

COUN 528: INTRODUCTION TO GROUP DYNAMICS AND PROCEDURES

Instructor: Wendy Robinson, Ph.D., LPC

Office Hours: By appointment only

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COURSE INFORMATION

Materials – Textbooks, Readings, Supplementary Readings:

Corey, M. S., Corey, G., & Corey, C. (2010). *Groups: Process and practice* (9th ed.). Belmont, CA: Brooks/Cole. ISBN-13: 978-1-133-9454-8; ISBN-10: 1-133-94546-5

**Additional assigned readings are integral to your understanding of this course. These handouts will be made available at the beginning of the semester.

Course Description:

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.

GENERAL COURSE INFORMATION

As one of the core courses in the TAMU-Commerce Counseling Program, this course should be taken early in the student's program, but not first. The course includes studies that provide both theoretical and experiential understandings of group purpose, development, dynamics, counseling theories, group counseling methods and skills, and other group approaches. A grade of "B" or higher must be earned in COUN 501, 510, 528, and 516 for admission to candidacy status (or its equivalent for those seeking school counselor certification only), which is required before practicum (COUN 551).

Student Learning Outcomes:

Students 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 commonalities, 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.

SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Corey, G. (2012). *Theory and practice of group counseling*. (8th ed.). Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole.
- DeLucia-Waack, J. L., Bridbord, K. H., & Kliener, J. S. (2006). *Group work experts share their favorite activities: A guide to choosing, planning, conducting, and processing*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Specialists in Group Work.
- DeLucia, J. L., Coleman, V. D., & Jensen-Scott, R. L. (1992). Cultural diversity in group counseling. *Journal for Specialists in Group Work*, 17(4), 194 – 195.
- Foss, L. L., Green, J., Wolf-Stilner, & DeLucia-Waack, J. L. (Eds.). (2008). *School counselors share their favorite group activities: A guide to choosing, planning, conducting, and processing*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Specialists in Group Work.
- Jacobs, E., Harvill, R., & Masson, R. (2006). *Group counseling: Strategies and skills* (5th ed.). Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole.
- Morganett, R. S. (1990). *Skills for living: Group counseling activities for young adolescents*. Champaign, IL: Research Press.
- Morganett, R. S. (1994). *Skills for living: Group counseling activities for children*. Champaign, IL: Research Press.

Pfeiffer, J. W., & Jones, J. E. (Eds.). (1993). *The annual handbook for group facilitators*. San Diego: University Associates.

Yalom, I. (1985). *The theory and practice of group psychotherapy*. (3rd ed.). New York: Basic Books.

Zimpfer, D. G. (1993). Group work in the helping professions: A bibliography. (Part II) *Journal for Specialists in Group Work*, 18(4), 149-165.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Instructional / Methods / Activities Assessments

Instructional Methods: Lecture, discussion, and experiential

In addition to other requirements, this course involves an experiential component of at least 10 hours designed as training for group membership and leadership. The group experiences are not designed to substitute for therapy.

Participation and Homework: Because the group process is seriously affected by member absence, participation is required. Your grade will be lowered one level for any unexcused absence. Homework assignments (written and non-written) are to be completed prior to the assigned date. All papers due at the beginning of the class period. Late papers will have 10% deducted from the final score.

Class Discussions and In-Class Activities: You will have the opportunity to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of key concepts through class discussions and in-class activities.

Student Learning Outcomes #1, #2, #3, and #4

Paper: In this paper you will demonstrate the ability to apply knowledge of principles of group dynamics and processes in writing. The object of the paper is to propose a counseling group you might like to conduct in Practicum or Internship. Minimum length is 25-pages, typed and double-spaced using APA style. The paper will include: (a) 10-page (minimum) literature review on the group topic; (b) screening, logistics, and 8-10 session plan for a counseling group in a school or agency setting; and (c) appendices containing group activities and resources.

The paper will include references from at least ten journal articles, in addition to texts. In addition to citing and synthesizing information from the related literature, you should specify the form and content of each group session, stating your objectives for each. Include your selection procedure and screening techniques. Identify the session(s) when individual education plans will be identified for each member, and the opportunities for subsequent follow-up on each member's progress.

Be certain your paper includes all elements listed in the *Group Paper Outline* (included in this syllabus).

Your paper should address a *group counseling* application, not a group guidance or group psychotherapy situation. It would be practical to identify a group you might actually lead in your practicum or internship field placement. Do not choose a suicide prevention group for your first attempt. Also avoid groups composed of all the children teachers are most likely to have absent. These "at-risk" groups of students are worthy of counseling, but frequently involve mislabeling or dual diagnoses.

Midterm Exam: There will be a midterm exam in which you will demonstrate knowledge and application of key concepts.

Student Learning Outcomes #1, #2, #3, and #4

Weekly Journal: Students will demonstrate understanding of group dynamics, group process components, leader skills, and ability to self-reflect as a group member, through completion of a structured weekly journal assignment.

Each week you will turn in a 2-3 page journal on the previous week's class. The journal will consist of a section from 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*.

Student Learning Outcomes #1 and #2

Training Group Experience: Students will gain experience as group members through participation in a minimum 10 clock hours of departmentally approved experiential small group activity during one academic term.

Student Learning Outcome #5

Grading

Attendance & Participation	5%	15 points
Weekly Journals	10	30 points
Midterm Exam	40	120 points
Final Paper	45	135 points

A = 270 – 300 C = 210 – 239

B = 240 – 269 D = 180 – 209

Participation in the training group and in-class experiential activities will be rated according to the communication skills employed by the student, not by the content of the participation. Actual content of the student's contributions will be incidental; the student's role in the group process will be important.

TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS

This class requires students to be able to access and use the library databases.

ACCESS AND NAVIGATION

This face-to-face class does not require access to eCollege.

COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT

Preferred method of contacting the instructor is email: Wendy.Robinson@tamuc.edu. In most instances you will receive a reply within 24 – 48 hours. If you are in need of support, please email and/or make an appointment to meet with me. Be sure to email in advance if you will miss class or will be late to class.

COURSE AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES/POLICIES
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Course Specific Procedures:

Attendance: The student is expected to attend class regularly. University guidelines regarding attendance policy will be followed.

Required Papers: papers are due on the dates noted in the syllabus. All papers are due at the beginning of the class period. Late papers will have 10% deducted from the final score.

Papers should be typed, double-spaced, with a one-inch margin on all side. Use APA format to cite all references. Please correct typos and grammar. Make sure to include title page according to APA format.

University Specific Procedures:**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@tamuc.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, Policies 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).

COURSE OUTLINE / CALENDAR

Week 1: 8/28	Course Expectations, Introductions
Week 2: 9/4 Readings:	History of Groups Corey Chapters 1 & 2; Handouts
Week 3: 9/11 Readings:	Group Dynamics Corey Chapters 6-9; Handouts
Week 4: 9/18 Readings:	Leadership Skills Corey Chapters 6-9; Handouts
Week 5: 9/28 Readings:	Diversity-Competent Group Leadership To be determined
Week 6: 10/2 Readings:	Changing Behavior Corey Chapter 5; Handouts
Week 7: 10/9	Midterm Essay Exam
Week 8: 10/16 Readings:	Group paper: Review Guidelines; Getting Started Review APA style
Week 9: 10/22 Readings:	Ethics; Group practice Corey Chapter 3; Handouts
Week 10: 10/30 Readings:	Group practice To be determined
Week 11: 11/6 Readings:	Theories and Techniques of Group Counseling: Group practice Corey Chapter 4
Week 12: 11/13	Group practice
Week 13: 11/20	Group practice
Week 14: 11/26 Assignment:	Group practice Paper Due (turn in paper and electronic copy)
Week 15: 12/4	Group practice: Closing a group

COUN 528: Group Paper Outline

1) Literature review (minimum 10 pages):

- Does it document this as a widespread problem?
- Does it describe the key elements of the topic?
- Does it identify and describe the most important issues faced by group members?
- Does it identify solutions discovered by others?
- Does it review 10 recent journal articles, as well as books?

2) Group Logistics

- Is the duration sufficient to cover topic and allow for change?
- Is the length of session sufficient for number of members?
- How do you incorporate holidays into your group plan?
- If school children involved, how are sessions staggered so child does not lose time from the same subject repeatedly?

3) Screening

- When deciding whom to exclude, what are the criteria?
- When deciding whom 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) Group Session Plans:

- Early session identifying General Goals, is followed by session(s) identifying Individualized Goal, followed by coaching/role play/support for opportunity to transfer learning to real life – occurring in time for member to “change”

5) What distinguishes the present group counseling proposal from group guidance or group therapy?

6) Does the paper conform to the **APA style** guide given in class?

Topics for Group Papers

(other topics only with advance permission from Instructor)

Loss-Bereavement

Stepfamily Issues

Children of Divorce

Females with food issues

Building Social Skills (choose one skill)

Survival Tactics for Newcomers

Families of Alcoholics