

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

Course Number: SW 333
Unique Number: 61665
Semester: Fall 2011
Meeting Time: M/W 12:30-2pm

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Office Hours: Wed 2-4 pm and by Appt

SW 333: SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE WITH GROUPS

I. 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.

II. COURSE OBJECTIVES

Course objectives are directly linked to specific Practice Behaviors (PB) that are assessed in this course to meet accreditation standards by the Council on Social Work Education (see page for full explanation of PBs).

1. Demonstrate an understanding of social group work and practice related to the strengths, capacities and resources of individuals within groups. **(PB 11, 35, 38)**
2. Develop leadership skills with groups in order to help alleviate critical social problems and enhance group well-being. **(PB 1, 2, 3, 4, 38)**
3. Develop skills in identifying group members' issues, problems, needs, resources, and assets within a framework of group processes, dynamics, and developmental stages. **(PB 11, 12, 13)**
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. **(PB 29, 30, 31)**
5. Understand and apply basic concepts of treatment groups, including group formation, facilitation, and termination (assessment, intervention, and evaluation). **(PB 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, and 40)**
6. Develop skills in identifying, analyzing and implementing empirically-based group interventions and evaluating group effectiveness. **(PB 5, 11, 12, 36, 37, 38, 39, and 40)**
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 **(PB 11, 30)**
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. **(PB 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10)**
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. **(PB 1, 29, 30)**

III. Teaching Methods

Course will include lectures, readings, discussion, speakers, videos, on-line interactive case examples, a community service learning component, and experiential exercises. Part of the class will be organized as a skill-building laboratory, utilizing the small group context and role plays for development of skill in leading groups. In addition, students will have the opportunity to work directly with group facilitators in the community on a variety of projects.

IV. Required Text and Readings

On-Line Course Packet: Readings will be posted to Blackboard and available in LRC

V. Course Requirements

A. Examinations: There will be three examinations based on the readings, text, lectures, and class discussions. Exams will be both objective (multiple choice, matching, and true/false questions) and essay-based with case studies that require the student to integrate course material, demonstrate critical thinking, and apply the knowledge from classroom and community learning to complex case examples of practice with groups.

B. Critical Thinking & Application Assignments. Students will be given a small group assignment to complete. These assignments will supplement the objective exams with critical thinking and skill-building activities that provide students with an opportunity to demonstrate that they understand and can apply the readings and lecture material.

C. Group Role Play Simulation Project: The class will be organized into role play treatment-growth groups of approximately 6-8 students per group. The focus of the role play growth group will be diversity. The purpose of each group will be to develop members' potential, awareness, and insight related to working with diverse cultures (diversity based on ethnicity/race, class, gender, sexual orientation, religion, physical or mental ability, age, etc.). Through this role play simulation project, students will develop awareness, knowledge and skill in self-assessment and assessment of how issues related to diversity, social and economic justice impact individuals within the context of social work practice with groups. Members will take turns facilitating the group. Each group will decide how best to address each area of diversity and how best to organize the group discussions to facilitate growth in members' insight and awareness. Although the instructor will provide some guidance for group activities, exercises, and discussion topics, it is the group's responsibility to work together toward growth and development related to the topic of diversity. Creativity and initiative are highly encouraged. Each group should reflect adherence to social work values and ethics. Both attendance and group participation will determine your grade for this assignment. At the end of the course, each group will make informal presentations to the class about their group's growth. A group journal will also be required.

D. Community Group Experience Project and Paper: Each student chooses one of four community group experience projects to develop practice behaviors in various stages of group work: (1) research and development of group curriculum, (2) co-facilitation of a group with an established group facilitator in the community; (2) co-facilitate a community group with a classroom peer or (3) final report and evaluation. Students will work directly with Communities in Schools (CIS) or Con Mi Madre staff and receive community and classroom supervision of group practice. Students will consult with professor to determine other available and appropriate group experiences. Through partnering with community-based group facilitators, students will develop awareness, knowledge, and beginning level skill in social work practice with groups.

VI. Explanation of Accreditation Standards

The School of Social Work has been continuously accredited by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) since 1952. In order to maintain our accreditation status, we engage in ongoing curriculum assessment to demonstrate compliance with CSWE's Education Policies and Accreditation Standards (EPAS). Several required courses in our curriculum are part of this ongoing assessment, including this course. Below is a list of the specific Educational Policies (EP) and Practice Behaviors (PB) that are assessed in this course. The complete EPAS can be optioned from your Student Handbook.

Competency 2.1.1: Identify as a professional social worker and conduct oneself accordingly.

PB1 Advocate for client access to the services of social work

Objectives: 2, 8, and 9

Assignment: Community Group Experience Project/Paper and Exams

PB2 Practice personal reflection and self-correction to assure continual professional development

Objectives: 2 and 8

Assignment: Group Role Play Simulation Project

PB3 Attend to professional roles and boundaries

Objectives: 2 and 8

Assignment: Group Role Play Simulation Project and Exams

PB4 Demonstrate professional demeanor in behavior, appearance, and communication

Objectives: 2 and 8

Assignment: Group Role Play Simulation Project and Exams

PB5 Engage in career-long learning

Objectives: 6 and 8

Assignment: Community Group Experience Project/Paper

PB6 Use supervision and consultation

Objectives: 8

Assignment: Group Role Play Simulation Project

Competency 2.1.2: Apply social work ethical principles to guide professional practice.

PB7 Recognize and manage personal values to allow professional values to guide practice

Objectives: 8

Assignments: Group Role Play Simulation Project and Exams

PB8 Make ethical decisions by applying NASW Code of Ethics and, as applicable, IFSW/IASSW ethical principles

Objectives: 8

Assignments: Group Role Play Simulation Project and Exams

PB9 Tolerate ambiguity in resolving ethical conflicts

Objectives: 8

Assignments: Group Role Play Simulation Project and Exams

PB10 Apply strategies of ethical reasoning to arrive at principled decisions

Objectives: 8

Assignments: Group Role Play Simulation Project and Exams

Competency 2.1.3: Apply critical thinking to inform and communicate professional judgments.

PB11 Distinguish, appraise, and integrate multiple sources of knowledge, including research-based knowledge, and practice wisdom

Objectives: 1, 3, 6, and 7

Assignment: Community Group Experience Project/Paper, Group Role Play Simulation Project and Exams

PB12 Analyze models of assessment, prevention, intervention, and evaluation

Objectives: 3 and 6

Assignment: Community Group Experience Project/Paper and Exams

PB13 Demonstrate effective oral and written communication in working with individuals, families, groups, organizations, communities, and colleagues

Objectives: 3

Assignment: Community Group Experience Project/Paper and Exams

Competency 2.1.10a: Engagement

PB29 Substantively and affectively prepare for action with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities

Objectives: 4, 5, and 9

Assignments: Group Role Play Simulation Project and Exams

PB30 Use empathy and other interpersonal skills

Objectives: 4, 5, 7, and 9

Assignments: Group Role Play Simulation Project and Exams

PB31 Develop a mutually agreed-on focus of work and desired outcomes

Objectives: 4 and 5

Assignments: Community Group Experience Project/Paper, Group Role Play Simulation Project and Exams

Competency 2.1.10b Assessment

PB32 Collect, organize, and interpret client data

Objectives: 5

Assignments: Community Group Experience Project/Paper and Exams

PB33 Assess client strengths and limitations

Objectives: 5

Assignments: Community Group Experience Project/Paper and Exams

PB34 Develop mutually agreed-on intervention goals and objective

Objectives: 5

Assignments: Community Group Experience Project/Paper, Group Role Play Simulation Project and Exams

PB35 Select appropriate intervention strategies

Objectives: 1 and 5

Assignments: Community Group Experience Project/Paper, Group Role Play Simulation Project and Exams

Competency 2.1.10c Interventions

PB36 Initiate actions to achieve organizational goals

Objectives: 5 and 6

Assignments: Community Group Experience Project/Paper

PB37 Implement prevention intervention that enhances client capacities

Objectives: 5 and 6

Assignments: Group Role Play Simulation Project

PB38 Help clients resolve problems

Objectives: 1, 2, 5, and 6

Assignments: Community Group Experience Project/Paper, Group Role Play Simulation Project and Exams

PB39 Negotiate, mediate, and advocate for clients

Objectives: 5 and 6

Assignments: Group Role Play Simulation Project and Exams

PB40 Facilitate transitions and endings

Objectives: 5 and 6

Assignments: Group Role Play Simulation Project and Exams

DETAILED GUIDES FOR ROLE-PLAY JOURNAL AND COMMUNITY PROJECT PAPER ASSIGNMENTS are AVAILABLE ON BLACKBOARD under ASSIGNMENTS

Student Performance Evaluation

<u>Assignment</u>	<u>Percent of Grade</u>
Examinations (3)	50%
Participation/Attendance & Critical Thinking Assignments	10%
Group Role Play Simulation Project/Journal	10%
Community Group Experience Project & Paper	25%
Learning Record Summary	5%

DETAILED GUIDES FOR ROLE-PLAY JOURNAL AND COMMUNITY PROJECT PAPER ASSIGNMENTS are on BLACKBOARD

GRADING SCALE

100 - 94 = A	93 - 90 = A-	89 - 87 = B+	86 - 84 = B	83 - 80 = B-		
79 - 77 = C+	76 - 74 = C	73 - 70 = C-	69 - 67 = D+	66 - 64 = D	63 - 60 = D-	
59 and below = F						

CRITERIA for GRADING

- A/A- SUPERIOR: Significantly exceeds assignments/performance expectations; demonstrates a high level of in-depth critical thinking and analysis that resulted in work additional to that laid out in the assignment guidelines and exceptional integration of ideas and course material.
- B+/B/B- GOOD: Assignment/overall performance in course meets all the requirements with evidence of critical thinking and analysis.
- C+/C/C- AVERAGE: Assignments/performance meets the requirements or has minor gaps; lacks evidence of in-depth thinking and analysis
- D+/D/D- BELOW AVERAGE: Important gaps exist in meeting the requirements and evidence of critical thinking and analysis.

VI. Class Policies

1. **Attendance:** Attendance and prompt arrival to class is mandatory and students must be present for examinations on the dates scheduled. **Beyond two absences, each absence will result in 5 points being subtracted from the final grade points.** An individual exception will be made only in the event of *properly documented* extenuating circumstances beyond the student's control.
2. **Late Assignments/Incompletes:** Assignments are due on the date assigned. Three points per day (including weekends) will be deducted for late assignments. Incompletes for the course will only be given in the case of extenuating circumstances beyond the student's control.
3. **APA format:** The School of Social Work uniformly requires the APA editorial style as the standard format for all written assignments. Details of the APA style are included in the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, 4th Edition.

5. **Participation:** Student's level of active participation will be assessed in three ways: in class, during role play groups, and through group project work. The assessments will be done by both instructor and peers.
6. If students are concerned about their class performance, the professor is more than willing to work with students to help them improve their course grades *prior to the end of the semester*.
FINAL GRADES ASSIGNED ARE NOT NEGOTIABLE.
7. **Small group work:** Groups are expected to resolve challenges within their group context. The instructor is willing to serve as consultant if groups are unable to resolve their differences. Groups are not penalized in their grade for consulting with the instructor.
8. **Confidentiality:** Group work can raise emotional issues and usually involves moderate to high self-disclosure. The instructor and classmates have the ethical responsibility to see that the class environment is maintained as a respectful and confidential setting.

OTHER 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 in Class

The professor expects students to act like 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. We will not, nor should we, always agree with one another. In this environment we should be exposed to diverse ideas and opinions, and sometime we will not agree with the ideas expressed by others. However, the professor does require that students engage one another with respect and professionalism.

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://www.utexas.edu/depts/dos/sjs/>).

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). Present the letter to the professor at the beginning of the semester so that needed accommodations can be discussed. The student should remind the professor of any testing accommodations no later than five business days before an exam. For more information, visit <http://www.utexas.edu/diversity/ddce/ssd/>.

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, an examination, a work assignment, or a 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.

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 to keep the university informed about changes to their 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 among 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 of the classroom and the building. Remember that the nearest exit door may not be the one you used when you entered 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’re given instructions by the Austin Fire Department, the UT Austin Police Department, or the Fire Prevention Services office.

Use of Blackboard in Class

In this class the professor uses Blackboard—a Web-based course management system with password-protected access at <http://courses.utexas.edu>—to distribute course materials, to communicate and collaborate online, to post grades, to submit assignments, and to give students online quizzes and surveys. Students can find support in using Blackboard at the ITS Help Desk by calling 475-9400, Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. Please plan accordingly.

Course Modification: To ensure achievement for course objectives, the professor reserves the right to make modifications to any part of this syllabus related to schedule and assignment due dates. Should any modifications be made, students will be notified in class and modifications will also be posted to the WIKI page. Students should check their email and WIKI frequently. Note that some of the links to documents and videos on the Internet may change. Documents, new links or alternate options will be provided.

VII. COURSE SCHEDULE

DATE & TOPIC	ASSIGNMENT/READING
August 24, Wed Course Overview and Getting Acquainted Panel Presentation: Community Group Opportunities	Syllabus
August 29, Mon History of Group Work	Course Packet
August 31, Wed Group Dynamics & Stages of Group Development	Course Packet
Sept 5, Mon	Labor Day Holiday
Sept 7, Wed Leadership: Power, Models, and Style	Course Packet
Sept 12, Mon Approaches to Multicultural Group Work	Course Packet
Sept 14, Wed The Planning & Assessment Stages	Course Packet
Sept 19, Mon	*** Exam 1 ***
Sept 21, Wed Group Leadership Experiential	
Sept 26, Mon Group Stages	Film
Sept 28, Wed Role-play Group Meeting 1	
Oct 3, Mon Middle Stage: Foundation Methods-Treatment Groups	Course Packet
Oct 5, Wed Role-play Group Meeting 2	
Oct 10, Mon Specialized Methods-Treatment Groups	Course Packet

Oct 12, Wed

Role-play Group Meeting 3

Oct 17, Mon

*****EXAM 2 *****

Oct 19, Wed

Role-play Group Meeting 4

Oct 24

Middle Stage: Foundation Methods-Task Groups

Course Packet Readings

Oct 25, Wed

Role-play Group Meeting 5

Oct 31, Mon

Specialized Methods-Task Groups

Course Packet Readings

Nov 2, Wed

Role-play Group Meeting 6

Nov 7, Mon

Specialized Methods-Task Groups

Course Packet Readings

Nov 9, Wed

Role-play Group Meeting 7

Nov 14, Mon

The Ending Stage

Course Packet Readings

Nov 16, Wed

Role-play Group Meeting 8

Nov 21, Mon

*****EXAM 3 *****

Nov 23, Wed

Community Project Research

Nov 28, Mon

Role-play Group Debriefings, Journals due
Community Group Project Presentations

Nov 30, Wed

Community Group Project Presentations continued

Course Wrap-Up and Evaluation