



**Course title:** Interpersonal Practice with Groups

**Course #/term:** SW624, Sec. 001, Sp/Su '20

**Time and place:** Monday, 1-5pm

**Credit hours:** 3

**Prerequisites:** [SW521] or permission of instructor

**Instructor:** Dr. Robert M. Ortega, LMSW, PhD

**Pronouns:** He, him, his

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**Office hours:** M. 9am-12pm and by appointment

## Course Statement

### 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 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.

### **3. Course objectives and competencies**

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. 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.

#### **[ Competency 1: Demonstrate ethical and professional behavior.]**

3. Describe the impact of 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.

4. 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.

**[Competency 2: Engage diversity and difference in practice.]**

5. Identify ways to match group intervention methods effectively and ethically with client problems, across diverse populations, cultural backgrounds, and sociopolitical contexts and critically apply in a practice setting a minimum of two empirically supported group work approaches.

**[Competency 4: Engage in practice-informed research and research-informed practice.]**

6. Assess the effectiveness of various kinds of groups and the various interventions that group leaders and facilitators utilize.
7. Conduct an assessment of coping resources and strengths; biophysical, emotional, behavioral and cognitive functioning; intra-personal and environmental systems.

**[Competency 7: Assess individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.]**

8. Operationalize various models of group development in both open and closed groups and recognize how these various stages impact on group dynamics.
9. 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.
10. 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.

**[Competency 6. Engage with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.]**

**[Competency 8: Intervene with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.]**

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

**[Competency 9: Evaluate practice with individuals, families and groups, organizations, and communities]**

12. Identify the factors that influence group members' motivation to pursue change, and common problems that emerge in group practice and intervene to resolve these problems. **[Competency 8: Intervene with individuals, families groups, organizations and communities.]**

**4. Course design**

The format is lecture, with questions and discussion, as well as organized class discussion and activities. There will be a frequent focus on the application of concepts and critical analysis based on real group situations. Role play 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.

## **5. 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 concerning 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 empirical research on the effectiveness of various group interventions and models. A goal of competency emphasizes evidence-based group work practice.

## **6. Relationship 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.

## **7. Intensive focus on PODS**

Content on privilege, oppression, diversity and social justice are core to the successful engagement in course content relevant to groups. PODS manifestations in group dynamics, leadership and in relations between the group and external contexts will be highlighted throughout the course.

## 8. Class Requirements

### Text and class materials

The primary text for this section is Ortega, R.M. & Garvin, C (2019). *Socially Just Practice in Groups: A Social Work Perspective*. Sage Publications ISBN 978-1-4129-9510-8 (paperback). This text can be purchased at the University bookstore (e.g., Ulrich's)

- Reading assignments are identified in the syllabus and posted on CANVAS
- To fully engage in the course topic and become a competent and skilled social work practitioner, it is expected that students will complete all required readings.
- Assigned readings will be discussed in class in response to session questions designed to help organize and emphasize essential aspects of assigned readings
- Other readings (not contained in the assigned text) will also be identified and posted on CANVAS
- Optional articles: As new or previously undiscovered material emerges during the semester I may add it for additional reading because of its relevance to current discussions. I will make every effort to give at least a one-week notice.

### RELEVANT JOURNALS

The following journals are oriented primarily toward group research, practice and education:

*Group, The Journal of the Eastern Group Psychotherapy Society*

*International Journal of Group Psychotherapy*

*Journal for Specialists in Group Work*

*Small Group Research* (A combination of two journals: *Small Group Behavior* and *International Journal of Small Group Research*)

*Social Work with Groups*

## 9. Class schedule

### ***I. KNOWLEDGE BASE OF GROUPS AND GROUP WORK***

***WEEK 1 (May 11): Introduction to Social Work with Groups***

***WEEK 2 (May 18): Group Dynamics / Values, Ethics and Professional Guidelines***

***WEEK 3 (May 25): \*\*\*\*\* MEMORIAL DAY – NO CLASS \*\*\*\*\****

### ***II. ACHIEVING CHANGE THROUGH SMALL GROUPS & GROUP PRACTICE CONTEXTS***

***WEEK 4 (June 1): Group Work Practice, Diversity / Group Structure, Formation, Process and Development: Implications for Assessment and Evaluation***

**WEEK 5 (June 8): Leadership: Roles, Functions and Guidelines / Group Typologies & Task Groups: Foundation and Specialized ( *Required Assignment #1 Diversity, ethics and social justice in groups Paper Due* )**

**WEEK 6 (June 15): Group Dynamics and Leadership in Action**

### **III. PHASES OF GROUP WORK PRACTICE**

**WEEK 7 (June 22): Group Work for Treatment, Support and Mutual Aid / Launching the Group / Pre-Group Formation Methods (*Required Assignment #2 Group Dynamics Analysis Assignment Due*)**

**WEEK 8 (June 29): Beginning the Group**

**WEEK 9 (July 6): Groups in Beginning / Transition (*Required Assignment #3 – Assessment in Group Work Practice Due*)**

**WEEK 10 (July 13): Groups in Transition / Ending in Groups**

**WEEK 11 (July 20): Ending in Groups**

**WEEK 12 (July 27): Summary / Wrap-Up (*Required Assignment #4, Revised Assignments & Alternative Assignments Due*)**

### **Assignments**

In this section of SW624, there are four required assignments. One assignment is a project and/or essay on diversity, ethics and social justice in social work practice with groups. A second assignment is a structured group analysis based on a critical review of a media resource and application of group dynamic concepts. A third assignment is based on observing and assessing a “real” group. The fourth assignment is TBD (e.g., simulation workbook) or based on an arrangement between you and me relevant to some aspect of social work with groups. For example, it could focus on a proposal you would like to develop based on a target population and problem you want to explore (e.g., relevant to your field practicum or as a professional interest). It could also focus on developing a compendium of group activities (I have examples). Alternative assignments will also be provided.

Additional points will be assigned based on your own evaluation of your overall attendance and participation.

All assignments are to be turned in via CANVAS. Points may be deducted for each component that is turned in past the due date (except for requested revisions). The final date to turn in any assignment and revisions is Friday, August 2. Partial credit may be assigned to any assignments turned in on the last day that are incomplete since no opportunity can be provided for revisions.

**Required Assignments:**

**#1 “Diversity, ethics and social justice in groups” - June 8 (20 points)**

***This assignment tests your creative abilities and is designed to help you build the case for engaging in social work practice that is inclusive of diversity, ethics and social justice. This is your opportunity to consider your own “diversity” and core diversity and social justice practice principles as part of your practice framework. To complete this assignment you MUST include reference to each of the following areas. Your paper or project MUST be divided into FOUR sections as follows:***

***SECTION 1: Your own definitions (or representations) of diversity and social justice. Consider, for example, how your definitions or representations are inclusive of key diversity identities (consider 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) and their intersectionality. Also, consider how your definition includes values relevant to STITCHES (Solidarity, tolerance, inclusion, transformation / trust, cultural humility, empowerment, and shared leadership).***

***SECTION 2: Briefly discuss each one of the four dimensions of group dynamics (i.e., (a) communication / interaction, (b) cohesion, (c) social control, (d) group culture). Offer a “working definition” (a definition that you can offer if asked, that clearly reflects an understanding of each concept. For example, what is meant by communication / interaction?). For each definition, add a paragraph that clearly explains how diversity and social justice are relevant (For example, why are diversity and social justice relevant to an understanding of communication / interaction?);***

***SECTION 3: Discuss what makes a focus on diversity and social justice our ethical responsibility (e.g., Refer to our NASW Code of Ethics or IASWG Code of Ethics) and explicitly indicate how diversity, social justice and ethics are all related (e.g., How does the NASW Code of Ethics require diversity and social justice as important aspects of social work with groups?)***

***SECTION 4: Finally, as a summary, identify three to five KEY diversity and social justice practice principles that emerged as core to your work in group settings. These practice principles are ones you will maintain and are deeply committed to “no matter what!” For example, In reflecting on my understanding of the importance of social justice and diversity in groups, the three core principles I will commit myself to whenever I work with groups are the following: (1) I will \_\_\_\_, (2) \_\_\_\_ and (3) \_\_\_\_.***

***(Completing this assignment - whether paper or project - should not exceed 8 pages typed, double-spaced and proofread. If you choose to do a project, you are required to submit something tangible (e.g., powerpoint slides, photo display, poster, etc.), that captures the spirit of this assignment.***

**#2 Group Dynamics Analysis Worksheet – June 22 (20 points) [To be discussed in class]**

**#3 Assessment in Group Work Practice - July 6 (25 points)**

*For this assignment, you are asked to observe and assess one formal group session of your choice. The group could be a committee meeting, a field placement staff meeting, a treatment group (e.g., that you either observe or facilitate). You are expected to maintain anonymity of participants (i.e., do not use actual group member names or initials) and in observing the group, it must be of the kind that will allow you to complete each one of the following required tasks:*

**Task 1:**

Describe the group's (a) context (e.g., sponsor, full description of physical setting (Hint: a room diagram helps!), (b) purpose, (c) composition, (d) size, (e) frequency (i.e., how often scheduled to meet), length, and duration (how many sessions planned), (f) open vs. closed, and (g) type (treatment, task, psycho-educational, self-help / mutual aid, or some combination; and (h) session context (what's the session you observed about?).

**Task 2:**

Refer to Toseland and Rivas Chapter 8 reference on CANVAS: (a) chart and record each member's frequency of interactions (i.e., this will describe how you "measured" communication and interaction); (b) measure the group members' social preferences (i.e., the group's sociometry); (c) comment on your observation of the group's social controls and (d) offer a general view of the group's culture (Note: If the group you are observing is not conducive to continuous recording, identify a sampling procedure that best fits this task and briefly explain your rationale for the procedure you selected.); (e) comment on the charting and recording used both in terms of strengths and limitations; (f) on the basis of your observations, speculate on relevant aspects of the group's dynamics at the time you made your observations (e.g., were you able to identify distinct subgroups or patterns of interaction based on seating? Did your observations help you identify task and socio-emotional leaders within the group? Were there other roles that could be associated with particular members?)

**Task 3:**

In your observation, you should have identified aspects of the group that appear as strengths (that contribute to the group's success) and/or that appear challenging or problematic to the group's ability to get its work done or pursue its purpose. (a) Describe the strengths and/or concerns relevant to the group's functioning. If you've raised a specific problem or concern, use Toseland and Rivas Figure 8-6 (p.247) and select an appropriate intervention to address the level of problem or concern. (b) Offer your specific observations that you believe characterize the strengths of the group and/or suggest a plan for intervention (focused on the group as a whole, subset of members, an individual or the group in interaction with its environment) that you believe will enhance the success of the group.

*Your paper should be divided into three sections corresponding to the three identified tasks AND sub-tasks as indicated by (a), (b), and so on. It should be 6-8 pages in length (including charts, diagrams and graphs), typed, double-spaced and proof-read.*



**#4 Required Assignment (TBD / Workbook) OR Alternative Assignments (Parts A, B, & C – see below) – July 27 (20 points): [To be discussed with Dr. O]**

**Alternative Assignment Descriptions:**

Two of the following **three short assignments** can be used to replace Assignment #4. These assignments are designed to reinforce key learning objectives. They can be turned in any time during the semester with an opportunity for revisions if necessary. No revisions will be expected if turned in during the last week of class. Instead they will receive points commensurate with how much they conform to the assignment tasks (i.e., partial points may be assigned if the assignment is incomplete). **These assignments must be turned in no later than Monday, July 27 in order to substitute for Assignment #4.**

**Alternative Assignment A: Reading Summaries**

Provide **five reading summaries from different weeks** limited to a total of 3-5 typed, double-spaced pages summarizing required readings from the ones listed on the syllabus PLUS a one-paragraph synthesis of the readings in terms of lessons learned or “take-away” points.

**Alternative Assignment B: Annotated Bibliography of 5 articles relevant to your specific interests. This option is similar to Alternative Assignment #1 EXCEPT you will choose a topic specific to your own interests relevant to social work practice in groups.** You must provide a 2-3 page summary of your own 5 (five) different readings PLUS provide a one-paragraph synthesis of the readings in terms of lessons learned or “take-away” points.

**Alternative Assignment C: Group Dynamics Analysis** of one of the following: *The Breakfast Club*, *Freedom Writer’s*, or *Remember the Titans*. I have a template for the summary you are required to follow. I will consider another option if you have a similar example of individuals coming together as a group. (To be discussed in class)

**COURSE OUTLINE**

In the following outline, I have indicated required reading as a double asterisk (\*\*) and recommended readings by a single asterisk (\*). Articles designated (e) can be retrieved electronically.

**1. KNOWLEDGE BASE OF GROUPS AND GROUP WORK**

***WEEK 1 (May 11): Introduction to Social Work with Groups***

*Discussion Questions:*

- *What is a group?*
- *What makes groups an important focus for social work practice?*
- *What are “group dynamics”?*

***REQUIRED: Ortega / Garvin: Chapters 1 & 2***

**OPTIONAL:**

Andrews, J. (2001). Group work's place in social work: An historical analysis. *Journal of Sociology and Social Welfare*, 28(4): 45-65.

Forte, James A. (2009) Adding the "symbolic" to interactionist practice: A theoretical elaboration of William Schwartz' legacy to group workers', *Social Work with Groups*, 32: 1, 80 – 95.

Kim, EC (2012). Nonsocial transient behavior: Social disengagement on the Greyhound Bus. *Symbolic Interaction*, 35(3), 267–283.

Strauss, S.G., Parker, A.M., & Bruce, J.B. (2011). The group matters: A review of processes and outcomes in intelligence analysis. *Group Dynamics Theory, Research and Practice* (on-line publication), 1-19.

**WEEK 2 (May 18) Group Work Values, Social Justice & Ethics**

*Discussion Questions:*

- *What ethical issues are unique to groups?*
- *What makes diversity a relevant topic to consider in group work practice?*
- *What makes social justice a relevant topic to consider in group work practice?*

**Required – Ortega & Garvin: Chapters 3, 4, & 6**

**OPTIONAL:**

Gumpert, J. (2006). Ethical issues in group work: What are they? How are they managed? *Social Work with Groups*, 29(4), 61-74.

Forsyth (TEXT): Chapter 1: The Science of Group Dynamics (pp. 2-23) and Chapter 2: Studying Groups

Breton, M. (2012). Small steps toward social justice. *Social Work with Groups*, 35(3), 205-217. DOI: 10.1080/01609513.2011.624369

Dickey, I.m. & Loewy, M.I. (2010). Group work with transgender clients. *Journal of Specialists in Group Work*, 35(3), 236-245. DOI: 10.1080/01933922.2010.492904

Garrett, M.T, Brubaker, M., Torres-Rivera, E., West-Olatunji, C., & Conwill, W.L. (2008). The medicine of coming to center: Use of the Native American centering technique – Ayeli – to promote wellness and healing in group work. *The Journal for Specialists in Group Work*, 33(2), 179-198.

Ratts, M., Anthony, L., & Santos, K. N. T. (2010). The dimensions of social justice model: Transforming traditional group work into a socially just framework. *The Journal for Specialists in Group Work*, 35(2), 160-168.

**WEEK 3 (May 25): \*\*\*\*\* MEMORIAL DAY – NO CLASS \*\*\*\*\***

**1. ACHIEVING CHANGE THROUGH SMALL GROUPS**

**WEEK 4 (June 1) Group Work Practice, Diversity / Group Structure, Formation, Process and Development: Implications for Assessment and Evaluation**

- *What is the difference between structuring a group and group structure?*
- *What makes group formation important to the group's development?*
- *What is "group process"?*

**Required: Ortega / Garvin: Chapters 7, 9, 10 & 18**

**OPTIONAL:**

Forsyth: Chapter 3: Group Formation (pp. 51-73), Chapter 4: Development and Socialization (pp. 75-99), and Chapter 5: Group Structure (pp. 109-133)

Johnson, J. E., Pulsipher, D., Ferrin, S.L., Burlingame, G.M., Davies, D.R., Gleave, R. (2006). Measuring Group Processes. *Group Dynamics: Theory, Research, and Practice*, 10,2,136-145.

**WEEK 5 (June 8): Leadership: Roles, Functions and Guidelines / Group Typologies & Task Groups: Foundation and Specialized Methods (Required Assignment #1 Due)**

- *What do we mean by "leadership styles" and why is your leadership style important to know?*
- *What makes diversity and social justice important to consider in discussions of group leadership?*
- *Discuss the ways in which leadership in task groups differ from treatment groups?*

**Required: Ortega / Garvin: Chapter 5, 8 & 16**

Rubin, S. (2011). Tackling taboo topics: Case studies in group work. *Social Work with Groups*, 34(3-4), 257-269.

**OPTIONAL:**

Forsyth: Chapter 8: Leadership

Gerrity, D.A. and Mathews, L. (2006). Leader Training and Practices in Groups for Survivors of Childhood Sexual Abuse, *Group Dynamics: Theory, Research, and Practice* 10( 2), 100–115.

Klaussner, S (2012): Trust and leadership: Toward an interactive perspective. *Journal of Change Management*, 12(4), 417-439.

Ortega, R.M. & Faller, K.C. (2011). Training child welfare workers for cultural humility. *Child Welfare*, 90(5), 27-49.

Shechtman, Z., & Toren, Z. (2009). The effect of leader behavior on processes and outcomes in group counseling. *Group Dynamics: Theory, Research, and Practice*, 13, 3, 218-233.

Turner, H. (2011). Concepts of effective facilitation of open groups. *Social Work with Groups*, 34(3-4), 246-256.

### **WEEK 6 (June 15): Group Dynamics in Action: 12 Angry Men**

#### **III. GROUP PRACTICE CONTEXTS**

**WEEK 7 (June 22) Group Work for Treatment, Support and Mutual Aid / Launching the Group / Pre-Group Formation (Required Assignment #2 - Group Dynamics Analysis Paper Due)**

**REQUIRED: Ortega / Garvin: Chapters 10, 11 & 14**

#### **OPTIONAL:**

Emond, S. and Rasmussen, B. (2012): The Status of psychiatric inpatient group therapy: Past, present, and future. *Social Work with Groups*, 35(1), 68-91.

Harpine, E. C., Nitza, A., & Conyne, R. (2010). Prevention groups: today and tomorrow. *Group Dynamics: Theory, Research, and Practice*, 14, 3, 268-280.

Lietz, C. A. (2007) 'Strengths-based group practice: Three case studies', *Social Work With Groups*, 30: 2, 73 — 87.

Miller, R. and Mason, S.E. (2012): Open-ended and open-door treatment groups for young people with mental illness, *Social Work with Groups*, 35(1), 50-67

Powell, T. & Blanchet-Cohen, N. (2014). The journey of hope: A group work intervention for children who have experienced a collective trauma. *Social Work with Groups*, 37(4), 297-313. DOI: 10.1080/01609513.2013.873884

Rose, S. and Chang, H. (2010). Motivating clients in treatment groups. *Social Work with Groups*, 33(2), 260-277.

### **WEEK 8 (June 29) Beginning the Group**

- *What is the difference between self-help and mutual aid in groups?*
- *Is treatment in groups possible for everyone?*
- *What must be considered prior to launching a group?*

**Required: Ortega / Garvin: Chapter 12, 13 & 17**

#### **III. PHASES OF GROUP WORK PRACTICE**

**WEEK 9 (July 6): Groups in Beginning / Transition (Required Assignment #3 – Assessment in Group Work Practice Due)**

**WEEK 10 (July 13): Groups in Transition / Ending in Groups**

## **WEEK 11 (July 20): Ending in Groups**

## **WEEK 12 (July 27): Summary / Wrap-Up** (Required Assignment #4, Revised Assignments & Alternative Assignments Due)

### **1. Attendance and class participation**

**(Maximum 15 points).** In this interpersonal practice course, in-class discussions and participation in exercises are considered an essential part of your learning experience. In addition, some of the material considered essential to achieving the objectives of the course will only be presented in class. If unanticipated circumstances arise that prevent you from attending or cause you to arrive late or leave early, you must notify me as soon as possible. Each clock hour of class missed (whether excused or unexcused) results in the loss of 1 A&P point (i.e., one missed class equals a loss of 3 points). Missing more than two class periods requires a meeting with me. You may complete an article summary per hour missed. Optional assignments will also be considered to make up for missed class hours.

### **1. Grading**

Letter grades from A through E are given for class performance. Grades of A are given for exceptional individual performance and mastery of the material. The use of A+, A, and A- distinguishes degrees of superior mastery. B grades are given to students who demonstrate mastery of the material: B+ is used for students who perform just above the mastery level but not in an exceptional manner; B- is used for students just below the mastery level. C grades are given when mastery of the material is minimal. A C- is the lowest grade which carries credit. D grades indicate deficiency and carry no credit. E grades indicate failure and carry no credit. Due to the brief length of time a mini-course meets, partial attendance will likely result in a grade of E.

In this section, an "A" = 96-100 pts.; "A-" = 91-95 pts.; "B+" = 86-90 pts.; "B" = 81-85 pts.; "B-" = 76-80 pts.; "C+" = 71-75 pts.; & "C" = 70 pts. or below.

**Additional School and University policies, information and resources are available here: <https://ssw.umich.edu/standard-policies-information-resources> (Links to an external site.). They include:**

- *Safety and emergency preparedness*
- *Mental health and well-being*
- *Teaching evaluations*
- *Proper use of names and pronouns*
- *Accommodations for students with disabilities*
- *Religious/spiritual observances*
- *Military deployment*
- *Writing skills and expectations*
- *Academic integrity and plagiarism*

### Generic Weekly Checklist to Stay Organized

PRE-CLASS: Readings, Notes in response to guided questions

LIVE: Class Lecture / Group 1 Breakout - Group 2 Breakout / Check Back In

POST-CLASS: Follow-up