

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

Course Number: SW 393R26	Instructor: Pamela Malone, Ph.D., LCSW
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Semester: Fall 2012	Phone: 512-444-8889
Class Time: Mondays 2:30-5:30 pm	Office: SSW 3.104A
Meeting Place: SSW 2.130	Office Hours: By appointment

THEORIES AND METHODS OF GROUP INTERVENTION

I. COURSE DESCRIPTION

The course will cover current group intervention approaches used with children, adolescents, adults, and the elderly across a variety of settings. Students will develop a working understanding of children, adolescents, adults and the elderly from diverse backgrounds, affirming and respecting their strengths and differences in group settings. The course is grounded in the identification, analysis, and implementation of empirically-based intervention strategies for group work with children, adolescents, adults, and the elderly. This course will focus on using multiple perspectives in the advanced application of theories, models, and skills utilized in short- and longer-term group interventions. The framework of the course is based on social work values and the ethical decision-making process, as illuminated by the [NASW Code of Ethics](#). This is a required course for MSSW students in the Clinical Concentration. It is a specialized group methods course which builds on the Practice I & II courses and Field Practicum I & II.

II. COURSE OBJECTIVES: Upon completion of this course, student will be able to:

1. Integrate theories and empirical research knowledge in selecting and using group work approaches with children, adolescents, adults, and the elderly **(CL/APB 6 and 10c)**
2. Demonstrate an advanced clinical knowledge of group work intervention and leadership roles and skills as they relates to the strengths, the processes involved in human change, and the capacities and resources of children, adolescents, adults, and the elderly **(CL/APB 4 and 10a)**
3. Adapt group work intervention models, programs, and activities for use with children, adolescents, adults, and the elderly to reflect an understanding of persons from diverse backgrounds, including (but not limited to) race, ethnicity, culture, class, gender, sexual orientation, religion/spiritual, physical or mental ability, developmental level, age, and national origin **(CL/APB 4 and 8)**
4. Evaluate, select, and design group work programs, methods, and activities for children, adolescents, adults, and the elderly based upon their empirical base, practice utility, potential, range of applicability and limitations **(CL/APB 6 and 10c)**
5. Select and design group work programs, methods, and activities, and to then critically evaluate and analyze these group work approaches as to their effectiveness in given situations. This includes: (a) the adequacy of the research and knowledge base; (b) the range of applicability; (c) the value and ethical issues, including the student's own value system; and (d) the policy implications involved in delivery of group work services to children, adolescents, adults, and the elderly **(CL/APB 2, 6 and 8)**

6. Integrate and apply core and advanced group work skills and processes, including, but not limited to, creation and maintenance of the group, resolving conflict, dealing with challenging clients, working in the here-and-now, and fostering the therapeutic factors of group work **(CL/APB 10a)**
7. Implement and evaluate the effectiveness of group work interventions for children, adolescents, adults and the elderly **(CL/APB 10c)**
8. Demonstrate the ability to tailor group work interventions for children, adolescents, adults, and the elderly based on the context in which they are delivered **(CL/APB 10c)**
9. Demonstrate advanced knowledge of social work values and ethical decision-making processes as they relate to ethical dilemmas in group work with children, adolescents, adults, and the elderly **(CL/APB2)**

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 descriptions can be optioned from your Student Handbook.

EP2.1.2. Apply social work ethical principles to guide professional practice.

CL/APB2 Refine ability to manage value differences and ethical dilemmas

Objectives 5, 9

Assignment: Class discussion, assigned reading, take home exam, weekly learning reflection, community learning assignment, small group assignment

EP2.1.4. Engage diversity and difference in practice.

CL/APB4 Utilize needs, values, and strengths in applying appropriate interventions for diverse client systems

Objectives 2, 3, 8

Assignment: Take home exam, classroom experiential exercises, class discussion, assigned reading

EP2.1.6. Engage in research-informed practice and practice-informed research.

CL/APB6 Apply empirically supported evidence to practice

Objectives 1, 4, 5,

Assignment: Take home exam, class experiential exercises, class discussion

EP2.1.8. Engage in policy practice to advance social and economic well-being and to deliver effective social work services.

CL/APB8 Identify and evaluate agency programs and/or practices in relation to client needs

Objectives 3, 5, 8

Assignment: Class discussion, assigned reading, take home exam, weekly learning reflection

EP2.1.10a. Engagement.

CL/APB10a Integrate theory-based relational skills in all areas of client engagement

Objectives 2, 6

Assignment: Class discussion, experiential class exercises, take home exam, weekly learning reflection

EP2.1.10c. Intervention

CL/APB10c Critically apply interventions to design, implement and evaluate effective practice
Objectives 1, 4, 7

Assignment: Class discussion, experiential class exercises, take home exam

III. Teaching Methods

This class will be taught using a variety of methods to foster a stimulating, creative, collaborative and interactive learning community. Experiential learning and exercises to promote self-awareness in relation to group process will be emphasized. The class will be organized as a skill laboratory utilizing small group context and role play to provide opportunities to students to develop group leadership and membership skills. The professor will model group work principles and skills in the leadership of the class. Other teaching methods include class discussion, videos, guest speakers, lecture, and assigned learning activities in the community. For a meaningful experience in this class, students must actively participate, take risks, stretch their creativity and critical thinking skills and attend class regularly. All students are encouraged to provide the professor feedback and meet with the professor individually as needed to enhance their learning.

IV. Required and Recommended Texts and Materials

Yalom, I. D. & Leszcz, M. (2005). (5th ed.). *The theory and practice of group psychotherapy*.
New York, NY: Basic Books.

Students are expected to review:

NASW Code of Ethics <http://www.socialworkers.org/pubs/code/code.asp>

Texas State Board of Social Work Examiners Code of Conduct
http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/socialwork/sw_conduct.shtm

NASW Standards for Cultural Competence
<http://naswdc.org/practice/standards/NASWCulturalStandards.pdf>

NASW Policy Statement on Professional Self Care
<http://www.naswdc.org/nasw/memberlink/2009/supportfiles/ProfessionalSelf-Care.pdf>

AASWG Standards for Social Work Practice with Groups
http://www.aaswg.org/files/AASWG_Standards_for_Social_Work_Practice_with_Groups.pdf

Additional required weekly readings will be posted on Blackboard.

V. Course Requirements

Students will be required to complete the assignments listed below. Detailed assignment learning objectives and instructions, including expected demonstration of content mastery and skill development will be provided. All assignments will be discussed in detail in class and students are encouraged to meet with the professor should they have any questions about the assignments. Grading sheets with point allocation will be provided with the assignment guidelines. All assignments are graded on depth and quality of required content, creativity and critical thinking skills, overall professionalism and quality of writing. Specific point totals for each assignment are listed below.

Grading Structure:

Class Contribution	30 points
Attendance (15 points)	
Participation (15 points)	
Weekly Written Learning Reflection (8 @ 5 points)	40 points
Community Learning Assignment	
Support Group Observations	50 points
Practitioner Interviews	50 points
Take Home Exam	<u>230 points</u>
	400 points

Grading Scale:

376-400 = A	360-375 = A-
348-359 = B+	336-347 = B
320-335 = B-	308-319 = C+
296-307 = C	280-295 = C-
268-279 = D+	256-267 = D
240-25 = D-	239 or below = F

VI. Class Policies

1. Students are expected to attend class weekly and on time as discussed above. Students who are absent after the break will be considered absent for the entire class, unless prior arrangements are made with the instructor.
2. Except under extremely unusual circumstances, assignments must be completed on the due date and turned in at the beginning of class on the due date. Late assignments will result in a deduction of 5 points for each day that the assignment is late. No assignment will be accepted beyond one week late.
3. If students are concerned about their class performance, the professor is more than willing to work with students to help them improve either their understanding of group theory, use of

self in understanding group process, or becoming more comfortable in group interaction. The professor can meet with students privately either before or after class, or by appointment.

4. Small groups are expected to resolve challenges within their group context. The instructor is willing to serve as a consultant if groups have worked diligently to resolve their differences but have been unsuccessful.
5. Students will be asked to provide feedback on their learning and the professor's teaching strategies in informal as well as formal ways. It is very important for the professor to know the students' reactions to what is taking place in the class, ensuring that together the professor and students can create a dynamic and effective learning community. Students are encouraged to provide ongoing feedback to the professor during class and office visits.

VII. Course Schedule (Subject to revision.)

9/10 Class 1	Course Overview Group as a Microcosm Classroom as a Learning Lab	Syllabus
9/17 Class 2	Therapeutic Factors Interpersonal Learning Group Cohesion	Yalom: Chapters 1-4
9/24 Class 3	Group Leadership & Co-leadership Essential Skills & Tasks Professional Training & Supervision Ethical Guidelines for Group Work Practice In-class small group meetings	Yalom: Chapters 5-6
10/1 Class 4	Group Composition Member Selection & Preparation Logistical & Practical Considerations Cultural Competence in Group Work	Yalom: Chapters 8-10 & Appendix Readings on Blackboard Due: Weekly Learning Reflection
10/8 Class 5	Stages of Group Development Group & Leader Tasks	Yalom: Chapters 11-12 Readings on Blackboard Due: Weekly Learning Reflection
10/15 Class 6	Group Dynamics & Group Process Assessment & Intervention	Yalom: Chapters 7 & 13 Due: Weekly Learning Reflection
10/22 Class 7	Therapeutically Working with Conflict	Readings on Blackboard Due: Weekly Learning Reflection
10/29 Class 8	Termination & Practice Evaluation in Groups	Readings on Blackboard Due: Weekly Learning Reflection
11/5 Class 9	Groups with Children & Adolescents	Readings on Blackboard

		Due: Weekly Learning Reflection
11/12 Class 10	Groups with Adults & Special Populations Hand out Take Home Exam	Readings on Blackboard Due: Weekly Learning Reflection
11/19 Class 11	Groups with the Elderly	Readings on Blackboard Due: Weekly Learning Reflection Due: Community Learning Assignment 1
11/26 Class 12	Expressive Arts Therapies in Groups	Readings on Blackboard Due: Community Learning Assignment 2
12/3 Class 13	Evaluation	Readings on Blackboard Due: Take Home Exam

VIII. General 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 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.

As part of professional courtesy in class, cell phones, laptops (unless otherwise indicated due to a learning disability), text-messaging, etc. will not be allowed during class hours, other than at the designated break time.

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.

Helpful Websites

American Group Psychotherapy Association www.agpa.org

Austin Group Psychotherapy Association www.austingroups.org

Association for the Advancement of Social Work with Groups <http://www.aaswg.org>

Mental Health Association of Texas <http://www.mhatexas.org/mhatexasMAIN/IRGuide4.03.pdf>

Mental Health America http://www.nmha.org/go/go/find_support_group

Local AA site with meetings schedule www.austinaa.org

UT Counseling and Mental Health Center www.cmhc.utexas.edu/g_schedule.html