

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

Course Number:	SWN393R26	Instructor:	Vicki Packheiser, LCSW
Unique Number:	94765	Office Number:	SWB 3.124D
Semester:	Summer 2012	Office Phone:	471-2364
Meeting Time/Place:	Tuesdays & Thursdays 5:30-8pm Room 2.122	Office Hours:	Tuesdays & Thursdays 4-5pm & by appointment
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Theories and Methods of Group Intervention

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 and II courses and Field Practicum I and II.

Course Objectives

Upon completion of this course, students 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 4 and 8)**
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/APB 2)**

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 obtained 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 readings, 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 readings

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 readings, 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, classroom experiential exercises, take home exam

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 for 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 instructor feedback and meet with the instructor individually as needed to enhance their learning.

Required and Recommended Texts and Materials

Required Text:

Yalom, I. (2005). *The theory and practice of group psychotherapy*. (5th Ed.) New York: Basic Books.

The following text is required of all students upon admission and readings will be assigned throughout the course of a student's program.

Roberts. A.R. (Ed.) (2009). *Social workers' desk reference*. New York: Oxford University Press.

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://www.naswdc.org/practice/standards/NASWCulturalStandards.pdf>

NASW Policy Statement on Professional Self Care

<http://www.naswdc.org/nasw/memberlink/2009/supportfiles/ProfesionalSelf-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 and handouts will be posted on Blackboard.

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 in a separate handout. All assignments will be discussed in detail in class and students are encouraged to meet with the instructor should they have any questions about the assignments. Grading sheets with point allocation will be provided with the assignment guidelines. All assignments will be 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. **All students are required to complete a grading sheet that is to be turned in with each assignment to foster their skill and comfort in self evaluation – a critical component of practice evaluation.**

Assignment Summary

Assignment	Points	Due Date
Class Contribution Attendance (15 points) Participation (15 points)	30 points	Weekly
Weekly Written Learning Reflection (5 points each)	40 points	Tuesdays
Take Home Exam	130 points	7/14
Community Learning Assignment Support Group Observations Practitioner Interviews	100 points	7/21
Small Group Experiential and Written Analysis	<u>100 points</u> 400 points	7/24

Letter grades will be assigned as follows:

376-400 points	A	Students who were admitted into the MSSW program on a conditional basis are not able to take an incomplete for this course if the conditions for admission are still in place.
360-375 points	A-	
348-359 points	B+	
336-347 points	B	
320-335 points	B-	
308-319 points	C+	
296-307 points	C	
280-295 points	C-	
268-279 points	D+	
256-267 points	D	
240-255 points	D-	
239 or below	F	

Class Policies

This class will operate under the guidelines of professional accountability in the classroom. The following policies will be observed:

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.

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 email address. Students should check their email 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>

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/>.

Professional Conduct in Class

Students are expected to act like professionals in class. This means students should arrive on time, be prepared to participate in discussions, and show respect for one another's opinions. In the classroom environment, students will be exposed to diverse ideas and opinions and may not always agree with ideas expressed by others. However, students are expected to engage one another with respect, courtesy and professionalism. This entails listening to the opinions, concerns and feelings of others with openness, speaking honestly about one's own experience, offering suggestions and ideas in a positive and respectful manner, and being willing to promote group cohesiveness in the learning environment. **Use of cell phones and laptops is not permitted during class.**

Attendance and Participation

Attendance and participation for the full class is expected for all students. **After two absences, the student's final grade will be lowered by one grade.** Further absences may result in the student being dropped from the course. 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. Students are to notify the instructor prior to class at the given office phone number or by email if they cannot attend class due to an illness or emergency.

Religious Holidays

According to 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.

Maintaining Confidentiality

Information shared in class about agencies and clients is considered to be covered by the NASW Code of Ethics regarding the sharing of information for educational supervision purposes. Agencies are aware that de-identified information is shared in classes for this purpose. However, discussions outside of class with individuals not in this class or with other members of the class regarding information shared in class about clients is considered a breach of confidentiality. All students are expected to maintain confidentiality.

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, repetition of information, and inferior work 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 SSW writing consultant for assistance with any writing assignments. Plagiarism is a serious violation of university rules and will be dealt with according to university policy.

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/>).

Time Management

All assignments are due at the beginning of class on the date indicated. **Late papers will be penalized 5 points per day that they are late.** This includes papers that are turned in after 5:30pm on the day they are due. Contact the instructor before the assignment is due if other arrangements need to be made due to an emergency.

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.

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 (i.e. Facebook, Twitter, etc.) and other forms of electronic communication (i.e. blogs, etc.), 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 that 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.

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 are given instructions by the Austin Fire Department, the UT Austin Police Department, or the Fire Prevention Services office.

Feedback

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 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 instructor during class and office visits.

Course Schedule

<u>Date</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Text/Readings</u>
5/31	Course Overview Group as a Microcosm Classroom as a Learning Lab	Syllabus
6/5	Therapeutic Factors Interpersonal Learning Group Cohesion Student Learning Assessment	Yalom Ch. 1-4
6/7	Group Leadership and Coleadership Essential Skills and Tasks Professional Training and Supervision Ethical Guidelines for Group Work Practice	Yalom Ch. 5-6 Readings on Blackboard
6/12	Group Composition Member Selection and Preparation Logistical and Practical Considerations Cultural Competence in Group Work Weekly Learning Reflection	Yalom Ch. 8-10 and Appendix Readings on Blackboard
6/14	Stages of Group Development Group and Leader Tasks	Yalom Ch. 11-12 Readings on Blackboard
6/19	Group Dynamics and Group Process Assessment and Intervention Weekly Learning Reflection	Yalom Ch. 7 and 13
6/21	Therapeutically Working with Conflict	Readings on Blackboard
6/26	Termination and Practice Evaluation in Groups Weekly Learning Reflection	Readings on Blackboard

6/28	Groups with Children and Adolescents	Readings on Blackboard
7/3	Groups with Adults - Special Populations Weekly Learning Reflection	Readings on Blackboard
7/5	No class – enjoy! Time will be made up in required activities outside of class	
7/10	Groups with Adults – Special Populations Weekly Learning Reflection	Readings on Blackboard
7/12	Groups with Adults – Special Populations Take Home Exam	Readings on Blackboard
7/17	Groups with the Elderly Weekly Learning Reflection	Readings on Blackboard
7/19	Expressive Arts Therapies in Groups Community Learning Assignment	Readings on Blackboard
7/24	Group Work in the Global Community Wisdom Circles and the Council Process Review, Reflection and Celebration Weekly Learning Reflection Written Analysis Small Group Assignment	Readings on Blackboard

Bibliography

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- Barsky, A. (2007). *Conflict resolution for the helping professions* (2nd ed.) Belmont, CA: Thomson-Brooks/Cole.
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- Chen, M. & Ryback, C. (2004). *Group leadership skills: Interpersonal process in group counseling and therapy*. Belmont, CA: Brooks/Cole-Thomson Learning.
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- Corey, M., Corey, G, & Corey, C. (2010). *Groups: Process and practice* (8th ed.). Belmont, CA: Brooks/Cole Cengage Learning.
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Helpful Websites

www.agpa.org

American Group Psychotherapy Association

www.austingroups.org

Austin Group Psychotherapy Association

<http://www.aaswg.org>

Association for the Advancement of Social Work with Groups

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

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

www.austinaa.org
Local AA site with meetings schedule

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