceedings. Any assignment or exam that lacks honesty will be given a grade of "0".

## **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,

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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.

**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).

**COURSE SCHEDULE \*\*\*\* TENTATIVE\*\*\*\***

<b>Week</b>	<b>Reading(s)</b>	<b>Assignment/Activities</b>	<b>Link to Comp.</b>	<b>SLO</b>
1 1/22 & 1/24	Chapter 1	Class introduction. Review of course syllabus and assignments. Overview of class subject matter. Assignment of groups. In class activities: 1. Create group identification. 2. Compare and contrast the standards.		
2 1/29 &	Chapter 2	Historical Developments		

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1/31		Influential Theories group assignments. Groups work together to prepare and teach a theory as assigned in class. Students then journal the experience,		
3 2/5 & 2/7	Chapter 3	Understanding Group Dynamics <i>Class activity</i>		
4 2/12 & 2/14	Chapter 4 <i>Subject to change due to scheduling.</i>  <i>Quiz 1 Chapters 1-4</i>	STRENGTHS Quest <i>(Journals required for both the sessions. How do these concepts affect or apply to your group?)</i>		
5 2/2/19 & 2/21	Chapter 5 <i>Assignment 1 due.</i>	Leadership <i>(demonstrate in group settings)</i> Leadership and Diversity		
6 2/26 & 2/28	Chapter 6	Planning the Group		
7 3/5 & 3/3/7	Chapter 7  <i>Quiz 2 Chapters 5-7</i>	The Group Begins <i>Activity; Each group presents an in-class role play.</i>		
8 3/11- 3/14	<b>SPRING BREAK</b>			
9 3/19 & 3/21	Chapter 8	Assessment As a journal exercise, identify basic group roles and assign them to members of your group.		
10 3/26 & 3/28	Chapter 9	Treatment Groups: Foundation Methods <i>In groups apply the appropriate method to an example.</i>		
11 4/2 & 4/4	Chapter 10  <i>Quiz 3 Chapters 8-10</i>	Treatment Groups: Specialized Methods		
12 4/9 & 4/11	Chapter 11 & 12	Task Groups Foundation and Specialized Methods		

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13 4/16 & 4/18	Chapter 12 & 13	Eevaluation		
14 4/23 & 4/25	Chapter 13 & 14  <i>ASSIGNMENT II due</i>	Ending the Group's Work <i>Class will be structured as an actual group to discuss the group experience of the semester.</i>		
15 4/30 & 5/1	Group Presentations			
16 May 7 <sup>th</sup>	<i>Quiz 4 Chapters 9-13</i> FINAL EXAM Option			

### References

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