

**THE UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE  
COLLEGE OF SOCIAL WORK**

SW 525: Clinical Social Work Practice with Groups  
Spring Semester 2003

Instructor: Catherine M. Knowles, MSSW  
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Office: 259-8729, Home: 673-1280  
Class Time: Thursday, 1:00 p.m.-3:50 p.m.  
Office Hours: Thursday, 4:00-5:00 p.m. or by appointment

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**Code of Conduct**

It is the student's responsibility to have read the College of Social Work Ethical Academic and Professional Conduct code that is in the College of Social Work MSSW Handbook ([www.csw.utk.edu](http://www.csw.utk.edu)).

**The Honor Statement**

An essential feature of The University of Tennessee is a commitment to maintaining an atmosphere of intellectual integrity and academic honesty. As a student of the University, I pledge that I will neither knowingly give nor receive any inappropriate assistance in academic work, thus affirming my own personal commitment to honor and integrity (Hilltopics, 2002).

**Disability**

If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a documented disability or if you have emergency information to share, please contact The University of Tennessee Office of Disability Services at 191 Hoskins Library 865-974-6087. This will ensure that you are properly registered for services.

**Course Description**

This course focuses on the development of knowledge and skills in the use of group methods in clinical social work practice. The course emphasizes: forming the group, assessing member problems, setting goals, structuring group tasks, activities, and experiences, understanding and enhancing group functioning, enabling problem-solving processes, facilitating transfer of change, evaluating individual and group work with clients/client systems from high risk and vulnerable populations and from varying racial, cultural, socio-economic backgrounds.

**Course Rationale**

Group work has a long history in social work, and is seen by many as a central interventive approach in clinical social work. Group methods in clinical social work are particularly

appropriate in the current context of clinical practice with its emphasis on efficient service delivery for a wide spectrum of client needs and problems across a variety of clinical social work setting. There is an abundance of research and conceptual literature on group methods of intervention with various client/client systems.

### **Course Objectives**

By the completion of the course, students are expected to be able to:

1. Trace the major historical developments and current trends in the use of groups in social work practice;
2. Identify and describe ethical and professional issues related to the use of treatment groups;
3. Specify and explain the appropriate and inappropriate use of the group method for client problems including clients from high risk populations and clients varying in racial, ethnic, socio-economic, cultural, gender, age or sexual orientation characteristics;
4. Assess client behavior and plan appropriate group interventions, strategies and goals;
5. Describe a framework for conceptualizing group developmental stages and process; the reciprocal influences of group process, individual and group behavior; the roles and functions of group leader, member, interaction and setting;
6. Effectively design, structure implement strategies for, lead and evaluate the effectiveness of group interventions for short-term and long-term groups;
7. Identify and describe the major principles and techniques for facilitating individual change;
8. Identify and describe evaluative procedures applicable to assessment of individual change, including worker's strengths/vulnerabilities as a group leader/member.

### **Required Text**

Reid, Kenneth E. (1997). Social Work Practice with Groups: A Clinical Perspective (2<sup>nd</sup> edition). Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole.

### **Additional Reading**

The following readings are on reserve in the library:

1. Brown, A. & Mistry, T. (1994). Group work with mixed membership groups: Issues of race and gender. Social Work with Groups, 17 (3), pp. 5-21.
2. Corey, M.S. & Corey, G. (1997). Ethical and legal issues in group counseling. *Groups: Process and Practice* (5<sup>th</sup> edition). Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole, pp. 25-58
3. Corey, M.S. & Corey, G. (1997). Ending a group. *Groups: Process and Practice* (5<sup>th</sup> edition). Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole, pp. 263-294
4. Dies, R., & Dies, K. (1993). The role of evaluation in clinical practice: Overview and group treatment illustration. International Journal of Group Psychotherapy, 43, pp.77-102
5. Hurdle, D. (1990). The ethnic group experience. Social Work With Groups, 13 (4). pp. 59-68
6. Klein, R. (1999). "Group Work Practice with Transgendered Male to Female Sex Workers", In Mallon, G. (1999) Social Services with Transgendered Youth (95-109).
7. Margolies, L. (1990). Cracks in the frame: Feminism and the boundaries of therapy. Women and Therapy, 9 (4), pp. 19-30.
8. Peterson, M (1992). The power differential in the professional/client relationship. At Personal Risk. New York: W.W. Norton and Co. pp. 34-49.
9. Riordan, R. J. and Beggs, M. S. (1988). Critical differences between self-help and therapy groups. Journal for Specialists in Group Work, 13, 1988. pp.24-28.
10. Rosenberg, P. (1984). Support groups: A special therapeutic entity. Small Group Behavior, 15, pp. 173-185.

### **Course Requirements**

1. Support/Self-Help Group Paper
2. Participation in either the Lab Group Experience or Family Group Retreat
3. Group Theory Presentation
4. Final Exam (optional)
5. Attendance and Participation

## **Grading**

- A Satisfactory completion of assignments 1-4  
Regular attendance and participation
- B+ Satisfactory completion of assignments 1-3  
Regular attendance and participation
- B Satisfactory completion of assignments 1-3  
Irregular attendance and/or participation (more than 2 absences)

## **Class Schedule**

January 16, 2003

Lecture: Introduction to Course  
Review of Syllabus  
Discussion of Assignments  
The History of Group Work

January 23, 2003

Lecture: Evolution of a Group (Corey & Corey video)  
Readings: Reserve reading 9: Some critical differences between self-help and therapy groups  
Reserve Reading 10: Support groups: A special therapeutic entity

January 30, 2003

Lecture: Therapeutic Factors in Groups  
Readings: Reid, Chapter 1: Groups to Help People  
Reid, Chapter 3: Therapeutic Factors in Groups

February 6, 2003

Lecture: The Concept of Group Development  
Lab Group #1  
\*Self-help/support group paper is due  
Readings: Reid, Chapter 4: The Group Cauldron

February 13, 2003

Lecture: Selection of Group Members  
Variables to Consider in Developing a Group  
Lab Group #2  
Readings: Reid, Chapter 5: The Person as Member

February 20, 2003

Lecture: Pre-group planning  
Establishing the Group  
Lab Group #3  
Readings: Reid, Chapter 9: Establishing the Group

February 27, 2003

Lecture: The Group Leader  
Assessment of Leadership Skills  
Lab Group #4  
Readings: Reid, Chapter 6: Worker in the Group

March 6, 2003

Lecture: Leadership Roles and Skills in Group Work  
Lab Group #5  
Readings: Reid, Chapter 7: Foundation Skills

March 13, 2003

Lecture: Strategies and Interventions for Group Leaders  
Dealing with Difficult Members  
Readings: Reid, Chapter 8: Worker Interventions  
Reid, Chapter 11: Program Activities

March 20, 2003

Spring Break—no class

March 27, 2003

Lecture: The Beginning Phase of the Group  
The Middle Phase of the Group  
\*Lab group paper is due  
Readings: Reid, Chapter 10: The Beginning Phase of Group Work  
Reid, Chapter 12: The Middle Phase of Group Work

April 3, 2003

Lecture: The Ending Phase of the Group  
Evaluation of Group Work  
Group Theory Presentations 1 & 2  
Readings: Reid, Chapter 13: The Ending Phase of Group Work  
Reserve reading 3: Ending a group  
Reserve reading 4: The role of evaluation in clinical practice: Overview  
and group treatment illustration

April 10, 2003

Lecture: Ethics and Professional Boundaries in Group Work  
Group Theory Presentations 3 & 4

Readings: Reserve readings 2: Ethical and legal issues in group counseling  
Reserve reading 8: The power differential in the professional/client relationship

April 17, 2003

Lecture: Multicultural/diversity issues in Group Work  
Proven interventions for specialized populations  
Group Theory Presentations 5 & 6

Readings: Reserve readings 1: Group work with mixed membership groups: Issues of race and gender  
Reserve reading 5: The ethnic group experience  
Reserve reading 6: Group work practice with transgendered male to female sex workers  
Reserve reading 7: Cracks in the frame: Feminism and the boundaries of therapy

April 24, 2003

Final Exam  
\*Retreat paper is due