COUN 528: INTRODUCTION TO GROUP DYNAMICS AND PROCEDURES  
Summer 2015

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COURSE INFORMATION

Materials – Textbooks, Readings, Supplementary Readings:

**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 counseling. Leadership styles, techniques and roles are explored, and ethical issues related to group interventions are discussed. Prerequisite: COUN 510 or consent of instructor with concurrent enrollment in 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 or facilitation 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. become more conscious of their 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:
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 are 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**

**Group Papers**: You will write two (2) papers in which you will demonstrate the ability to apply knowledge of principles of group dynamics and processes in writing. You will begin by proposing a counseling group you might like to conduct in Practicum or Internship. You must have instructor approval of your topic before you begin the papers.

The first paper is a Literature Review in which you will cite and synthesize information from the literature related to your group topic. This paper will include references from at least ten journal articles, in addition to texts. Length for the literature review is a minimum of 10 pages, not
including the title page and reference pages. The paper must be typed and double-spaced using APA style.

The second paper is a **Counseling Group Plan**, which will include: (a) a brief description of the counseling group you are proposing, (b) screening and logistics, (c) a detailed 8-10 session plan for a counseling group in a school or agency setting; and (d) appendices containing group activities and resources. Length for this paper is a minimum of 15 pages, not including the title or reference pages. You must cite relevant references, using APA style.

In your session plan 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 goals will be identified for each member, and the opportunities for subsequent follow-up on each member’s progress.

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 happy to have absent. These “at-risk” groups of students are worthy of counseling, but frequently involve mislabeling or dual diagnoses.

Be certain your papers include all elements listed in the **Group Paper Guidelines** (included in this syllabus). **Samples of student papers will be made available.**

**Student Learning Outcomes #1 and #4**

In addition, the group papers prepare students for the CACREP-required group leadership experience during internship (COUN 552).

**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 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.*
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**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grading</th>
<th>Weight</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attendance &amp; Participation</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>15 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weekly Journals</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midterm Exam</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Literature Review</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group Session Plan</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

100%                      300 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 for contacting the instructor is email: Carmen.Salazar@tamuc.edu. In most instances you will receive a reply within 24 hours. If you are in need of support, please email and/or make an appointment to meet with me during office hours. 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. 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 sides. Use APA format to cite all references. Please correct typos and grammar. Use non-sexist language. Put your name and title of paper on a separate cover page for the final papers.

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 Dishonesty
"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 Closure Due to Weather
Check www.tamuc.edu 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:
6/9      Course Expectations, Introductions, Handouts, Active Listening
6/11     History of Groups
           Readings: Handouts #1, 1A; Corey Chapters 1 & 2
           Group Dynamics
           Readings: Handout #2; Corey Chapters 6-9

Week 2:
6/16     Leadership Skills
           Readings: Handouts # 7, 8, 9, 10; Corey Chapters 6-9
           Diversity-Competent Group Leadership
           Readings: Salazar: Diversity-Competent Group Leadership, in Salazar (Chapter 1, pp. 3-12); Corey & Corey: Attending to Cultural Issues in Group Counseling, in Salazar (pp. 215-220)
Week 2 (continued):

6/18 Changing Behavior
Readings: Handouts #11, 12; Corey Chapter 5
Activity: Midterm review
Self-Disclosure & Feedback
Readings: Handouts #3, 4, 5
Activity: Stockton Video – Early Development of a Group

Week 3:

6/23 Midterm Essay Exam

6/25 Review group session plan guidelines and APA style
Ethics; T-Group Practice
Readings: Handouts #13, 20; Corey Chapter 3
Assignment: Literature Review due (turn in paper and electronic copy)

Week 4:

6/30 Choosing Group Activities and Processing Group Activities; T-group practice
Readings: Dye: Matching Activities to Group Goal and Stage, in Salazar (Chapter 3, pp. 25-34); Jacobs & Schimmel: Processing Activities, in Salazar (Chapter 3, pp. 35-44).

7/2 Theories and Techniques of Group Counseling; T-Group Practice
Readings: Corey Chapter 4; Handout #21

Week 5:

7/7 T-Group Practice
Assignment: Group Session Plan Paper Due (turn in paper and electronic copy)
Activity: Stockton Video – Transition/Working Stage

7/9 T-Group Practice; Closing a group
Activity: Stockton Video – Working Stage/Termination
Guidelines for Group Papers

Group Paper #1 – Literature Review
Minimum of 10 pages (not counting title page and references)
Must be formatted in APA style (6th edition)
• See the “Resources” folder for APA style tips and samples

Here’s what I’ll be looking for in your literature review:
• Does it document your chosen topic 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 for the issue/problem discovered by others (practical things that help the client)?

Cover all information it takes to help a “rookie” group leader understand the topic and the kinds of interventions that have been successful.

What’s the most important info to include?
• You must read enough to find out
  o e.g., grief and loss - must have Kubler-Ross
  o e.g., children of alcoholics – must include roles children take on

Does your literature review include 10 recent journal articles, as well as books?

The references included in the “Resources” folder a good place to start
• Library trick:
  • On search engine, type in “review” and your topic of interest
    o e.g., “review” and “children of divorce”
  • Dissertations also a good source for literature reviews
    o You’ll find dissertations in the ProQuest database
• Use professional journals
  o e.g., The School Psychologist, found on library databases (Psych Info & ERIC)
  o Journal for Specialists in Group Work (ASGW journal)
  o Group Dynamics: Theory, Research & Practice (APA Division 49 journal)
• You might not find everything in full-text online; must go to library

Don’t just use the first 1 or 2 references you can come up with
***Synthesize the information; don’t list it serially (not a laundry list of facts)

Group Paper #2 – Counseling Group Plan
Minimum of 15 pages (not including title page and references).
Must be formatted in APA style (6th edition)
• See the “Resources” folder for APA style tips and samples

This paper includes the following sections:

Introduction and Description of the Group
• What kind of counseling group does your plan describe?
• In what setting will the group take place? (e.g., school or agency)
• Who are your intended group members?
• What issue are group members experiencing?
Group Logistics:
Logistics = how you will set up your group
How many members in your group? How long are the weekly sessions?
- Duration: you must allow enough time to cover the topic and for members to make changes
- Not a different “workshop” per week with you as the “star”
- End product of your group: members can do something different. What?
- Is the length of sessions sufficient for the number of members?
- How do you plan around (incorporate) holidays?
  - e.g., Children of divorce: the holidays are approaching; kids are living in two houses, how do you help the kids to prepare for the holidays?

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, frequency of the issue, intensity of the issue, duration of the issue, acceptance and/or completion of the issue

Group Session Plans:
Minimum 8 sessions – each session on a separate page

First few sessions: Group vs individual goals
- In an early session identify general goals, followed by session(s) identifying individualized goal for each member
  - Just allow time for individual goals
  - You don’t have to make up actual individuals and goals
Subsequent sessions:
- Coaching/role play/support for opportunity to transfer learning to real life – occurring in time for member to “change”

**Remember, this is your group plan – based on what you think are the best sources. You’re not presenting someone else’s “canned” group plan.

Appendices
- You can Xerox exercises, handouts.
- Print page number and title at top of page; include a citation (in APA style) at the bottom of the page.

Remember: You are designing a Counseling Group
- Be sure to make clear what distinguishes your group counseling proposal from group guidance or group therapy.

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