THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN
School of Social Work

Interpersonal Practice with Groups
SW624: Fall 2018

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1. 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.

2. 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 will be discussed. Various structural properties of groups such as 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 and purpose of group.
The intervention process from recruitment and composition to assessment, goal formulation, evaluation, intervention and termination will be presented. Interventions 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 considered . 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.

3. 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.

3. Critically apply in a practice setting a minimum of two empirically supported group work approaches.

4. Implement specific evaluation measures that can be integrated into monitoring and evaluation of group work.

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.

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.

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

10. Operationalize ethical codes (i.e. the NASW Code of Ethics and other ethical codes such as the ASGW) as they apply to value dilemmas that arise in social group work practice.

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

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.

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.

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.

Your educational program is designed to accommodate the Council on Social Work Education educational policies (EP) relevant to social work generalist and advanced generalist practice. For this course (SW624) these EPs are listed below and linked to assignments used to evaluate the achievement of both course objectives and these EP standards.

- EP 2.1.1—Identify as a professional social worker and conduct oneself accordingly. ADV PRACBEHAVIOR: Demonstrate professional use of self with client groups and colleagues specific to groupwork practice.
- EP2.1.2 Apply social work values and ethical principles to guide professional practice. ADV PRACBEHAVIOR: Apply and articulate social work values, ethical standards, and principles unique tointerpersonal interventions involving diverse populations and settings specific to group work practice.
- EP 2.1.3—Apply critical thinking to inform and communicate professional judgments. ADV PRACBEHAVIOR: Apply a minimum of two evidence informed interpersonal practice theories specific to group work practice.
- 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.
- 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.

- EP 2.1.6 Engage in research-informed practice and practice-informed research. ADV PRAC BEHAVIOR: Critically use evidence informed practices specific to group work practice.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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, and help enhance the motivation for change, cultivate hope, and address ambivalence and internal / external barriers to change specific to group work practice.
- 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.
- EP 2.1.10 (c) Intervention with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. ADV PRACBEHAVIOR: Match intervention methods effectively and ethically with the client system problems across diverse backgrounds specific to group work practice.
- 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.

Reading Assignment per week:

Please note that the reading assignment is extensive some days more than others. Your job as a student in my class is to do the best you can. Please prioritize all of your goals and values in order to get the most out of this class in context of all of your responsibilities. I believe that you could select something that you find interesting enough to contribute in class without reading all listed when necessary. I will be grading you each week on this part so please read something for the day.

September 6, 2018:   Read: "Learning from Social Group Work Traditions" by Margot Breton pgs. 107- 119
Read *Handbook of Social Work with Groups*, "An Empowerment Perspective" pages 55 – 69 (also by Margot Breton)
Read DBT Skills Training Manual pages 3 – 23.
We will discuss in class

September 13, 2018:   Read: "Not for Women Only: Applying the Relational Model of Group Development with Vulnerable Populations" by Linda Yael Schiller pgs. 11-24
Read: DBT Skills Training Manual pages 127 – 137 and Mindfulness pgs. 151-160
We will discuss in class

September 20, 2018   Read: *The Journal for Specialists in Group Work* (33 (2), pages 179 – 198. "The medicine of coming to center: Use of the Native American centering technique-Ayeli-to promote wellness and healing in group work. " Read: *DBT Skills Training Manual*, Mindfulness, any amount of pgs. 161-230 & Chapter 3, pgs. 43-60.   We will discuss in class.

September 27, 2018   Read: *DBT Skills Training Manual*, Emotion Regulation any amount of Chapter 9. Pgs. 318-410
Read: *Handbook of Social Work with Groups,* "Group Work with Immigrants and Refugees" by Izumi Sakamoto and Sidonia Couto Pgs. 360 – 380. Read: Ortega & Faller, "Child Welfare", Vol.90, No. 5, pgs. 27 – 49.
          We will discuss in class

October 4, 2018   Read *DBT Skills Training Manual*, Emotion Regulation, any amount of Chapter 9
Read: *Social Work with Groups*, 29(4), pgs. 61-74 "Ethical Issues in Group Work: What are they? How Are They Managed?"
By Joanne Gumpert and Phyllis N. Black
          We will discuss in class

October 11, 2018   Read: *Handbook of Social Work with Groups*, "The Mutual Aid Model" by Alex Gitterman, pgs. 113 – 132.
Read: "Standards for Social Work Practice with Groups" by International Association for Social Work with Groups, INC. pgs. 1-18
          We will discuss in class very briefly.

Give attention to GUEST SPEAKER, Jim Svensson, LMSW

October 18, 2018   Read: *DBT Skills Training Manual*, Interpersonal Effectiveness any amount of Chapter 8.
Read: *Handbook of Social Work with Groups,* "Ethics and Values in Group Work" by Barsky and Northern   pgs. 74 – 92.

October 25, 2018   Read *DBT Skills Training Manual*, Interpersonal Effectiveness,
 any amount of Chapter 8.
Read: *Handbook of Social Work with Groups*, "Group Dynamics" pgs. 9-27
Read: *Handbook of Social Work with Groups*, "Cognitive-Behavioral Group Work" by Tolman, R.M. & LeCroy, C. pgs. 133.-151
          We will discuss in class.

November 1, 2018   Read: *Social Work with Groups*, 33(2), "Motivating clients in treatment groups" pgs.260-277.

Please give attention to GUEST SPEAKER,
Todd Favorite PhD.

November 8, 2018   Read: *DBT Skills Training Manual*, Distress Tolerance, any amount of Chapter 10. pgs. 416 -490.
Read: *Social Work with Groups*, 22(4):67-84. "Spirituality in social work groups: Practitioners speak out".   We will discuss in class.

November 15, 2018   ## Guest Speaker, Mika Handleman, PhD.
"Self -Compassion Group"

November 22, 2018   HOLIDAY THANKSGIVING NO CLASS

November 29, 2018   <mark>Paper Due</mark>   Distress Tolerance Read: "Difficult Behavior" by M. Doel, pgs. <mark>3 -21</mark>. Read: "Tackling Taboo topics", pgs. <mark>257 -268</mark> by Sarah Rubin.

December 6, 2018   Papers graded feedback given, Termination process in group.
 "Ethics and Endings in Group Psychotherapy: Saying Good-bye and Saying it Well" pgs. <mark>25 – 40</mark>. by Mangione, Forti, and Iacuzzi in International Journal of Group Psychotherapy, Jan 2007, 57,1.

Course Assignments for Grades:

(Three following Assignments equal 100 points)

#1. SW624 Required Assignment #1. Weekly contribution within the group milieu including review of reading assignment, review of previous class lesson and your opinion. 3 pts. Per wk.
 (Total of 30 will be max points for the term of 13 weeks).
#2. SW624 Required Assignment #2. Facilitate group as leader and get feedback. 30 pts.
#3. SW 624 Required Assignment #3. One 3 page reflection paper due November 29 for 40 pts.

Alternative for #2: Lead the group in a Mindfulness exercise and get feedback. `15 pts.`
            AND   Research and submit a DEI article to the instructor   15 pts.

In this section, an "A"= 94-100 pts.; "A-"= 90-93 pts.; "B+"= 87-89 pts.; "B"=84-86 pts.; "B-"= 80-83 pts.; "C+"= 77-79 pts.; "C"=74-76; "C-"=70-73;"D+"=67-69;"D"=64-66;"D-"=61-63;"F"=0-60

If you believe that you may need an accommodation for any sort of disability or learning issue, please feel free to let me know. If you have anything you would like me to consider in terms of maximizing your learning, please talk to me about it.

The Office of Student Services's Health and Wellness Program provides supportive services to MSW students which promote wellness, self-care, and maintenance of a healthy academic and mental health balance, as well as to increase disability awareness. Students may experience situations or circumstances that impede educational success and/or quality of life. Students may contact the Health and Wellness Advocates regarding any health, mental health or wellness issue(s). This could include need for advocacy and/or referral to School, university, or community resources, financial resources, or counseling centers. All meetings with students are strictly confidential and can take place in the School, over coffee, or locations where the student feels comfortable and non threatened. Contact the Health and Wellness Program via ssw.wellness@umich.edu.

 Please consult the SSW website for additional resources: https://ssw.umich.edu/student-life/health-safety.

Safety & Emergency Preparedness

In the event of an emergency, dial 9-1-1 from any cell phone or campus phone.

All University of Michigan students, faculty and staff are required to familiarize themselves with emergency procedures and protocols for both inside and outside of the classroom. In the event of possible building closure (i.e. severe weather conditions, public health notices, etc.) you may contact (734)764-SSWB (7793) for up-to-date School closure information.

Be Prepared. Familiarize yourself with the emergency card posted next to the phone in every classroom/meeting room. Review the information on the emergency evacuation sign (located nearest the door) and locate at least (2) emergency exits nearest the classroom.

If you are concerned about your ability to exit the building in the case of an emergency, contact the Office of Student Services and/or email ssw-ADAcompliance@umich.edu. Office of Student Services, School of Social Work | Room 1748 734-936-0961 For more information, view the annual Campus Safety Statement at http://www.dpss.umich.edu/. Register for UM Emergency Alerts at http://www.dpss.umich.edu/emergency-management/alert/.

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