# Course Statement

This advanced practice course builds on content from previous foundational courses and focuses on the processes of group interventions with diverse client populations, across various client concerns and in a variety of practice settings such as healthcare, mental health, and other community-based settings. The focus of this course is on the development and utilization of group skills and interventions.

Particular attention will be given to the recruitment and composition of group members, leadership structure of groups, phases of group development, and group processes such as decision-making, tension reduction, conflict resolution, goal setting, contracting, and evaluation. Students will learn how to assess and intervene with group problems such as scapegoating, member resistance, low morale, over-active participation, etc. They will learn to employ a variety of intra-group strategies and techniques such as programs, structured activities, exercises, etc.

Interventions 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 various aspects of
group functioning such as purpose, composition, leadership, selection of intervention strategies, and group development.
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**Course Objective:** Upon completion of this course, students will be able to: 1. Develop and operationalize a working knowledge of the various types of groups (i.e. support, therapy, tasks, focus, prevention, rehabilitation, etc.), the stages of the evolution/development and life cycle of groups and the impact of these factors on group dynamics and group functioning. (EPAS 6,7) 2. Develop and use knowledge of the types and stages of groups to identify group processes to determine and demonstrate appropriate, effective interventions. (EPAS 6, 7, 8) 3. Recognize multiple factors including, but not limited to, composition, screening, format, contraindications, interventions and process elements when considering the development and/or use of groups as a client/population intervention. (EPAS 2, 6, 7, 8) 4. Demonstrate knowledge of group roles, dynamics, norms and communication styles and patterns and identity/utilize appropriate interventions to promote effective group functioning and desired group outcomes. (EPAS 2, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9) 5. Analyze the impact of and apply various types of leadership styles in facilitating group processes . (EPAS 1, 7, 8) 6. Demonstrate ability to effectively and ethically consider, plan and carry out a range of evidence-based/evidence-informed structured activities and interventions across diverse populations, cultural backgrounds, and sociopolitical contexts to address client concerns/needs in a variety of practice settings. (EPAS 1, 2, 4, 6, 7, 8) 8. Demonstrate ability to form worker-group member alliances and collaborations, communicate empathically, and help enhance client-centered motivation for change, cultivate hope, and address ambivalence and internal and external barriers to change. (EPAS 6,8) 9. Demonstrate sensitivity to interpersonal dynamics, voluntary or involuntary participation and social/cultural/contextual factors of both the group facilitator(s) and diverse group members which can both strengthen and potentially threaten therapeutic alliance and group functioning (EPAS 1,2,7) 10. Describe and effectively respond to the impact of key diversity dimensions for both the facilitator(s) and members of a group 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, and sexual orientation on the dynamics of group structure and group process. (EPAS 2,8) 11. Assess the effectiveness of various types of groups and various interventions utilizing specific evaluation measures that can be integrated into monitoring and evaluating group work. (EPAS 7,9).
Intensive Focus on Privilege, Oppression, Diversity and Social Justice (PODS)

This course integrates PODS content and skills with a special emphasis on the identification of theories, practice and/or policies that promote social justice, illuminate injustices and are consistent with scientific and professional knowledge. Through the use of a variety of instructional methods, this course will support students developing a vision of social justice, learn to recognize and reduce mechanisms that support oppression and injustice, work toward social justice processes, apply intersectionality and intercultural frameworks and strengthen critical consciousness, self-knowledge and self-awareness to facilitate PODS learning.

Group work is grounded in Social Work's historical involvement with various reform movements at the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th century. This course will examine the contemporary relevance of social justice practice in group work practice and diverse ways this may be integrated into social work practice in a variety of settings. Key diversity dimensions have an impact on membership and composition, which in turn, influence various aspects of group dynamics. Attention will be given to considerations regarding 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, and sexual orientation on the dynamics of group structure and group process.

Class Requirements

Text and class materials


Readings as assigned/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 reading content will be discussed in class and/or included in quiz material.
- Readings will be posted on Canvas in advance and may be flexible to change.

Class Schedule

YOU WILL FIND DETAILED CLASS SCHEDULE ON CANVAS. Since these sometimes change due to needed class modifications, only a brief outline is provided in the syllabus. The details of the schedule are outlined clearly in the MODULES on Canvas.
General Class Schedule Topics

**History and key core concepts**
Development; dynamics; ethics; types of groups; composition; Anti-oppressive and anti-racist frameworks (Integrated throughout but at least one session)

**Leadership Skills** (at least one session)
Evidence informed and group work approaches consistent with social work values (at least two sessions). While emphasis may vary, there should be inclusion of cognitive-behavioral group work, mutual aid models and models that promote social justice.

**Planning groups** (one session)
Importance of purpose; Components of group proposals; Promoting and gaining support for group work services

**Beginning stages of groups** (one session)
First sessions; Goal setting and motivation

**Middle stages of groups** (one session)
Deepening process and goal progress; Dealing with group problems and concerns

**Ending Stages** (one session)

**Specific groups or applications** (one to three sessions)
Groups for specific age groups; groups in integrated health, mental health and substance abuse settings

**Class Assignment**

Please review CANVAS for assignment information and details.

**Class Recording and Course Materials**

Additional information on class recordings can be found the Recording and Privacy Concerns FAQ:

Audio and video recording of in-class lectures and discussions is prohibited without the advance written permission of the instructor. Students with an approved accommodation from the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities permitting the recording of class meetings must present documentation to the instructor in advance of any recording being done. The instructor reserves the right to disallow recording for a portion of any class time where privacy is a special concern. If the instructor chooses to record a class, they will decide which classes, if any, are recorded, what portion of each class is recorded, and whether a recording is made available on the course management website. On days when classes are recorded, students will be notified a recording is occurring. Class recordings and course materials may not be reproduced,
a. COVID-19 Statement

For the safety of all students, faculty, and staff on campus, it is important for each of us to be mindful of safety measures that have been put in place for our protection. Your participation in this course is conditional upon your adherence to all safety measures mandated by the state of Michigan and the University, including properly wearing a face covering in class and compliance with the University COVID-19 Vaccination Policy. Other applicable and additional safety measures may be described in the Campus Maize & Blueprint. Your ability to participate in this course may be impacted by failure to comply with campus safety measures. Individuals seeking to request an accommodation related to the face covering requirement under the Americans with Disabilities Act should contact the Office for Institutional Equity and those seeking an exemption related to the vaccination requirement should submit an exemption request through WolverineAccess. I also encourage you to review the Statement of Student Rights and Responsibilities and the COVID-related Addendum to the Statement of Student Rights and Responsibilities.

b. Health-Related Class Absences

Please evaluate your own health status regularly and refrain from attending class and coming to campus if you are ill. You are encouraged to seek appropriate medical attention for treatment. School of Social Work students who miss class due to illness of any kind will be given opportunities to access course materials online or provided with alternative learning opportunities. Please notify me by email about your absence as soon as practical, so that I can make accommodations. Please note that documentation (a doctor’s note) for medical excuses is not required.

Additional School and University policies, information and resources are available here: https://ssw.umich.edu/standard-policies-information-resources. 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

Videos
There is limited availability through the library for videos that can be used for group demonstrations for social group work practice. Here is a list of some that have a good fit for this class.

**Mindfulness CBT group for young adults** *(Links to an external site.)*
This video is about 3 hours long. Condenses three sessions. Good chance to see a real group progress with a group of real and diverse young adults in a mindfulness based Cognitive Behavioral Group. There is also commentary and discussion with the facilitators. A good example of consideration of group processes in addition to the techniques themselves.

**Mindfulness CBT with Adults** *(Links to an external site.)*
This video is about 2 1/2 hours long. The group is mainly interns and helping professionals so the process is impacted by that and not as realistic as the young adult version. The facilitators reflect on the sessions and on the group process as well as demonstrating mindfulness techniques.

**Exploring Developmental Issues with a Multicultural Group of 8 graders** *(Links to an external site.)*
2012. Shows 6 full sessions with group members. Good for illustration of group stages, use of activities, opening and deepening discussions about race, gender. The facilitators, a black man and white woman, debrief each session with each other and are open about leaving in errors and missteps which is very helpful for modeling self-reflection in group work. Six hours in total.

**Leading Counseling Groups with Adults**