

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

Course Number:	SW 393R26	Instructor:	Kelsey Balaban, LCSW, CGP
Unique Number:	61665	Email:	kelsey.balaban@austin.utexas.edu
Semester:	Fall 2022	Office:	3.104A (Adjunct office)
Meeting Time/Place:	Tuesdays	Office Phone:	512-815-3498
	8:30am – 11:30am	Office Hours:	Tuesdays, 11:30am – 12:30pm
	SSW 2.122		Other time by appointment

Theories & Methods of Group Intervention

I. STANDARDIZED 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 used 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](#).

II. STANDARDIZED 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;
2. Demonstrate an advanced clinical knowledge of group work intervention and leadership roles and skills as they relate to the strengths, the processes involved in human change, and the capacities and resources of children, adolescents, adults, and the elderly;
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/spirituality, physical or mental ability, developmental level, age, and national origin;
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;
5. Select and design group work programs, methods, and activities, and 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;
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;

7. Implement and evaluate the effectiveness of group work interventions for children, adolescents, adults and the elderly;
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;
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.

III. TEACHING METHODS

This class will be taught using a variety of methods to foster a collaborative, interactive, and stimulating 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, using demo groups and small groups to provide opportunities for you to develop group leadership and membership skills. Other teaching methods include class discussion, videos, guest speakers, and lectures. For a meaningful experience in this class, you are invited to attend class regularly, actively participate, take risks, and stretch your creativity and critical thinking skills. I ask you to engage in informed discussion of the assigned readings and to apply these readings to the experiential exercises and small group work. I encourage you to provide me with feedback and meet with me individually as needed to enhance your learning.

All in-class discussions related to personal information—including identity, values, beliefs, and life experiences—must be kept confidential.

IV. REQUIRED TEXTS AND MATERIALS

Yalom, I. D., & Leszcz, M. (2020) *The theory and practice of group psychotherapy* (6th ed.) New York, NY: Basic Books.

Ormont, L. R. (2001) *The technique of group treatment: The collected papers of Louis R. Ormont, Ph.D.* (L. Blanco Furgeri, Ed.) Madison, CT: Psychosocial Press.

Additional weekly readings and/or handouts will be posted on Canvas.

V. COURSE COMPONENTS

Our course will consist of the elements listed below. All assignments will be discussed in class, and detailed instructions will be posted on Canvas. Reach out to me if you have any questions. Total points = 100.

Demo Groups – Not graded

All students will be invited to volunteer to participate in a demo group, which will take place **in class** about every other week. I or the guest lecturer will run the group as a training experience, after which the whole class will have the opportunity to process the experience.

Small Groups – Not graded

Students will be placed in one of several small groups that will meet throughout the semester. You will meet in your groups **during class time** about every other week, returning after the group to process the experience with the class. You'll take turns leading the group each time and may co-lead if you prefer.

3-2-1 Reflections – 10 pts

You will turn in reflections at the beginning of each class; these are meant to help you synthesize the readings. For this assignment, you'll jot down 3 main takeaways, 2 things you like or disagree with, and 1 question from the readings.

Format: This can be in bullet point form and should only take about five minutes.

Paper: Reflection #1 – 10 pts

Please discuss your prior group experience; goals for your learning in this course—including but not limited to ethics; social justice, equity and inclusion; plans for using (or not using) group therapy in your career; and challenges you anticipate coming up in this class.

Format: 2-3 pages, double-spaced, 1" margins, 11-12 pt font. Neither APA format nor references are required; first person perspective is permitted.

Paper: Group (Leadership) Analysis – 20 pts

Choose one of these three options and write an analysis of your experience:

- Watch several episodes of Elliot Zeisel's "Group" on YouTube and analyze the dynamics and leadership skills you notice.
- Interview a therapy group leader in the community and discuss what you learn. Feel free to come up with your own questions, but if you'd like help with this, reach out to me.
- Attend a group in the community (12-step meeting, neighborhood association, task force meeting, etc.) and discuss the dynamics and leadership choices you observe.

Format: 3-4 pages, double-spaced, 1" margins, 11-12 pt font, APA format.

Paper: Small Group Analysis – 25 pts

Reflect on your experience in your small group so far. Explore dynamics you observe in yourself and others, challenges that have arisen (including those related to racism, white supremacy, sexism, etc.), ways you and others have responded, and leadership—whether you or your peers were leading.

Format: 4-6 pages, double-spaced, 1" margins, 11-12 pt font, APA format.

Paper: Creating a Group – 25 pts

Choosing a social inequity / injustice **or** a marginalized population, you'll design a therapeutic group to address this injustice or population. (Note: You will only be writing about this, not actually starting a group.) Describe your setting, type of group, and marketing of the group. Discuss how you'll select and prepare clients, describe challenges in the group that might arise, and explore interventions you can use.

Format: 5-6 pages, double-spaced, 1" margins, 11-12 pt font, APA format.

Reflection Paper #2 – 10 pts

Please look back over the class, evaluate your initial goals, and summarize key takeaways from your learning. Discuss group facilitation skills you have honed, analyze the impact of your group experiences, and describe your growth in interacting with issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion in a group therapy context.

Format: 2-4 pages, double-spaced, 1" margins, 11-12 pt font. Neither APA format nor references are required; first person perspective is permitted.

Course Assignments	Points	Due Date
3-2-1 Reflections	10	See course calendar
Paper: Reflection #1	10	
Paper: Group (Leadership) Analysis	20	
Paper: Small Group Analysis	25	
Paper: Creating a Group	25	
Reflection Paper #2	10	
Total	100	

VI. GRADES

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

Attendance and Participation

- Please arrive on time and stay for the full class, since classroom discussions, demo groups, case studies, and guest speakers are helpful for your professional growth. If you can't attend a class, please let me know by email or text as soon as possible.
- Please be mindful of how texting or using your phone/other electronic devices during class could impact your focus and that of your classmates.
- Feel free to bring food and drinks to class. However, please avoid noisy/crunchy foods out of consideration for everyone else.
- Class discussions will not be routinely recorded. However, if any part of a class meeting is recorded, it will be for the sole use of students in this course. The information about violations of this policy listed below in this syllabus under Section VIII (University Policies), item 10 will apply.

Demo/Small Group Experience

- Confidentiality is imperative. You're free to discuss your experience in the class and groups, but please do not share any identifying information regarding other participants.
- Group work can raise emotional issues. Let's all work to maintain respect within the class environment.
- Please refrain from eating and drinking (anything but water) while participating in a small group or demo group.

- You are encouraged to resolve challenges within your group context, but I'm happy to act as a consultant if group members are unable to resolve differences.

Assignments & Grading

- Please attempt to submit all assignments on or before the due date and time. If the due date is a problem, please let me know and we'll see whether another due date can be arranged well in advance.
- If you're concerned about your class performance, I'm more than willing to work with you to help you improve grades prior to the end of the semester.
- In this class I use Canvas—a Web-based course management system with password-protected access—to distribute course materials, communicate and collaborate online, post grades, and receive submitted assignments. Canvas is used to provide access to course readings, PowerPoint presentations of lecture materials, and in-class exercises. You can get help using Canvas at the ITS Help Desk by calling 512-475-9400 (Mon-Fri, 8am-6pm) or by visiting <http://it.utexas.edu/>.
- If you are unfamiliar with APA format, please see the American Psychological Association's [basics on APA style](#) and/or Purdue University's [OWL site](#). Students are also encouraged to consult with the [SSW writing consultant](#) or the [University Writing Center](#) for assistance. Note that plagiarism is a serious violation of university rules and will be dealt with according to university policy.

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 Disabilities and Access 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 ACADEMIC INTEGRITY. Students who violate University rules on academic 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 academic dishonesty will be strictly enforced. For further information, please visit the Student Conduct and Academic Integrity website at: <http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/conduct>.

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.

UNIVERSITY ELECTRONIC MAIL STUDENT NOTIFICATION. Electronic mail (email), like postal mail, is a mechanism for official University communication to students. The University will exercise the right to send email communications to all students, and the University will expect that email communications will be received and read in a timely manner. Students can find UT Austin's policies and instructions for updating their e-mail address at <https://it.utexas.edu/policies/university-electronic-mail-student-notification-policy>.

RELIGIOUS HOLY DAYS. A student who misses classes or other required activities, including examinations, for the observance of a religious holy day should inform the instructor as far in advance of the absence as possible so that arrangements can be made to complete an assignment within a reasonable period after the absence. A reasonable accommodation does not include substantial modification to academic standards, or adjustments of requirements essential to any program of instruction. Students and instructors who have questions or concerns about academic accommodations for religious observance or religious beliefs may contact the [Office for Inclusion and Equity](#). The University does not maintain a list of religious holy days.

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 on 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 help 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

Note: I may shift class topics and readings around. The best place to get all the details on assignments, readings, and due dates will be Canvas. Each module will hold the information you need for the week.

Date	Topic	Assignment Due	Readings
8/23	Introductions, overview of course, & types of groups		Syllabus
8/30	Core therapeutic factors	Reflection Paper #1	Yalom: Ch. 1-2 <i>Optional:</i> <i>Elnakib & Makki article</i>
9/6	Group leadership skills		Yalom: Ch. 6 Ormont: Ch. 19 <i>Optional:</i> <i>Masselink article</i> <i>Avula article</i> <i>Terrazas-Carrillo, et al. article</i>
9/13	Creating a group		Yalom: Ch. 8 (pp. 293-355) Handouts: Group agreement questions Group therapy agreements
9/20	Preparing members		Yalom: Ch. 8 (pp. 355-375) Ormont: Ch. 3-4
9/27	Guest lecturer (Kelsey out)		Readings TBD

10/4	Formative stages	Paper: Analysis of Group Leaders/Dynamics	Yalom: Ch. 10 (pp. 377-408) Haen & Thomas article
10/11	Challenging member dynamics		Yalom: Ch. 12 Ormont: Ch. 7
10/18	Challenging leader dynamics		Ormont: Ch. 19 Rosenthal article <i>Optional:</i> <i>Billow article</i>
10/25	Group modalities & settings	Paper: Small Group Analysis	Yalom: Ch. 15
11/1	Groups across developmental stages		<i>Optional:</i> <i>Chen, et al. article</i>
11/8	History of therapeutic groups across cultures		Ormont: Ch. 1 Kimmel article <i>Optional:</i> <i>Paquin, et al. article</i>
11/15	Review	Paper: Creating of Group	Readings TBD
11/22	No Class: Fall Break		
11/29	Termination	Reflection Paper #2	Yalom: Ch. 12 (pp. 465-476)
	Exams (no final exam)		

X. BIBLIOGRAPHY

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