COUN 528: INTRODUCTION TO GROUP DYNAMICS AND PROCEDURE
Fall 2015
Wednesday 7:20-10:00

INSTRUCTOR
Erika Schmit, Ph.D., LPC-Intern
Assistant Professor

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OFFICE HOURS
Tuesday 2:00-4:30; by appointment (MPLX)
Wednesday 4:30-7:00; by appointment (MPLX)

TEXTBOOK(S)

Required:

Author.

Recommended:
Association.

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.

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).
COURSE OBJECTIVES include, but are not limited to, the following. Students will demonstrate an understanding of:

1. principles of group dynamics, including group process components, developmental stage theories, group members’ roles and behaviors, and therapeutic factors of group work; (6a)
2. group leadership or facilitation styles and approaches, including characteristics of various types of group leaders and leadership styles; (6b)
3. theories of group counseling, including commonalties, distinguishing characteristics, and pertinent research and literature; (6c)
4. group counseling methods, including group counselor orientations and behaviors, appropriate selection criteria and methods, and methods of evaluation of effectiveness; (6d)
5. approaches used for other types of group work, including task groups, psychoeducational groups, and therapy groups; (6e)
6. professional preparation standards for group leaders;
7. ethical and legal considerations related to group work; and
8. students will become more conscious of their personal growth through participation as group members. (6e)

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.

METHOD OF INSTRUCTION

Traditional lecture, group discussions, and experiential activities.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Attendance, participation, assignments, and classroom activities

All students are required to attend and actively participate in class. University guidelines regarding attendance policy will be followed. Due to the nature of this course, you should attend ALL classes but I do understand that unforeseeable circumstances may happen. Please plan for the 8 weeks in which we are participating in actual group counseling. Absences will not be excused during these weeks. If you cannot actively participate in the group, you should not be enrolled in this course during this semester. More than two absences will result in a letter grade reduction. Being excessively late to class and/or leaving early counts as an absence and will result in a possibility of a letter grade reduction as well. Students are expected to arrive to class on time and contribute to all discussions, activities, presentations, etc. Participation is a critical component to your learning outcome. Participation includes actively and respectfully interacting with the professor and your peers. This includes reading all course material before the class date in order to contribute to class discussions. Any student that noticeably does not participate in class will lose significant participation points. The professor will assign groups during the second week of class. Participation in these groups is key to your learning experience.

Activities outside of the classroom

In addition to participation in classroom discussions and activities, students are required to complete homework assignments. All assignments must be completed by class time on the due date. Failure to do so will result in a 10% deduction per day late. In addition to this, students should become familiar with APA guidelines. Students must adhere to APA guidelines on all assignments.

Other requirements

Students need to have access to and be proficient in navigating the Internet. Furthermore, students should check their Leo email often, and ensure that they have access to their e-college account. This is crucial, as myself and other members of the department periodically update these platforms on any changes or issues. Also, please frequent the department website as updates are posted here as well.
Communication with Professor

Communication with your professors is key to your professional growth. I am here to support and guide you along your academic journey. With that being said, I cannot help you if you do not communicate with me. Please make an appointment if you have any concerns or questions. I will be available to meet face to face but can also meet via skype. Because I teach in different locations, calls will be returned at my earliest convenience. Therefore, email is the best way to reach me. I will attempt to answer all emails within 24 hours, Monday-Friday. When emailing, please use your university email and address me with courtesy and respect.

Confidentiality

Because of the nature of this course, students are required to co-lead and participate in actual counseling groups. As a result, you and your peers may share personal information concerning the group topics. However, confidentiality is of the utmost importance for this course, and a responsibility of not only the professor, but also of you, as a counseling student.

Overview of Assignments

1. Group Proposal Paper (120 points)
   The purpose of this paper is to develop a counseling group that you would like to facilitate in the future. Choose a group population that interests you and create a 6-8 session group. This paper will include the following: (a) comprehensive literature review on the topic of choice; (b) logistics including selection of members, exclusion/inclusion criteria, length, and demographic information; and (c) complete 6-8 session plan outlining each group session. The literature review should include key components of the topic and setting, rationale behind the need for that specific group, any research on the specific population, and any successes/solutions with that specific issue. The session plan should be detailed and clearly flow from initial stages of group to final stages of group. In other words, walk me through the hows, whats, and whys of your group. Your proposal should include AT LEAST 10 references from peer-reviewed journals. Examples of these journals are provided at the end of the syllabus. You may also use books. The entire group proposal paper should be 20-25 pages in length. You must follow APA 6th edition guidelines.

2. Group Experience (20 points)
   All students will actively participate in groups during the second half of classes. Students will be (a) a leader, (b) a “client”, or (c) an observer. Students will have the chance to participate in all three of these roles at least once. You will each co-lead (2 students) a 60-90 minute group. The leaders will facilitate the group topic. All students who are considered group members for that day are required to participate (i.e., talk) in the group topic. Students who observe the group for that day critique both the leaders and group process. Group members will not be evaluated on content of session.

3. Weekly journals (80 points)
   Throughout this program you will experience a personal awareness journey of yourself and others. This is an important process to go through and understand. Journaling provides a medium for you to reflect on personal experiences as well as deepen your knowledge of the
group process. You will turn in a 2-4 page journal entry each week (beginning week 4). You will focus on the previous week’s group session. Prompts for your entry according to your role that week are below.

**Everyone**
- a) Summarize the group topic.
- b) Describe any techniques you noticed.
- c) What is one thing you learned from this week’s group?
- d) Please connect what you learned this week to your potential settings. Give examples.
- e) Discuss anything else that you noticed of importance this week.

**Group Leader**
- a) What was it like to be the leader?
- b) What were some challenges you noticed?
- c) What are some of your strengths as the group leader?
- d) What are some of your growth areas?
- e) What is one thing you would do different?

**Group Participant**
- a) What was it like to be a participant this week?
- b) Describe your comfort level with the group topic and group process this week.

**Group Observer**
- a) How involved/active was the group this week? Describe.
- b) Describe what you thought the group leaders did well this week?
- c) What would you have done differently if you were the leader this week?

4. **Final Exam (100 points)**
   The final exam will include information learned throughout the semester. It will include 100 multiple-choice questions.

5. **Course Reflection Paper (10 points)**
   Write a 1-2 page reflection paper on the course. Summarize your experiences in this course. Discuss what you liked and what you did not like. Talk about what you learned in the course as well as what you learned about yourself. Think about your personal and professional growth during this semester. Think about your strengths and growth areas.

6. **Participation and Professionalism (20 points)**

**Final Grading**
- Participation 20 points
- Group Proposal Paper 120 points
- Group Experience 20 points
- Weekly Journals 80 points
- Final Exam 100 points
- Course Reflection Paper 10 points
- Total 350 points

**STUDENT PERFORMANCE EVALUATION CRITERIA AND PROCEDURES**

- 90%-100%  A
- 80%-89%  B
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).

Students are expected to maintain integrity at all times. Plagiarism is presenting others’ work as your own and will not be tolerated in this course. Please remember to always cite authors’ work and never directly copy from any source. When in doubt please do not be afraid to ask.

Any act of academic dishonesty may result in a grade of “0” on the assignment and/or course and will be reported to the department chair.

As a courtesy to your professor and peers please refrain from using your cell phone in this class. If you have a family emergency, please step outside of class to address it. You are allowed to use laptops for professional use only (i.e., taking notes). You are not allowed to utilize your laptop for checking personal emails, Facebook, Twitter, etc. This is disrespectful to your professor and those around you.

APA Style and Formatting
All assignments submitted should follow APA 6th edition guidelines. I strongly suggest students to buy the APA manual. There are also many Internet sites that can be utilized if you are not familiar with APA style.

DISCRIMINATION FREE ENVIRONMENT
A&M-Commerce will comply in the classroom, and in online courses, with all federal and state laws prohibiting discrimination and related retaliation on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, age, genetic information or veteran status. Further, an environment free from discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression will be maintained.

ACCOMMODATIONS FOR 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
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).

Resources for Assignments

Counseling Journal List (not limited to only these):

- Journal of Counseling & Development (JCD)
- Adultspan Journal
- The Career Development Quarterly (CDQ)
- Counseling and Values (CVJ)
- Counselor Education and Supervision (CES)
- Journal of Addictions & Offender Counseling (JAOC)
- Journal of College Counseling (JCC)
- Journal of Employment Counseling (JEC)
- Journal of Humanistic Counseling (JHC)
- Journal of Multicultural Counseling and Development (JMCD)
- Journal for Specialists in Group Work
- Counseling Outcome Research and Evaluation (CORE)
- Measurement and Evaluation in Counseling and Development (MECD)
- Journal of Professional Counseling: Practice, Theory, and Research
- The Family Journal
- Journal of Mental Health
- Child and Adolescent Mental Health

Course Calendar

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Readings</th>
<th>Assignments</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9/2/15</td>
<td>Introductions; Course Overview and Expectations; Review of Syllabus;</td>
<td>Chapter 1</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Guidelines for Writing and APA; Introduction to Group Counseling</td>
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<tr>
<td>9/9/15</td>
<td>Being a group counselor; co-counseling in groups</td>
<td>Chapters 1 &amp; 2;</td>
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<tr>
<td>9/16/15</td>
<td>ACA Code of Ethics pertaining to groups; ethical and legal issues</td>
<td>Chapters 3</td>
<td>Group 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>9/23/15</td>
<td>Group techniques; developing theory</td>
<td>Chapters 4</td>
<td>Group 2; Journal 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>9/30/15</td>
<td>Stages: Forming the group</td>
<td>Chapter 5</td>
<td>Group 3; Journal 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Event</td>
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<tr>
<td>10/7/15</td>
<td>ACES Conference</td>
<td>No Class</td>
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<tr>
<td>10/14/15</td>
<td>Stages: Initial</td>
<td>Chapter 6, Group 4; Journal 3</td>
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<td>10/21/15</td>
<td>Stages: Transition</td>
<td>Chapter 7, Group 5; Journal 4</td>
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<tr>
<td>10/28/15</td>
<td>Stages: Working</td>
<td>Chapter 8, Group 6; Journal 5</td>
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<td>11/4/15</td>
<td>Stages: Final ONLINE COURSE</td>
<td>Chapter 9 ONLINE COURSE; Journal 6; ONLINE COURSE</td>
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<tr>
<td>11/11/15</td>
<td>Groups in schools</td>
<td>Chapter 10, Group 7</td>
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<tr>
<td>11/18/15</td>
<td>Groups in the community</td>
<td>Chapters 11, Group 8; Journal 7</td>
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<tr>
<td>11/25/15</td>
<td>No Class</td>
<td>Thanksgiving, Holiday</td>
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<tr>
<td>12/2/15</td>
<td>Closure; Review for</td>
<td>Group Proposal Paper; Journal 8</td>
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<td>Final Exam</td>
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<tr>
<td>12/9/15</td>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>Final Exam, Course Reflection Paper; Final Exam</td>
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Syllabus may be amended by the professor throughout the semester as necessary.

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


**TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS**

- To fully participate in online courses you will need to use a current Flash enabled browser. For PC users, the suggested browser is Google Chrome or Mozilla Firefox. For Mac users, the most current update of Firefox is suggested.

- You will need regular access to a computer with a broadband Internet connection. The minimum computer requirements are:
  - 512 MB of RAM, 1 GB or more preferred
  - Broadband connection required courses are heavily video intensive
  - Video display capable of high-color 16-bit display 1024 x 768 or higher resolution

- You must have a:
• Sound card, which is usually integrated into your desktop or laptop computer
• Speakers or headphones.
• *For courses utilizing video-conferencing tools and/or an online proctoring solution, a webcam and microphone are required.

• Both versions of Java (32 bit and 64 bit) must be installed and up to date on your machine. At a minimum Java 7, update 51, is required to support the learning management system. The most current version of Java can be downloaded at: JAVA web site http://www.java.com/en/download/manual.jsp

• Current anti-virus software must be installed and kept up to date.


Running the browser check will ensure your internet browser is supported.
  Pop-ups are allowed.
  JavaScript is enabled.
  Cookies are enabled.

• You will need some additional free software (plug-ins) for enhanced web browsing. Ensure that you download the free versions of the following software:
  o Adobe Reader https://get.adobe.com/reader/
  o Adobe Flash Player (version 17 or later) https://get.adobe.com/flashplayer/
  o Adobe Shockwave Player https://get.adobe.com/shockwave/
  o Apple Quick Time http://www.apple.com/quicktime/download/

• At a minimum, you must have Microsoft Office 2013, 2010, 2007 or Open Office. Microsoft Office is the standard office productivity software utilized by faculty, students, and staff. Microsoft Word is the standard word processing software, Microsoft Excel is the standard spreadsheet software, and Microsoft PowerPoint is the standard presentation software. Copying and pasting, along with attaching/uploading documents for assignment submission, will also be required. If you do not have Microsoft Office, you can check with the bookstore to see if they have any student copies.

• For additional information about system requirements, please see: https://secure.ecollege.com/tamuc/index.learn?action=technical

ACCESS AND NAVIGATION

Pearson LearningStudio (eCollege) Access and Log in Information

This course will be facilitated using Pearson LearningStudio, the learning management system used by Texas A&M University-Commerce. To get started with the course, go to myLeo. http://www.tamuc.edu/myleo.aspx
You will need your CWID and password to log in to the course. If you do not know your CWID or have forgotten your password, contact Technology Services at 903.468.6000 or helpdesk@tamuc.edu.

It is strongly recommended you perform a “Browser Test” prior to the start of your course. To launch a browser test, login to Pearson LearningStudio, click on the “My Courses” tab, and then select the “Browser Test” link under Support Services.

**Pearson LearningStudio Student Technical Support**

Texas A&M University-Commerce provides students technical support in the use of Pearson LearningStudio.

Technical assistance is available 24 hours a day/ 7 days a week.

If you experience LearningStudio (eCollege) technical problems, contact the LearningStudio helpdesk at 1-866-656-5511 (toll free) or visit Pearson 24/7 Customer Support Site http://247support.custhelp.com/

The student help desk may be reached by the following means 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

- **Chat Support:** Click on 'Live Support' on the tool bar within your course to chat with a Pearson LearningStudio Representative.

- **Phone:** 1-866-656-5511 (Toll Free) to speak with Pearson LearningStudio Technical Support Representative.

**Accessing Help from within Your Course:** Click on the 'Tech Support' icon on the upper left side of the screen inside the course. You then will be able to get assistance via online chat, email or by phone.

**Note:** Personal computer problems do not excuse the requirement to complete all course work in a timely and satisfactory manner. Each student needs to have a backup method to deal with these inevitable problems. These methods might include the availability of a backup PC at home or work, the temporary use of a computer at a friend's home, the local library, office service companies, an Internet cafe, or a bookstore, such as Barnes & Noble, etc.

**Policy for Reporting Problems with Pearson LearningStudio**

Should students encounter Pearson LearningStudio based problems while submitting assignments/discussions/comments/exams, the following procedure **MUST** be followed:

1. Students must report the problem to the help desk. You may reach the helpdesk at 1-866-656-5511.
2. Students **MUST** file their problem with the helpdesk and obtain a helpdesk ticket number
3. Once a helpdesk ticket number is in your possession, students should email me to advise me of the problem and to provide me with the helpdesk ticket number
4. At that time, I will call the helpdesk to confirm your problem and follow up with you

**PLEASE NOTE:** Your personal computer/access problems are not a legitimate excuse for filing a ticket with the Pearson LearningStudio Help Desk. You are strongly encouraged to check for compatibility of your browser **BEFORE** the course begins and to take the Pearson LearningStudio tutorial offered for students who may require some extra assistance in navigating the Pearson LearningStudio platform. **ONLY** Pearson LearningStudio based problems are legitimate.

**myLeo Support**
Your myLeo email address is required to send and receive all student correspondence. Please email helpdesk@tamuc.edu or call us at 903-468-6000 with any questions about setting up your myLeo email account. You may also access information at myLeo.  https://leo.tamuc.edu

**Learner Support**
Go to the following link **One Stop Shop**- created to serve you by attempting to provide as many resources as possible in one location. http://www.tamuc.edu/admissions/onestopshop/

Go to the following link **Academic Success Center**- focused on providing academic resources to help you achieve academic success.  http://www.tamuc.edu/campusLife/campusServices/academicSuccessCenter/