

S.W. 624: Interpersonal Practice with Groups

Fall 2014

Thursday 9-12 PM

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Office hours: Thursday and Friday~ 1:00 to 3:00 PM

Course Description

This course builds on the content presented in SW521 and the other foundation courses and focuses on the processes of intervention and individual change groups. Particular attention will be given to the recruitment and composition of group members, leadership structure of small groups, phases of group development, and such group processes as decision-making, tension reduction, conflict resolution, goal setting, contracting, and evaluation. Students will learn how to assess and address group problems such as scapegoating, member resistance, low morale, over-active deviance, etc. They will learn to employ a variety of intra-group strategies and techniques such as programs, structured activities, exercises, etc. Theories and methods consistent with the achievement of social justice through group work practice will be emphasized. The course will also consider how gender, ethnicity, race, social class, sexual orientation, and different abilities will impact on various aspects of group functioning such as purpose, composition, leadership, selection of intervention strategies, and group development.

Course Content

The course briefly reviews the history of social group work practice in the United States, and discusses the various kinds of task and individual change groups (e.g. teams, committees, consciousness raising, support, treatment, developmental, social action/social change, self-help, internet, etc.) found in contemporary social work practice. The course will also discuss how groups can be used to promote well-being, to prevent social problems, to treat existing problems, and to rehabilitate clients with severe conditions that are not amenable to more time limited interventions. The various factors associated with group effectiveness in both task and individual change groups will be presented, as well as those factors that have been designed to reduce the potentially negative and deleterious consequences of group interventions.

Various models of stages of group development in both task and individual change groups and in both open-ended and closed-ended groups will be presented. The implications for leadership styles, the kinds of group dynamics, and the kinds of group interventions in each stage will be discussed. Various structural properties of groups such as sociometry,

communication, norms, roles, status, power, and geography will be presented as they relate to the stages of group development. Group processes such as decision making, task achievement, conflict resolution, tension reduction, and contracting will also be related to stages of group development.

All phases of the intervention process from recruitment and composition to assessment, goal formulation, evaluation, intervention and termination will be presented. Special consideration will be given to how these phases may be modified to account for the various diversity identities racial, class, gender, ethnic, sexual orientations, and abilities of clients. Evaluation procedures, designed to determine the effectiveness of various interventions, that can be incorporated into small groups will be presented. Course content will include ethical issues that relate to the practice of social work with groups, and those elements of the NASW code of ethics that especially impact on group practice.

Course Objectives

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Describe the differences between task, individual change, promotion, prevention, treatment and rehabilitation groups and how these groups are employed in contemporary social work practice.
2. Assess the effectiveness of various kinds of groups and the various interventions that group leaders and facilitators utilize.
[EP2.1.6 Engage in research-informed practice and practice-informed research. ADV PRAC BEHAVIOR: Critically use evidence informed practices specific to group work practice.]
3. Critically apply in a practice setting a minimum of two empirically supported group work approaches.
[EP 2.1.3—Apply critical thinking to inform and communicate professional judgments. ADV PRAC BEHAVIOR: Apply a minimum of two evidence informed interpersonal practice theories specific to group work practice.]
4. Implement specific evaluation measures that can be integrated into monitoring and evaluation of group work.
[EP 2.1.10(d) Evaluation with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. ADV PRAC BEHAVIOR: Evaluate the efficacy of interventions specific to group work practice.]
5. Operationalize various models of group development in both open and closed groups and recognize how these various stages impact on group dynamics.
6. Identify common problems that emerge in group practice and intervene to resolve these problems.
[EP 2.1.7—Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment. Synthesize and differentially apply theories of human behavior and the social environment to guide clinical practice decisions.]
7. Plan and carry out various structured activities and group interventions that take into account the phases of group development and the special needs of group members.
8. Describe the impact of the key diversity dimensions such as ability, age, class, color, culture, ethnicity, family structure, gender (including gender identity and gender

expression), marital status, national origin, race, religion or spirituality, sex, and sexual orientation on the dynamics of group structure and process in small groups. *[EP2.1.4 Engage diversity and difference in practice ADV PRAC BEHAVIOR: Identify and assess the effects of race / ethnicity, national origin, gender, age, height, weight, marital status, socioeconomic status, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, disability, immigration status, faith / spirituality, veteran status and the joint and interacting effects of these identities on the client, worker, and client-worker relationship specific to group work practice.]*

9. Identify ways to match group intervention methods effectively and ethically with client problems, across diverse populations, cultural backgrounds, and sociopolitical contexts.

[EP 2.1.10 (c) Intervention with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. ADV PRAC BEHAVIOR: Match intervention methods effectively and ethically with the client system problems across diverse backgrounds specific to group work practice.]

10. Operationalize ethical codes (i.e. NASW Code of Ethics and other codes such as those espoused by AASWG, Inc.) as they apply to value dilemmas that arise in social work practice with groups.

[EP2.1.2 Apply social work values and ethical principles to guide professional practice. ADV PRAC BEHAVIOR: Apply and articulate social work values, ethical standards, and principles unique to interpersonal interventions involving diverse populations and settings specific to group work practice.]

11. Conduct an assessment of coping resources and strengths; biophysical, emotional, behavioral and cognitive functioning; intra-personal and environmental systems.

[EP 2.1.10 (b) Assessment with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. ADV PRAC BEHAVIOR: Synthesize information on clients derived from multi-dimensional, comprehensive assessment specific to group work practice.]

12. Identify the factors that influence group members' motivation to pursue change.

13. Demonstrate their ability to form worker-group member alliances and collaborations, communicate empathically, and help enhance the motivation for change, cultivate hope, and address ambivalence and internal and external barriers to change.

[EP 2.1.10(a) Engagement with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. ADV PRAC BEHAVIOR: Demonstrate the ability to form worker – client alliances, communicate empathically, help enhance the motivation for change, cultivate hope, and address ambivalence and internal / external barriers to change specific to group work practice.]

14. Identify one's own social and cultural identities and group memberships, and how these relate to working with diverse group members, colleagues, and other professionals.

[EP 2.1.1—Identify as a professional social worker and conduct oneself accordingly. ADV PRAC BEHAVIOR: Demonstrate professional use of self with client groups and colleagues specific to group work practice.]

15. EP 2.1.5—Advance human rights and social and economic justice Use knowledge of the effects of oppression, discrimination, and historical trauma of client group to

guide the development of socially just planning and interventions specific to group work practice.]

16. EP 2.1.8—Engage in policy practice to advance social and economic well-being and to deliver effective social work services. Communicate and advocate with stakeholders the effects of policies and policy changes on the lives of client groups.

17. EP 2.1.9—Respond to contexts that shape practice. Critically appraise social and historical era contexts and are proactive in delivering current and relevant services.

COURSE DESIGN

Our format will include some lectures, with questions and discussion, as well as organized class discussion around engagement in select activities. There will be a frequent focus on the application of concepts and critical analysis based on real group situations. In vivo small and large group opportunities will be offered to develop and facilitate application of group planning, implementation and application of EBP knowledge and practice skills will occupy the latter part of the course.

Relationship of Course to Four Curricular Themes

- **Multiculturalism and Diversity:** The key diversity dimensions have an impact on membership and composition, which in turn, influence various aspects of group dynamics. Leadership, status, sociometry, norms, conflict resolution, and communication in groups are dramatically affected by issues of diversity and must be accounted for by social workers in planning and facilitating various kinds of groups.
- **Social Justice and Social Change:** The history of social group work emerges from that part of social work's history concerned various reform movements in the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th century. Though therapy groups have emerged as the primary venue in the last two decades, there are efforts to redirect group work to its more traditional roots. We will examine contemporary conceptions of social justice practice in groups and the diverse ways this may be addressed.
- **Promotion, Prevention, Treatment, and Rehabilitation:** Though methods courses tend to emphasize treatment models, this course will examine at least one promotion and prevention model of groups and at least one rehabilitation model of groups. This course will also describe the similarities and differences between these kinds of groups.
- **Behavioral and Social Science Research:** This course will rely on group dynamic theory and on empirical research on the effectiveness of various group interventions and models. A goal of competency is evidence-based group work practice is emphasized.

Relationship of the Course to Social Work Ethics and Values

Social workers must understand when groups are contraindicated for particular clients and must be able to assertively intervene in group processes when group experiences are harming group members. Ethical issues such as client confidentiality, forced participation, and involuntary treatment are considered as they impact social work with groups.

Accommodations

If you need or desire an accommodation for a disability, please let me know at your earliest convenience. Many aspects of this course, the assignments, the in-class activities and the

way that the course is taught can be modified to facilitate your participation and progress throughout the semester. The earlier that you make me aware of your needs the more effectively we will be able to use the resources available to us, such as the services for Students with Disabilities, the Adaptive Technology Computing Site, and the like. If you do decide to disclose your disability, I will (to the extent permitted by law) treat that information as private and confidential. Also, please notify me if religious observances conflict with class attendance or due dates for assignments so that we can make appropriate arrangements.

Course Texts

CTools will house most required readings taken from the books listed below. Any other required readings will be provided in class. Although buying these books are unnecessary, consider owning them if you expect to work with groups

Corey, M. S. and Corey, G. (2006). Groups: Process and practice. 7th Edition, Pacific Grove: Brooks/Cole.

Furman, R., Rowan, D. & Bender, K. (2009). An Experiential Approach to Group Work. Lyceum Books, Inc.

Garvin, C., Gutierrez, L., & Galinsky, M. (2004). Handbook of Social Work with Groups; The Guilford Press.

Lee, Judith (2001). The Empowerment Approach to Social Work Practice, 2nd edition. Columbia University Press

Ringer, T Martin (2002). Group Action: The dynamics of Groups in Therapeutic, Educational and Corporate Settings. Jessica Kingsley Publishers, London and Philadelphia, ISBN 1 84310 028 2

Toseland, R. W., Rivas, R. F. (2012). An introduction to group work practice (7th ed.). Boston: Pearson/Allyn and Bacon.

Yanca, S. & Johnson, L. (2009). Generalist Social Work Practice with Groups, Pearson Education Inc.

If you are interested in activity/adventure/experiential-based group work, I strongly recommend that you purchase this manual

AIT Inc (2013) Adventure Activities Manual, 5th edition, AIT Inc Publishers

Assignments/Expectations for the course

1. **Active Engagement /Participation** (3 points per class session= 33 possible pts)
In my classes, I use many adventure and experiential activities to teach the lessons to be learned. Hence, **class attendance is important**. If you are unable to come to class on a specific day, please contact me (via email or c-tool message to create a written record) with the reason for the absence. If you miss any class sessions, it will lower your grade. We could work on a plan for making up missed class material to adequately complete the course (This might mean an extra paper that covers material from that class). **Active participation**, which to me means being **fully present** in class is expected. This can be demonstrated in several ways like:

participating in discussions, staying on top of readings, volunteering for in-class exercises, bringing experiences or problems from real life groups to class discussion, sharing group activities or techniques with class members, thoughtfully processing classroom experiences, taking risks in sustaining dialogue on difficult issues that arise in class, and sharing things you know that may help others learn about group work practice. (Engaging in activities that move you away- physically and mentally- from the room- like an extended break, being on the phone or computer unnecessarily, napping, gossiping, chatting- without explanation will demonstrate to me a person being **fully/partly absent** and will have consequences)

During the course of the semester, you will be asked to join a small group and throughout the term, when invited, will engage in group work membership. For some small group sessions, we may offer opportunities for the group to address a task; for others, perhaps addressing/simulating a treatment experience. We will discuss this more in class.

Required papers, totaling 30 pages in all, and accounting for 67 of 100 points, are described as follows:

2. **Observe an ongoing group in the community** (15 points)
 - a. For this assignment, arrange for a visit to an agency and sit in on an ongoing group
 - b. The group you will observe cannot be one you are running yourself or being run in your field agency.
 - c. An option- I help run a program at Fraser High School and there are monthly gatherings. You can come to one
 - d. The group could be a task group (committee meeting, Board meeting, Staff meeting, City Council meeting) or a treatment group (AA, NA, Social Skills group, Support group, etc)
 - e. Observe the following:
 - i. Logistics (setting, membership, purpose, frequency, etc)
 - ii. Process (communication patterns, record keeping, power dynamic, group culture, roles, - Refer to Toseland chapter 3)
 - iii. Strengths and areas for improvement (Include here thoughts on actions you might take if you had the power to help this group become more functional)
 - f. Write a **5 page paper** and submit to me (via CTools) on **Session 9**.

3. **Facilitate a session of the class** (15 points)
 - a. In pairs or groups of three (given 30 minutes), you will
 - i. Choose a date when you will facilitate our class
 - ii. Choose what you will do. Run it by me. Plan it. Do it!
 - iii. As a group, submit a **3-page paper** showing your rationale for choosing what you did, the agenda you created, and your intentions. In addition, individually, reflect on your experience and submit a **3-page reflection paper** that considers lessons learned from the experience, including what it

was like to co-facilitate with your peers, how the group managed the distribution of tasks, etc.; incorporating the session's readings is important; speak also to the learning you experienced in engaging in this exercise. Submit the week following your facilitation.

- iv. 15 points. You will receive 5 points each for the group submission, the individual reflection and the overall implementation of your plan.

Note: Available Dates:

- Session 4 facilitation (Sep 25); paper due Session 6 (Oct 9)
- Session 5 facilitation (Oct 2); paper due Session 7 (Oct 16)
- Session 6 facilitation (Oct 9); paper due Session 0 (Oct 23)
- Session 7 facilitation (Oct 16); paper due Session 8 (Oct 30)
- Session 8 facilitation (Oct 30); paper due Session 9 (Nov 13)
- Session 9 facilitation (Nov 13); paper due Session 0 (Nov 27)
- Session 10 facilitation (Nov 20); paper due Session 11 (Dec 4)

4. Reading Journals (12 points; 6 points per submission)

Complete two journals pertaining to the class readings.

1. Choose two class sessions- one from sessions 1-6, the other from 7-12.
2. Summarize at least two (2) required reading for the class session you select. In addition, read and summarize a non-required reading for that session (1-2 paragraphs totaling *no more than 2 pages*)
3. Summarize salient points from the readings altogether, including lessons learned, questions that may have been triggered by the readings, and any applicability of the lessons to your group practice
4. Submit these **4-page journal entries** by **Session 6 and 10**

5. Curriculum for a 6-8 week group (20 points)

1. Choose a preferred population
2. Imagine that you will be working with this group for 6-8 weeks. What might be your purpose for working with them? What type of group might you offer them?
3. Create a curriculum (nothing longer than an 8-week curriculum) for this population with this goal in mind.
4. Consider sequencing, the ebb and flow of the group.
5. Support your design with readings, class lessons, research, etc.
6. Submit this **8-page paper** by **Session 10**.

6. Class takeaways (5 points)

Come up with 5 lessons/take aways from the class experience. Consider anything and everything that occurred this semester in the class, something that perhaps made a big difference to your knowledge about groupwork; perhaps an experience that taught you things about yourself or others. No more than **3 pages. Bring to last class and also upload to CTools**

Notes on Grading

All assignments earn points, which means you could earn up to 100 possible points.

Attendance:	33 points
Observing a group:	15 points
Class facilitation:	15 points
Reading Journals	12 points
Group Curriculum	20 points
Class Take Aways	5 points

The final grading scale is:

**A+ = 100, A = 97-99, A- = 93-96; B+ = 89-92, B = 85-88, B- = 81-84,
C+ = 77-80, not passing = <77**

I strive to give substantive feedback on each assignment, and to use my comments as a way to continue to have a dialogue about what you are learning in the class. I may not give specific feedback about why an assignment didn't get a perfect score, say a 13 of 15. A paper needn't have any major flaws to earn less than a perfect mark. But if you ever have any questions or concerns about the grading, please contact me to talk more about it.

SESSION OUTLINE

Note: As a general rule, the first four articles (numbered) are required readings for the session. There may be additions to this required list. The rest are there for your perusal. Also, depending on class flow, this outline may need refining as the semester progresses.

Session 1- September 4 Introduction

This session will provide us the opportunity to learn more about who we are and what we expect from participation in this course. Also our opportunity to begin the process of creating the desired environment for us to do our best work!

1. Alvarez & Stauffer (2001) Facilitating the Experiential Wave

Session 2-September 11 History; Dynamics; Ethical Considerations

In this session, let us explore the history of, and the tradition that is group work! Let us also begin to converse about the factors of group work that drive it!

1. Ch 1: The group work tradition in SW- Furman & Rowan & Bender
2. Ch 1: Constructing Reality in groups- Ringer
3. Ch 1: Group Dynamics- by Toseland et al in *Handbook ...*
4. Gumpert, J. & Black, P. (2006) Ethical issues in group work: What are they? How are they managed? *Social Work with Groups*, 29 (4), 61-74.

Ch 1: Generalist SWP with Groups- Yanca & Johnson

Knauss, L. (2006). Ethical issues in record-keeping in group psychotherapy. *International Journal of Group Psychotherapy*, 56 (4), 415-430.

Fallon, A. (2006). Informed consent in the practice of group psychotherapy. *International Journal of Group Psychotherapy*, 56 (4), 431-454.

Lasky and Riva (2006). Confidentiality and privileged communication in group psychotherapy. *International Journal of Group Psychotherapy*, 56 (4) 455-475.

Smokowski, P.R; Rose, S; Todar, K; Reardon, K. (1999). Postgroup-casualty status, group events, and leader behavior: an early look into the dynamics of damaging group experiences. *Research on Social Work Practice*. 9(5): 555-574.

Brabender, V. (2006). The ethical group psychotherapist. *International Journal of Group Psychotherapy*, 56 (4), 395-414.

Session 3-September 18 Models; Purposes; Structure

Why group and for what reason? Let's explore the different models available to practitioners as well as reasons when a group is considered the intervention of choice

1. Kurland & Salmon: Purpose
2. Rose: CB GW Ch 7
3. Roffman: Psychoeducational groups
4. Wright- Use of Purpose in activity groups

Ch 2: Foundations of Generalist SWP- Yanca & Johnson

Chapters 11-12: The Empowerment Approach- Lee

Davis, L. E., Galinsky, M. J. & Schopler, J. H. (1995). RAP: A framework for leadership of multiracial groups. *Social Work*, 40(2), 155-165.

Masequesmay, G (2003). Negotiating identity in a queer Vietnamese support group. *Journal of Homosexuality*, Vol. 45, No. 2/3/4, 2003, pp. 193-215

Firestein, B. A. (1999). New perspectives on group treatment with women of diverse sexual identities. *Journal for Specialists in Group Work*, 24, 3, 306-315.

Marbley, A. F.(2004). His eye is on the sparrow: A counselor of color's perception of facilitating groups with predominantly white members. *Journal for Specialists in Group Work*, 29, 3, 247-258.

Debiak, D. (2007). Attending to diversity in group psychotherapy: An ethical imperative. *International Journal of Group Psychotherapy*, 57 (1), 1-12.

Brown, A. and Mistry, T. (2005). "Group Work with 'Mixed Membership' Groups: Issues of Race and Gender." *Social Work with Groups*, Vol. 28, No. 3/4, 2005, pp. 133-148;

Session 4-Sep 25

Beginning of Group

1. Jacobs, E. E., Masson, R. L, and Harvill, R. L. (2009) Group counseling. Strategies and skills. Chapter 5. Getting started: The Beginning Stage and Beginning Phase. Pg. 85-120.
2. MacGowan (2008). *A guide to evidence-based group work*. Chapter 3 and 4.
3. Ch 4 & 6: Leadership/Planning- Toseland and Rivas (2009)

Session 5- October 2

Group evolves

1. Ch 2: Internal Working Models- Ringer
2. Cohen, M. B. and Graybeal, C. T. (2007). Using solution-oriented techniques in mutual aid groups, *Social Work With Groups*, 30: 4, 41 — 58.
3. Gitterman, A. (2005). Building Mutual Support in Groups. *Social Work with Groups* Vol. 28, No. 3/4, pp. 91-106;

**** Assignment 2 due- Paper on your observation of a group**

Session 6- October 9

Squiggles!

Later stages of groups/Problem behaviors within Groups

1. Corey & Corey, Ch. 7- Working Stage
2. Doel, M. (2005). Difficult Behavior in Groups. *Social Work with Groups*, Vol. 28(1), 3-21.
3. Wayne, J. and Gitterman, A. (2003). Offensive Behavior in Groups. *Social Work with Groups*, Vol. 26(2) pp. 23-34.
4. Lindsay, J., Roy, V., Montminy, L., Turcotte, D. and Genest-Dufault, S. (2008). The emergence and the effects of therapeutic factors in groups, *Social Work With Groups*, 31: 3, 255 — 271.

**** Assignment 4 due: Reading Journal 1**

Session 7 –October 16

More on problem situations

More of middle sessions; Conflict; getting the work done:

October 23: I will be away at the AEE Conference

Session 8- October 30 Groups for Children and Adolescents

1. Bratton, S. C., Ceballos, P. L. and Ferebee, K. W. (2009). Integration of structured expressive activities within a humanistic group play therapy format for preadolescents, *The Journal for Specialists in Group Work*, 34: 3, 251 — 275
2. Tucker, A. R.(2009). Adventure-Based Group Therapy to Promote Social Skills in Adolescents', *Social Work With Groups*, 32: 4, 315 — 329
3. Malekoff, A. (2007) 'A Flexible Organizing Framework for Group Work with Adolescents', *Social Work With Groups*, 30: 3, 85 — 102
4. Colmant, S. A. (1999). Using the sweat lodge ceremony as group therapy for Navajo youth, *Journal for Specialists in Group Work*, 24, 1; pg. 55-74.

LeCroy, C. W. (2004). Experimental Evaluation of “Go Grrrls” Preventive Intervention for Early Adolescent Girls. *The Journal of Primary Prevention*, Vol. 25, No. 4, 457-473.

November 6: I will be away at the MASSW Conference

Session 9- November 13 Social Justice

1. Cohen, M. B. and Mullender, A. (2005). The Personal in the Political: Exploring the Group Work Continuum from Individual to Social Change Goals.” *Social Work with Groups*, Vol. 28, No. 3/4, pp. 187-204;
2. Donaldson, L. P. (2004). Toward Validating the Therapeutic Benefits of Empowerment-Oriented Social Action Groups, *Social Work with Groups*, Vol. 27(2/3), pp. 159-175.
3. Bagamoyo College of Arts et al. (2002) Participatory action research on HIV/AIDS through a popular theater approach in Tanzania. *Evaluation and Program Planning*. 25 (2002): 333-339.
4. Norsworthy, K. L. and Khuankaew (2004). Women of Burma Speak Out: Workshops to Deconstruct Gender-Based Violence and Build Systems of Peace and Justice. *Journal for Specialists in Group Work*, 29, 3, 259-284.
5. Jacobson, M. and Rugeley, C. (2007). Community-based participatory research: Group work for social justice and community change. *Social Work with Groups*, 30(4), 21-39.

**** Assignment 4 due: Reading Journal 2**

Session 10-November 20 Ending the Group; Transitions

1. Corey & Corey, Ch. 8

- Mangione, L., Forti, R. & Iacuzzi, C. (2007). Ethics and endings in group psychotherapy: Saying good-bye and saying it well. *International Journal of Group Psychotherapy*, 57 (1), 25-40.

**** Assignment 5 due: Curriculum**

November 27: Thanksgiving Holiday

Session 11- December 4

Final rituals, Evaluations

Rebmann, H. (2006). Warning: There's a lot of yelling in knitting: The impact of parallel process on empowerment in a group setting, *Social Work with Groups*. 29 (4)5-24.

Hallas, V. (2006) You don't always have to pick up your mess right away: How being messy can be really neat! *Social Work with Groups*, 29 (2/3), 175-194

**** Assignment 6 Due: Class Take aways**