

**THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN  
STEVE HICKS SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK**

**Course Number:** SW 333

**Unique Number:** 60580

**Semester:** Spring 2019

**Meeting Time/Place:** Tuesdays/Thursdays  
9:30 – 11:00 a.m.  
Room SSW 2.116

**Instructor:** Audrey Hai

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**Office:** n/a

**Office Phone:** n/a

**Office Hours:** By appointment

**SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE WITH GROUPS**

**I. STANDARDIZED COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course in the practice sequence focuses on developing group leaders who possess both an understanding of group dynamics and effective leadership skills. The foundation of the course is social work values and the ethical decision-making process, as illuminated by the NASW Code of Ethics. The content encompasses both task and treatment groups utilizing an ecosystems developmental framework. The course emphasizes understanding, affirming, and respecting groups with diverse backgrounds, including (but not limited to) race, ethnicity, culture, class, gender, sexual orientation, religion, physical or mental ability, age, and national origin. Social work group facilitation is taught utilizing empirically-based theories and interventions to achieve client goals. Students will know how to evaluate the effectiveness of group interventions.

This course carries the Ethics flag. Ethics courses are designed to equip you with skills that are necessary for making ethical decisions in your adult and professional life. You should therefore expect a substantial portion of your grade to come from assignments involving ethical issues and the process of applying ethical reasoning to real-life situations.

**II. STANDARDIZED COURSE OBJECTIVES**

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

1. Demonstrate an understanding of social group work and practice related to the strengths, capacities and resources of individuals within groups.
2. Develop leadership skills with groups in order to help alleviate critical social problems and enhance group well-being.
3. Develop skills in identifying group members' issues, problems, needs, resources, and assets within a framework of group processes, dynamics, and developmental stages.
4. Understand and apply basic concepts of task-oriented group work, including recruiting and selecting members, leadership, group decision making and problem solving, running an effective meeting, and evaluation of task groups.

5. Understand and apply basic concepts of treatment groups, including group formation, facilitation, and termination (assessment, intervention, and evaluation).
6. Develop skills in identifying, analyzing and implementing empirically based group interventions and evaluating group effectiveness.
7. Develop tools and techniques for understanding, affirming, and respecting group members from diverse backgrounds, distinguished by characteristics including (but not limited to) race, ethnicity, culture, class, gender, sexual orientation, religion, physical or mental ability, age, and national origin.
8. Explore what is involved in making real life ethical choices, establishing a professional self, applying social work values and utilizing the ethical decision making process, as illuminated by the NASW Code of Ethics, to social work with groups.
9. Demonstrate an understanding of the pursuit of social and economic justice including group/community strategies to combat discrimination, oppression, and economic deprivation for individuals and families.

### **III. TEACHING METHODS**

To foster a stimulating, creative, and collaborative learning community and to engage students with different learning styles, this course will be taught using a variety of methods such as lectures, discussion, audiovisual materials, group exercises, guest speakers, group presentations, readings, and assigned learning activities in the community. Students are expected to complete the reading assignments prior to each class and to dive deeper into topics during classroom discussions, activities, and experiential group exercises.

### **IV. REQUIRED TEXT**

Corey, M. Schneider, Corey, G. and Corey, C. (2014). *Groups: Process and Practice*. (9th ed.). Belmont, CA.: Brooks/Cole.

Additional required weekly readings and handouts will be posted on Canvas.

### **V. COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

Students will be required to complete all the assignments listed below. Detailed assignment instructions will be posted on Canvas and will be discussed in class. If students have questions regarding assignments, please speak with the instructor in class, during office hours, or send an email to [audreyhai@utexas.edu](mailto:audreyhai@utexas.edu). All written assignments will be graded on depth and quality of required content, creativity and critical thinking skills, overall professionalism and quality of writing. All students are required to complete a grading sheet that is to be turned in with each written assignment (except for weekly learning reflections) to foster their skill and comfort in self-evaluation – a critical component of practice evaluation.

## **Assignments**

Ten learning & self-care reflections- (20%)

Learning & self-care final presentation- 5/2 and 5/7 (5%)

Experiential group exercise paper- (5%)

Group exercise demonstration + discussion- (10%)

Assessment of small group experience paper- due 5/9 12pm (25%)

Community group observation paper- due 3/25 12pm (25%)

Researched role play- (10%)

### **1. Learning & Self-Care Reflections- 25%**

Over the course of the semester, students will cultivate a self-care practice. They are encouraged to come up with a regular practice that supports their own mental health and their ability to best care for their clients. Students will submit a total of 10 reflections (on both their learning and self-care practice) over the course of the semester. Each reflection is worth 2 point. The reflections should be 1-2 pages (typed, double spaced, Times New Roman 12-point font, 1 inch margins). The reflections are meant to inspire critical thinking, integration of learning materials and to foster the practice of professional journaling, which will be an integral part of the field practicum course.

Students will focus their reflections on three areas:

1. What I did this week for self-care;
2. What I learned from this week's readings;
3. What I learned from this week's classes and/or assignment activities.

Reflections are usually due on a Saturday at 11:59pm on Canvas. Students who do not attend the classes that week cannot write about what they learned from the classes and will as a result lose 1 point for that submission.

In the last two classes, each student will give a 5-minute presentation to summarize what she/he has learned from this class and from their semester long self-care project. The presentation is worth 5 points.

### **2 Experiential Exercise Assignment 40%**

Each student will be assigned to an ongoing small group. The purpose of this group is to help students integrate course material and apply theory to practice – through collaboration on class activities, discussion, and assignments.

For the experiential exercise assignment:

- Each member of the small group should identify an exercise or activity that relates to the particular topic assigned to one's small group.
  - Your group will identify an exercise to demonstrate for the entire class on the assigned date.
  - Following the demonstration, your group will lead a discussion with the class about the value and applicability of the exercise by developing 4-5 questions to generate class discussion about the exercise. The exercise and discussion should take approximately 30-40 minutes in total.
  - Your group is also responsible for developing a written evaluation form in order to receive peer feedback on the experience.
  - Your group will schedule and hold a de-briefing session for your group to discuss the experience and review the evaluations.
  - Each group member is required to submit a critical analysis of your small group experience in 6-9 double-spaced, carefully proofread pages.
- Detailed assignment instructions will be posted on Canvas.

Experiential group exercise paper 5%

Demonstration + discussion 10%

Assessment of small group experience 25%

### **3 Community Group Observation Paper 25% (due 3/25)**

Each student will observe one community support group and write a paper assessing this experience through 1) the lens of a group worker, and 2) its potential influence on one's personal/professional aspirations. This assignment provides students with the opportunity to practice professional networking skills, represent the Steve Hicks School of Social Work, and to learn from workers in the field. The paper should be 5 pages minimum (typed, double spaced, Times New Roman 12-point font, 1 inch margins). Detailed assignment instructions will be posted on Canvas.

Students will choose a group in the community that serves populations commonly cared for by the social work profession, but the group does not have to be facilitated by a social worker. By February 12th, each student will provide the instructor with details about the group they will observe including the type of group and contact information for the facilitator. After receiving approval from the instructor, each student will reach out to the community group contact to seek permission to observe the selected group.

### **4 Researched Role Play- 10%**

Each small group will role play a treatment group in front of class utilizing specific theoretical frameworks. Students will alternate in the leadership role to demonstrate their practice behaviors. Each group will reflect adherence to social work values and ethics, and application to a specific (child, adolescent, adult, elderly or family group) population. The groups should target a population, which is diverse, at-risk, and/or disadvantaged. The session should demonstrate

techniques appropriate to the “middle” group developmental stage and the developmental life cycle of the treatment population. Detailed assignment instructions will be posted on Canvas.

## **VI. GRADING SCALE**

94.0 and Above	A
90.0 to 93.999	A-
87.0 to 89.999	B+
84.0 to 86.999	B
80.0 to 83.999	B-
77.0 to 79.999	C+
74.0 to 76.999	C
70.0 to 73.999	C-
67.0 to 69.999	D+
64.0 to 66.999	D
60.0 to 63.999	D-
Below 60.0	F

## **VII. CLASS POLICIES**

### **Classroom Courtesy**

As a courtesy to the class that meets after our class, please dispose of trash and return the chairs and desks to rows or some organized arrangement.

### **Attendance and Participation**

Attendance and participation for the full class is expected for all students. Repeated late arrivals to class may be considered as an absence. Classroom exercises, discussions, role plays, guest speakers and other class experiential exercises are essential for the students’ professional learning and continued development of self awareness. This form of learning cannot be “made up” once missed. Consequently 1 points will be deducted for any missed classes. Students are to notify the instructor prior to class by email if they cannot attend class due to an illness or emergency. In addition, the instructor reserves the right to add or deduct up to 5 points to students’ final point total based on the overall quality of their classroom participation during the semester.

### **Papers**

Students are expected to produce high quality work in terms of appearance, writing style and content. Points will be deducted for errors, misspellings, incorrect grammar, poor organization and formatting, repetition of information, and inferior word processing. When using information from other sources, references and bibliography should conform to the current APA style citation. Students are encouraged to consult with the Undergraduate Writing Center at

<http://uwc.utexas.edu> (512) 471-6222 for assistance with any writing assignments. Plagiarism is a serious violation of university rules and will be dealt with according to university policy.

### **Time Management**

Assignments will be penalized 5 points per day that they are late. Contact the instructor before the assignment is due if other arrangements need to be made due to an emergency.

## **VIII. UNIVERSITY POLICIES**

**THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS HONOR CODE.** The core values of The University of Texas at Austin are learning, discovery, freedom, leadership, individual opportunity, and responsibility. Each member of the university is expected to uphold these values through integrity, honesty, trust, fairness, and respect toward peers and community.

**PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT AND CIVILITY IN THE CLASSROOM.** The professor expects students to act as professionals in class. This means students should arrive on time for class, be prepared to participate in the class discussion, and show respect for one another's opinions. A course brings together a group of diverse individuals with various backgrounds. Students are influenced and shaped by such factors as ethnicity, gender, sex, physical abilities, religious and political beliefs, national origins, and sexual orientations, among others. We expect to learn from each other in an atmosphere of positive engagement and mutual respect. Social Work also deals with complex and controversial issues. These issues may be challenging and uncomfortable, and it would be impossible to offer a substantive classroom experience that did not include potentially difficult conversations relating to challenging issues. In this environment we will be exposed to diverse ideas and opinions, and sometimes we will not agree with the ideas expressed by others. Nevertheless, the professor requires that students engage one another with civility, respect, and professionalism.

**UNANTICIPATED DISTRESS.** Students may experience unexpected and/or distressing reactions to course readings, videos, conversations, and assignments. If so, students are encouraged to inform the professor. The professor can be responsive and supportive regarding students' participation in course assignments and activities, but students are responsible for communicating clearly what kind of support is desired. If counseling is needed, students may contact a service provider of their choosing, including the UT Counseling Center at 512-471-3515 or online at <https://cmhc.utexas.edu/>.

**POLICY ON SOCIAL MEDIA AND PROFESSIONAL COMMUNICATION.** Public social networks are not private. Even when open only to approved or invited members, users cannot be certain that privacy will exist among the general membership of sites. If social work students

choose to participate in such forums, please assume that anything posted can be seen, read, and critiqued. What is said, posted, linked to, commented on, uploaded, subscribed to, etc., can be accessed and archived, posing potential harm to professional reputations and prospective careers.

Social work students who use social media (e.g. Facebook, Twitter, Instagram) and other forms of electronic communication (e.g. blogs) must be mindful of how their communication may be perceived by clients, colleagues, faculty, and others. Social work students are expected to make every effort to minimize material which could be considered inappropriate for a professional social worker in training. Because of this, social work students are advised to manage security settings at their most private levels and avoid posting information/photos or using any language that could jeopardize their professional image.

Students are asked to consider the amount of personal information posted on these sites and are obliged to block any client access to involvement in the students' social networks. Client material should not be referred to in any form of electronic media, including *any* information that might lead to the identification of a client or compromise client confidentiality in *any* way.

Additionally, students must critically evaluate any material that is posted regarding community agencies and professional relationships, as certain material could violate the standards set by the School of Social Work, the Texas Code of Conduct for Social Workers, and/or the NASW Code of Ethics.

Social work students should consider that they will be representing professional social work practice as well as The University of Texas at Austin School of Social Work program while in the classroom, the university community, and the broader area communities.

**POLICY ON SCHOLASTIC DISHONESTY.** Students who violate University rules on scholastic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary penalties, including the possibility of failure in the course and/or dismissal from the University. Since such dishonesty harms the individual, all students, and the integrity of the University, policies on scholastic dishonesty will be strictly enforced. For further information, the student may refer to the Web Site of the Student Judicial Services, Office of the Dean of Students: <http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/sjs/>.

**USE OF COURSE MATERIALS.** The materials used in this course, including, but not limited to exams, quizzes, and homework assignments, are copyright protected works. Any unauthorized duplication of the course materials is a violation of federal law and may result in disciplinary action being taken against the student. Additionally, the sharing of course materials without the specific, express approval of the professor may be a violation of the University's Student Honor Code and an act of academic dishonesty, which could result in further disciplinary action. This sharing includes, among other things, uploading class materials to websites for the purpose of distributing those materials to other current or future students.

**DOCUMENTED DISABILITY STATEMENT.** Any student who requires special accommodations must obtain a letter that documents the disability from the Services for Students with Disabilities area of the Division of Diversity and Community Engagement (471- 6259 voice or 471-4641 TTY for users who are deaf or hard of hearing). A student should present the letter to the professor at the beginning of the semester so that needed accommodations can be discussed and followed. The student should remind the professor of any testing accommodations no later than five business days before an exam. For more information, visit:<http://diversity.utexas.edu/disability/>.

**RELIGIOUS HOLIDAYS.** By UT Austin policy, students must notify the professor of a pending absence at least fourteen days prior to the date of observance of a religious holy day. If the student must miss a class, examination, work assignment, or project in order to observe a religious holy day, the professor will give the student an opportunity to complete the missed work within a reasonable time after the absence.

**TITLE IX REPORTING. TITLE IX REPORTING.** In accordance with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, the University of Texas at Austin is committed to maintaining a learning environment that is free from discriminatory conduct based on gender. Faculty, field instructors, staff, and/or teaching assistants in their supervisory roles are mandated reporters of incidents of sex discrimination, sexual harassment, sexual violence, stalking, interpersonal violence, or any other forms of sexual misconduct. Students who report such incidents will be informed of University resources. Incidents will be reported to the University's Title IX Coordinator and/or the Title IX Liaison for the SHSSW, Professor Tanya Voss. Students, faculty and staff may contact Professor Voss to report incidents or to obtain information. Further information, including student resources related to Title IX, may also be found at <http://socialwork.utexas.edu/dl/files/academic-programs/other/qrg-sexualharassment.pdf>.

**CAMPUS CARRY POLICY.** The University's policy on concealed fire arms may be found here:<https://campuscarry.utexas.edu>. You also may find this information by accessing the Quick Links menu on the School's website.

**CLASSROOM CONFIDENTIALITY.** Information shared in class about agencies, clients, and personal matters is considered confidential per the NASW Code of Ethics on educational supervision and is protected by regulations of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) as well. As such, sharing this information with individuals outside of the educational context is not permitted. Violations of confidentiality could result in actions taken according to the policies and procedure for review of academic performance located in sections 3.0, 3.1, and 3.2 of the Standards for Social Work Education.



**USE OF E-MAIL FOR OFFICIAL CORRESPONDENCE TO STUDENTS.** Email is recognized as an official mode of university correspondence; therefore, students are responsible for reading their email for university and course-related information and announcements. Students are responsible for keeping the university informed about a change of e-mail address. Students should check their e-mail regularly and frequently—daily, but at minimum twice a week—to stay current with university-related communications, some of which may be time-sensitive. Students can find UT Austin’s policies and instructions for updating their e-mail address at <http://www.utexas.edu/its/policies/emailnotify.php>.

**SAFETY.** As part of professional social work education, students may have assignments that involve working in agency settings and/or the community. As such, these assignments may present some risks. Sound choices and caution may lower risks inherent to the profession. It is the student's responsibility to be aware of and adhere to policies and practices related to agency and/or community safety. Students should notify the professor regarding any safety concerns.

**BEHAVIOR CONCERNS ADVICE LINE (BCAL).** If students are worried about someone who is acting differently, they may use the Behavior Concerns Advice Line to discuss by phone their concerns about another individual’s behavior. This service is provided through a partnership between the Office of the Dean of Students, the Counseling and Mental Health Center (CMHC), the Employee Assistance Program (EAP), and The University of Texas Police Department (UTPD). Call 512-232-5050 or visit <http://www.utexas.edu/safety/bcal>.

**EMERGENCY EVACUATION POLICY.** Occupants of buildings on the UT Austin campus are required to evacuate and assemble outside when a fire alarm is activated or an announcement is made. Please be aware of the following policies regarding evacuation:

- Familiarize yourself with all exit doors in the classroom and the building. Remember that the nearest exit door may not be the one you used when entering the building.
- If you require assistance to evacuate, inform the professor in writing during the first week of class.
- In the event of an evacuation, follow the professor’s instructions.
- Do not re-enter a building unless you are given instructions by the Austin Fire Department, the UT Austin Police Department, or the Fire Prevention Services office.

## IX. COURSE SCHEDULE

This schedule is intended only as a guide and subject to change.

Date	Topic	Assignment	Readings
<b>W1</b>			
1/22 T	Welcome & Introductions		-Course syllabus -International Association for Social Work Groups (2105). <i>Standards for social work practice with groups</i> . <a href="http://www.aaswg.org/files/AASWG_Standards_for_Social_Work_Practice_with_Groups.pdf">http://www.aaswg.org/files/AASWG_Standards_for_Social_Work_Practice_with_Groups.pdf</a>
1/24 TH	-History of Group Work -The Group Leader: Personal and Professional Considerations - Professional Self Care: An Ethical Imperative		-Corey Ch. 1 pp. 1-12 -Corey Ch. 2 pp. 26-36 -Schwartz. W. (2006) The group work tradition and social work practice. <i>Social Work with Groups</i> , 28(3-4), 69-89.
<b>W2</b>			
1/29 T	Practice Theories and Models in Group Work		Corey Ch. 4
1/31 TH	Ethical Considerations and Decision Making in Group Work	Learning Reflection 1 due on 2/2	-Corey Ch. 3 -NASW Code of Ethics  Recommended readings: Texas State Board of Examiners Code of Conduct Guidelines for Ethics – American Group Psychotherapy Assn. Ethical Guidelines for Group Counselors – Assn. for Specialists in Group Work
<b>W3</b>			
2/5 T	Group		Corey Ch. 2

	Facilitation Skills		Turner, H. (2011). Concepts for effective facilitation of open groups. <i>Social Work with Groups</i> , 34 (3-4), pp. 246-256.
2/7 TH	Overview: Stages of Group Development	-Learning Reflection 2 due on 2/9 - Experiential group exercise materials due for Group 1	Corey Intro Part 2 pp. 145-146 Canvas readings
<b>W4</b>			
2/12 T	Forming a Group	Turn in the contact information for the community group you want to attend.	Corey Ch. 5
2/14 TH	First group exercise demonstration	-Learning Reflection 3 due on 2/16 -Experiential group exercise materials due for Group 2	
<b>W5</b>			
2/19 T	Initial Stage: Group Characteristics and Process Leader and Member Roles		Corey Ch. 6
2/21 TH	Second group exercise demonstration	-Learning Reflection 4 due on 2/23	
<b>W6</b>			
2/26 T	Transition Stage: Group Characteristics and		Corey Ch. 7

	Challenging Dynamics Leader and Member Roles		
2/28 TH	Working with Conflict	-Learning Reflection 5 due on 3/2 - Experiential group exercise materials due for Group 3	Wayne, J. and Gitterman, A. (2004). Offensive behaviors in groups: Challenges and opportunities. Social Work with Groups, 26(2), 23-34.
<b>W7</b>			
3/5 T	Working Stage: Group Characteristics Leader and Member Roles		Corey Ch. 8
3/7 TH	Third group exercise demonstration	-Learning Reflection 6 due on 3/9	
<b>W8</b>			
3/12 T	Final Stage: Termination and Evaluation		Corey Ch. 9
3/14 TH	Group Work Across the Life Cycle Group Work with Children	- Experiential group exercise materials due for Group 4 -Community group observation paper due 3/25 12pm	Corey Ch. 10 pp. 325-345
<b>3/18-3/23</b>	<b>Spring break!</b>		
<b>W9</b>			

3/26 T	Group Work Across the Life Cycle Group Work with Adolescents		Corey Ch. 10, pp. 351-367
3/28 TH	Fourth group exercise demonstration	Learning Reflection 7 due on 3/30	
<b>W10</b>			
4/2 T	Group Work Across the Life Cycle Group Work with Adults		
4/4 TH	Role play 1	Learning Reflection 8 due on 4/6	
<b>W11</b>			
4/9 T	Group Work Across the Life Cycle Group Work with Older Adults		Corey Ch. 11 pp. 394-418
4/11 TH	Role play 2	Learning Reflection 9 due on 4/13	
<b>W12</b>			
4/16 T	Cultural Considerations in Group Work		Corey Ch. 1 pp. 12-23 Shulman, L. (2017). Addressing internalized biases and stereotypes of the group leader: A life-long professional task. <i>Social Work with Groups</i> , 40(1- 2), 10-16.
4/18 TH	Role play 3	Learning Reflection 10 due on 4/20	
<b>W13</b>			
4/23 T	Social Work and Task Groups		Boehm, A., & Staples, L. (2006). Grassroots leadership in task-oriented

			groups: Learning from successful leaders. <i>Social Work with Groups</i> , 28(2), 77-96
4/25 TH	Role play 4		
<b>W14</b>			
4/30 T	Final paper and presentation preparation time. Class will not meet face to face.		
5/2 TH	Learning Reflection & Self Care Project Presentation Part 1		
<b>W15</b>			
5/7 T	-Learning Reflection & Self Care Project Presentation Part 2 -Class Review -Ending Celebration		
5/9 TH		Assessment of small group experience paper turn in on Canvas	

## X. BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Abrams, B. (2000). Finding common ground in a conflict resolution group for boys. *Social Work with Groups*, 23(1), 55-69.
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