

**THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN
STEVE HICK'S SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK**

Course Number: SW 333	Instructor's Name: Cynthia Penwell, LCSW-S Pronouns: she/her/hers
Unique Number: 61435	E-Mail: csPenwell@utexas.edu
Semester: Fall 2021	Office Number: 3.104
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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.

Course credit for SW325 and SW327 with at least a C grade in each a prerequisite for this course.

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

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.

IV. REQUIRED TEXT AND MATERIALS

Corey, M., Corey, G, & Corey, C. (2018). *Groups: Process and practice* (10th ed.). Belmont, CA: Brooks/Cole Cengage Learning.

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

Students are also expected to review:

UTSSW Standards for Social Work Education

<https://socialwork.utexas.edu/dl/files/academic-programs/other/standards-sw-education.pdf>

NASW Code of Ethics

<https://www.socialworkers.org/About/Ethics/Code-of-Ethics/Code-of-Ethics-English>

Board of Social Work Examiners Code of Conduct

http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/socialwork/sw_conduct.shtm

NASW Standards and Indicators for Cultural Competence in Social Work Practice

<https://www.socialworkers.org/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=PonPTDEBrn4%3D&portalid=0>

Standards for Social Work Practice with Groups

http://www.aaswg.org/files/AASWG_Standards_for_Social_Work_Practice_with_Groups.pdf

<http://www.iaswg.org>

NASW Policy Statement on Professional Self Care

<http://www.compassionstrengths.com/uploads/NASW.ProfesionalSelf-Care.p>

REQUIRED READINGS

Required Text

Corey, M. Schneider, Corey, G. and Corey, C. Bundle.10e Groups: Process and Practice. Belmont, CA.: Brooks/Cole.

V. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Students will be required to complete all 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. All written 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.

Student Participation

10pts

Attendance and active participation are critical to the teaching and learning in this class. Students are expected to be on video and present during synchronized classes, or, in extenuating circumstances, to notify the instructor if they cannot attend. This portion of the grade will be determined by attendance and quality of contribution as demonstrated by student preparation level during synchronized classes including chat discussion as a form of participation in a zoom classroom, and active engagement in small group exercises. Preparation includes completing readings and assignments by due dates and coming to class prepared to discuss them, and “being present” and involved in experiential activities and discussions. As active experimentation is an important part of our learning, and our synchronous classes are reduced in the current semester, participation is critical to learning

Self-Care & Moments of Excellence Project

2.5pts

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. At the end of the first month of the class, the professor will ask students to provide a paragraph describing their self-care practice and will touch-base throughout the semester to assess the effectiveness of students’ self-care practices. On the last day of class, students will have two minutes to share with the class about their self-care practice. You can use photos, slide show, YouTube, art work, music, poetry, or a creative use of expression suitable for classroom presentation.

In addition to our own need for self-care, students will also cultivate an appreciation for the work and learning contribution of others, as part of an essential social work practice skill. On the last day of class, students will have two minutes to share with the class about what they have noticed in the semester about one or more of their classmates. This “moment of excellence” will be integrated into the final class celebration.

Self Care and Moments of Excellence are an ongoing process with final project Due 5/4

Leadership Evaluation **2.5 pts**

Students will complete and turn in the leadership evaluation as posted in the module. In addition, students are to bring the evaluation to class and engage in discussion with peer/group/class regarding lessons learned and goals

Leadership Due 9/1

Discussion Board **5pts**

Students are to actively participate in the asynchronous group development video by responding to explore ethics, social justice, and cultural diversity issues related to social work.

Yalom Video Discussion Board Due 10/23

Learning Reflections **10 pts**

Students will submit a total of 10 learning reflections (worth 1 point each) over the course of the semester. The reflections should be a 1 page minimum/ 2 pages maximum (typed, double-spaced, Times New Roman 12-point font, 1 inch margins) and focus on the student’s experiences in that week’s experiential group lab or on the posted prompt. On a few occasions, the instructor may provide designated topics for the reflection paper. The reflections are meant to inspire critical thinking, integration of learning materials, and reactions to the group lab. This will also serve to foster the practice of professional journaling, which will be an integral part of the field practicum course. The reflections are due after the group experiential lab, and generally linked to the lab. Students who do not attend the group lab cannot submit a journal reflection for that group and will subsequently lose a point for that submission.

Social Work Theory Application and Intervention Plan
35 pts

To further understanding of practice theory, students will present and demonstrate a selected theory in class. Students will work in designated small groups. The objectives of this assignment are to:1. To demonstrate understanding of a selected practice theory.2. To apply the assigned theory to a client situation using creative demonstration, role-play and/or media presentation.3. To enhance own understanding of the theory by completing further research and sharing learning with others in the class. 4. To learn about effective task group roles and experience through active task group implementation.

Take Home Final **35 pts**

There will be a cumulative take-home final exam due the final week of class. More details will be provided in class

Assignment	Points
Attendance	10
Self Care & Moments	2.5

Leadership Evaluation	2.5
Discussion Board	5
Learning Reflections	10
Theory Application and Presentation	35
Take home final	35
Total pts 100	

VI. GRADES

Overall Criteria for Evaluating Student Assignments

Your written work should be well-conceptualized and researched, clearly organized, and supported by examples and details. It also should show evidence of your own creative and thoughtful analysis. Papers must follow APA style formatting. Additional criteria and evaluation guidelines are provided at the end of the syllabus for all assignments. Note that if you are a social work major you will need to repeat this course if your final grade falls below a 'C'-.

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. UNIVERSITY POLICIES

COVID-19 RELATED INFORMATION. The University's policies and practices related to the pandemic may be accessed at: <https://protect.utexas.edu/>

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.

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/>.

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 race, 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. This atmosphere includes working intentionally to recognize and dismantle racism, sexism, heterosexism, and ableism in the classroom. 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.

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>.

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. 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 on the basis of sex <https://titleix.utexas.edu/>. 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, dating 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. Further information, including student resources related to Title IX, may also be found at <https://titleix.utexas.edu/>.

CAMPUS CARRY POLICY. The University's policy on campus carry may be found here: <https://campuscarry.utexas.edu>.

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 and COVID-19 ADVICE LINE (BCCAL). If students have concerns about their behavioral health, or if they are concerned about the behavioral health of someone else, students may use the Behavior Concerns and COVID-19 Advice Line to discuss by phone their concerns. 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 <https://safety.utexas.edu/behavior-concerns-advice-line>. The Behavior Concerns and COVID-19 Advice Line has been expanded to support The University of Texas at Austin community during the COVID-19 pandemic. By calling 512-232-5050 - Option 2 for COVID-19, students, faculty and staff can be assisted in English and Spanish with COVID-19 support.

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.

VIII. COURSE SCHEDULE

Date	Topic	Assignment	Text/Readings
8/26 wk 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction/ syllabus review • Kolb's Cycle of Experiential learning 		Review Syllabus <u>Canvas Readings</u> as posted in module
8/31 wk 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction to Group Work in Social Work Practice • Historical Overview • Types of Groups 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corey Ch. 1 • Standards for Social Work Practice with Groups
9/2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The group leader: personal- professional considerations • Professional Self Care • Dyad Lab 	In-class experiential lab (bring evaluation) Leadership evaluation due 9/1 at 11:59pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corey Ch. 2 • Leadership Evaluation Form • NASW Policy Statement on Professional Self Care
9/7 wk 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ethical Considerations and Decision-Making in Group Work 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corey Ch 3 • Canvas Readings: NASW Code of Ethics
9/9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ethical Considerations Small Group Lab 	In-class experiential lab Learning Reflection 1 due 9/10 by 11:59pm	
9/14 wk 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practice Theories and Models in Group work 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corey Ch 4
9/16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Power and Culture in Group Practice 	Learning Reflection 2 due 9/17 by 11:59pm In-class experiential lab	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Canvas Readings</u> as posted in module
9/21 wk 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guest speaker: Neathery Thurmond, LCSW-S, CGP • More about groups, leadership, and self-care 		<u>Canvas Readings</u> as posted in module
9/23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Considerations in 	Learning Reflection 3	Corey Ch 5

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Planning a group Small Group Lab 	due 9/24 by 11:59pm	
9/28 wk 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Guest Speaker: Vanessa Flores, LCSW-S Power and Culture in Groups 		<u>Canvas Readings</u> as posted in module
9/30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stages of Group Development 	Learning Reflection 4 due 10/1 by 11:59pm Small Group Lab	Canvas Reading as indicated
10/5 wk 7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initial Stage of Group 		Corey Chap 6
10/7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stages of Group and the Initial Stage 	Learning Reflection 5 due 3/6 by 11:59pm Experiential Group lab	Canvas Reading as indicated: Yalom
10/12 wk 8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Universal Therapeutic Factors 		Canvas Reading as indicated: Yalom
10/14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Universal Therapeutic Factors 	Learning Reflection 6 due 3/13 by 11:59pm Experiential Group lab	
10/19 wk 9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transition Stage of group 		Corey Chap 7
10/21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learning by Doing Asynchronous Independent Group Work 	Experiential Lab outside the classroom Learning Reflection 7 due 10/24 by 11:59pm	
10/26 wk 10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working stage of group 		Corey Ch 8
10/28	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working stage of group 	Learning Reflection 8 due 3/27 by 11:59pm Experiential Group lab	
11/2 wk 11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Termination stage of group 		Corey Ch 9
11/4	Guest Speaker: Ani Mirasol, LCSW, CGP; Working constructively	Learning Reflection 9 due 4/3 by 11:59pm	

	with conflict		
11/9 wk 12	Guest Speaker: Wanda Montemayor, LPC-S-AT; Group work across the life cycle; children teens		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corey Ch 10
11/11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group work across the life cycle; work with older adults 	Learning Reflection 10 due 4/10 by 11:59pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corey Ch 11
11/16 wk 13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group I Presentation 		
11/18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group II Presentation 		
11/23 wk 14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group III Presentation 		
11/25 OFF		No classes due to cultural tradition	
11/30 wk 15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group IV Presentation 		
12/5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final Class – Wrap up and celebration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review and presentation of self care projects • Moments of Excellence 	
Take home final exam due on 12/6 at 11:59pm			

IX. BIBLIOGRAPHY

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