

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

SW 525 - Clinical Social Work Practice with Groups

Course Outline
Spring 2005

Instructor: Sherry Cummings

Time: Thursday 9:00 - 11:50 p.m.

Office hrs: Thursday, 12:00 - 1:30pm

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Required Text

Henry, S. (1992) Group Skills in Social Work (Second Edition). Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole,.

Assigned Readings - on reserve in the library

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.

Corey, (1997). Groups: Process & Practice. Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole Publishing.

Dies (1993). The role of evaluation in clinical practice: Overview and group treatment illustration. International Journal of Group Psychotherapy, 43, 77-102

Gitterman & Shulman (1994). Mutual Aid Groups, Vulnerable Populations, and the Life Cycle, (Second Edition) New York: Columbia University Press, 1994.

Hurdle, (1990). The ethnic group experience. Social Work With Groups, 13(4). pp. 59-68.

Margolies, (1990). Cracks in the frame: Feminism and the boundaries of therapy. Women and Therapy, 9 (4), pp. 19-30.

Reid, Kenneth E., Social Work Practice with Groups: A Clinical Perspective, (Second Edition) Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole, 1997.

Riordan and Boggs, (1988). Some critical differences between self-help and therapy groups. Journal for Specialists in Group Work, 1, 24-28

Rosenberg (1984). Support groups: A special therapeutic entity. Small Group Behavior, 15, 173-185.

Toseland & Rivas (1984). An Introduction to Group Work Practice New York: MacMillan.

Yalom, (1995). The Theory and Practice of Group Psychotherapy, Fourth Edition, New York: Basic Books.

Course Requirements

Graduate level work includes an ability to synthesize one's experience and knowledge into an explication which illuminates theory and an understanding of the course material. The writing of papers and the exam is expected to be organized, succinct in conceptualization and syntax and grammatically correct. The following criteria will be used for all graded assignments:

1. quality and clarity of writing and organization
2. comprehensiveness
3. the extent to which course concepts, discussion and readings are reflected in the writing.
4. accuracy and specificity of observations.

I. Assigned Readings and Attendance at Class Sessions.

Students are expected to read the assigned readings before attending the class in which they are assigned. The readings have been selected to supplement the text and expand one's repertoire of group knowledge. Students are encouraged as they read and as they work with groups in the field to bring their reactions and questions to class for discussion. Regular attendance is essential given the purpose and design of this course.

II. Assignment on Group Work with a Vulnerable Population/Special Problem Area

Working in a small group, you will complete an assignment on group work with a particular client population/problem area. This assignment will involve a presentation by the group on what has been written about the client population (major issues with which they struggle, special dynamics, etc.), special factors to take in consideration when conducting groups with this population (how would format, duration, timing, and location of the groups be affected, what does this mean about the members' roles and leader's role, how might group dynamics be impacted?), what group methods/techniques are most effective based on all of the above? What type of inclusion/exclusion criteria would use for this type of group and why? What ethical concerns should you be sensitive to when running a group with this population? What might be the best methods of evaluating such a group? Group presentation evaluation guidelines are available at class the online website.

III. Participation in Small Group Labs

Students will be assigned to a small lab group that will meet weekly over the course of the semester for the purpose of learning experientially about the small group process. Each student will have the opportunity to lead their group at least once during the quarter. The lab groups will be conducted as follows:

* Members will be assigned to groups in the 1st class session. The lab groups will focus on issues related to becoming and being a professional social worker.

* Each student will be responsible for leading their respective group activities at least once. Prior to each session the group leader will plan the next group session. This planning should incorporate an analysis of the group dynamics and the implications they have for the next session's agenda. Group leaders have the option of meeting with the instructor to receive assistance in planning the session

* the lab group will meet weekly for 65 minutes - 50 minutes for the session and 15 minutes for session evaluation. After each session each student will complete a brief feedback sheet for the leader regarding the leader's performance. Leadership Evaluation forms are available at class the online website. The group leader will summarize the group meeting and invite other group members to comment on their perceptions about the group session.

* As part of the small group assignment, students will be required to maintain a *weekly log of their experience in the group*. This log should reflect the student's observations and an analysis of the group's stage of development and of the group dynamics, including a description and analysis of their role in the group and their feelings about the group process. Guidelines for the log are available at class the online website.

LOG DUE DATES: Logs are due weekly - hand-in logs during class following your lab group meetings

IV. Final Paper - the final paper will give students an opportunity to integrate their learning from the class and to critically apply this learning to experience within their lab group. Guidelines for the final paper are attached. Final papers are due April 14th. Guidelines for the final papers are available at class the online website.

Grade Distribution

1.	Vulnerable Population/Special Problem Assignment	30 points (18 individual, 12 group)
2.	Logs	30 points
3.	Final Papers	30 points
4.	Class participation	10 points

EVALUATION PROCEDURES AND GRADES

The following scale will be used for the final course grade:

- A (94-100) Outstanding/Superior.
Exceptional performance. Consistently exceeds expectations.
- B+ (90-93) Very Good.
Student consistently meets, and occasionally exceeds, normal expectations for the course.
- B (80-89) Good.
Student consistently meets normal expectations for the course.
- C+ (77-79) Average
There is unevenness in grasping course content. Student is inconsistent in meeting normal expectations for the course.
- C (70-76) Poor
There is lack of understanding of course content. Student does not meet course expectations.
- F (69-Below) Very Poor
There is a lack of attendance or incomplete assignments. Course expectations are not met.

Course Calendar, Outline, & Readings

WEEK #1 Introduction to Class
(1-13-05)

WEEK #2 Overview; Assignment of Lab Groups; Historical background of social work practice with groups
(1-20-05)

READINGS:

Reid, Chapter 2, "A Historical Context"

WEEK #3 Groups in Social Work Practice; Types of Groups; Different Theoretical Approaches
(1-27-05)

READINGS:

Gitterman & Shulman, "The Life Model, Mutual Aid, Oppression, and the Mediating Function" in Mutual Aid Groups, Vulnerable Populations, and the Life Cycle, pp. 3-28.

Riordan and Boggs, (1988). Some critical differences between self-help and therapy groups. Journal for Specialists in Group Work, 1, 24-28

Rosenberg (1984). Support groups: A special therapeutic entity. Small Group Behavior, 15, 173-185.

LAB GROUPS BEGIN

WEEK #4 Use of Groups as a Method of Practice; Interpersonal Influence Processes; Therapeutic Factors
(2-3-05)

READINGS:

Reid, Chapter 3, "Therapeutic Factors in Groups"

Lee & Swenson, "The Concept of Mutual Aid," in Mutual Aid Groups, Vulnerable Populations, and the Life Cycle, pp. 413-429.

WEEK #5 Social Worker Skills in Group Work; Overview of Concepts
(2-10-05)

READINGS:

Henry, Chapter 1 "Context"

Shulman, "Group Work Method" in Mutual Aid Groups, Vulnerable Populations, and the Life Cycle, pp. 29-58.

WEEK #6 Group Dynamics; Stages of group development
(2-17-05)

READINGS:

Henry, Chapters 2 "A Four-Dimensional Approach to Group Skills"

Toseland & Rivas, "Understanding Group Dynamics" in An Introduction to Group Work Practice, pp. 56-64

WEEK #7 Pre-Group Planning; Convening Stage
(2-24-05)

READINGS:

Henry, Chapters 3 & 4 "The Initial Stage" and "The Convening Stage"

Yalom, (1995). "Creation of the Group: Place, Time, Size, Preparation," The Theory and Practice of Group Psychotherapy, Fourth Edition, New York: Basic Books. pp. 266-278.

WEEK #8 Formation stage of the group, worker skills & role
(3-3-05)

READINGS: Henry, Chapter 5 "The formation Stage"

WEEK #9 Conflict/disequilibrium stage; Worker skills & role
(3-10-05)

READINGS: Chapter 6 "The Conflict/Disequilibrium Stage"

WEEK #10 Conflict/disequilibrium stage; Worker skills & role continued.....
(3-17-05)

WEEK #11 **Spring Break**
(3-24-05)

WEEK #12 The maintenance and termination stage, worker skills & role
(3-31-05)

READINGS: Henry, Chapters 7 & 8 - "The Maintenance Stage" and "The Termination Stage"

LAB GROUPS END

WEEK #13 Working With Difficult Clients and Group Situations; Evaluating Groups
(4-07-05) Groups for Special and Vulnerable Populations

READINGS:

Yalom, (1995). "Problem Patients," The Theory and Practice of Group Psychotherapy, pp.369-403.

Dies (1993). The role of evaluation in clinical practice: Overview and group treatment illustration. International Journal of Group Psychotherapy, 43, 77-102

WEEK # 14 Attending to Multiculturalism in Groups; Ethics and Professional Boundaries in
(4-14-05) Groups for Special and Vulnerable Populations

READINGS:

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.

Corey, (1997). "Ethical and Legal Issues in Group Counseling," in Groups: Process & Practice, pp. 25-58.

Hurdle, (1990). The ethnic group experience. Social Work With Groups, 13(4). pp. 59-68.

Margolies, (1990). Cracks in the frame: Feminism and the boundaries of therapy. Women and Therapy, 9 (4), pp. 19-30.

Final Papers Due

WEEK # 15 Wrap-Up and Evaluation
(4-21-05)