

# 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:

REQUIRED - Corey, M. S., Corey, G., & Corey, C. (2010). *Groups: Process and practice* (9<sup>th</sup> 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 and will be provided during class.

### 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. Commonalities
  - 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*. (8<sup>th</sup> 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* (5<sup>th</sup> 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. (3<sup>rd</sup> 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 and/or after two excused absences. No absences are excused during the 6-week group process. Please plan accordingly. 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 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 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

during the six week group process.

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	30 points
Participation	60 points
Weekly Journals	60 (6 journals at 10 points each)
Midterm Exam	100 points
Final Paper	150 points

A = 360 – 400      C = 280 – 319

B = 320 – 359      D/F = 279 and below

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](mailto: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**

### **Course Specific Procedures**

**Attendance:** The student is expected to attend class regularly. The student may have one absence with a deduction of 10 points from the attendance grade. The student must communicate with the professor via email to inform of absence prior to class or immediately following if an emergency. A student who misses two classes will automatically drop a letter grade at the end of the semester. **There are no excused absences during the six week group process.**

**Class participation:** Students are expected to make an active and personal effort to contribute to class. In order to gain full benefit of the material covered, participation is "essential." "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 Procedure, Conduct). All phones, pagers, and other communication devices are to be turned off or place on silent mode during class. If you need to check a device please do so at break or excuse yourself from the class.

**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@tamu-commerce.edu](mailto: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, 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).

<b>COURSE OUTLINE / CALENDAR</b>	
<b>Week 1: 1/16</b>	<b>Course Expectations, Introductions</b>
<b>Week 2: 1/23</b> Readings:	<b>History of Groups and Group Counselor</b> Corey Chapters 1 & 2
<b>Week 3: 1/30</b> Readings:	<b>Group Dynamics</b> Corey Chapters 5-6
<b>Week 4: 2/6</b> Readings:	<b>Transitions and Working Stage of Group</b> Corey Chapters 7-8
<b>Week 5: 2/13</b> Readings:	<b>Termination of Group/Review Group paper</b> Corey Chapter 9
<b>Week 5: 2/20</b> Readings:	<b>Diversity-Competent Group Leadership &amp; Ethics</b> Chapter 1 (Diversity section) and Chapter 3 <a href="http://www.counseling.org">www.counseling.org</a> to obtain the ACA Code of Ethics – bring a copy to class
<b>Week 6: 2/27</b> Readings:	<b>Group Paper: Review Guidelines; Getting Started</b> <b>Midterm Essay Exam distributed</b> Review APA style
<b>Week 7: 3/6</b> <b>Week 8: 3/13</b>	<b>Midterm Essay Exam due by the end of class (via email)</b> <b>Spring Break</b>
<b>Week 9: 3/20</b> Readings:	<b>Changing Behavior/ Mandatory Group practice</b> Corey Chapter 5; pgs 98 - 107
<b>Week 10: 3/27</b> Readings:	<b>Changing Behavior (Psychodynamic/Adlerian)/ Mandatory Group practice</b> Corey Chapter 5; pgs 108 - 114
<b>Week 11: 4/3</b> Readings:	<b>Changing Behavior (Person-Center, Existential and Gestalt)/ Group practice</b> Corey Chapter 5; pgs 114 – 122
<b>Week 12: 4/10</b> Readings:	<b>Changing Behavior (CBT, REBT, Reality and Narrative)/Group practice</b> Corey Chapter 5; pgs 123 - 132
<b>Week 13: 4/17</b> Readings:	<b>Changing Behavior (Postmodern Approaches)/Group practice</b> Corey Chapter 5; pgs 132 - 140
<b>Week 14: 4/21</b> Assignment:	<b>Leadership and Co-Leader Skills/Termination Group practice</b> Paper Due at the beginning of class
<b>Week 15: 4/28</b> <b>Week 16: 5/1</b> <b>Week 17: 5/8</b>	<b>Group Facilitator Skills</b> <b>Group Facilitator Skills</b> <b>Termination of group class</b>

## **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