University of St. Thomas
Houston, Texas
Counselor Education Department
COUN 5358- Group Procedure Dynamics of Group Counseling
Spring 2018

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Email: saflores@stthom.edu Class Time: Thursday 5:00pm – 8:00pm
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Social Justice Teachings of the Catholic Church

Subsidiarity: Integrated in each course in the Counselor Education program is a sense of community. Students are guided to respect different perspectives within normed views. By using case study samples, students are exposed to varying situations not otherwise experienced.

Dignity and rights of children: The dignity and rights of all University of St. Thomas counseling program students along with the grade school students in which they work with receive confidentiality, respect, and appropriate supervision.

People have a right to an education: Equality is a major theme integrated in the Counselor Education program. In each course equality is stressed as evidenced in courses such as, however not limited to, Cultural Foundations and Multicultural Populations.

Text Books and Readings


Optional Reading

General Description of Course

COUN 5358 Group Procedures Dynamics of Group Counseling includes developing proficiency in the theories, strategies, and techniques of small group counseling including major elements related to group dynamics and methods for conceptualizing and effectively managing common group issues.

This course includes the mastery of content and processes related to group dynamics and methods used with common group challenges. It probes the challenges of interpersonal relationships including but not limited to those of language, race, ethnicity, class, gender, age, and historically devalued and privilege populations. It provides the opportunity to investigate content and practice related to group leadership, the stages of group process, the posing and solving of problems which are specific to group process. It peruses the professional, legal, and ethical issues related to group counseling. Students have the opportunity to practice appropriate boundaries and self-disclosure. They participate in an educational group as leader and member.

This course involves three equally important components, namely, cognitive, affective, and professional.

Cognitive

The cognitive components of this course include but are not limited to organizing, researching, integrating, creating, writing, and entering into academic, professional conversations with peers and professor in a learning community. Students acquire knowledge, abilities, and skills in becoming successful group members and leaders. They will be able to modify group theories and practices to address issues of culture, diversity, and historical privilege and oppression. They will expand their knowledge, abilities, and skills to facilitate the success of group members whose first language is not English.

Affective

The affective components of this course include but are not limited to bringing life experiences to the table when they enhance the dialogue. Students keep journals on reflections regarding the experiences in this course, especially, their participation in the psycho-educational groups as members and leaders.

Professional

The professional components of this course include but are not limited to demonstrating appropriate boundary setting, self-disclosure, and good judgment especially in their participation in the psycho-educational group as members and leaders. Students will be able to modify group theories, strategies, and techniques to meet a diverse group membership. They will consistently demonstrate legal and ethical behavior and demonstrate awareness of the limits of confidentiality as members or leaders of groups.

Competencies

Professional School Counselors:

1. Discern when individual or group counseling is more helpful for students.
2. Use the basic principles of group dynamics and group procedures in keeping with the developmental stages of students.
3. Demonstrate familiarity with the history of group work and the unique characteristics of major group theories.
4. Communicate familiarity with a number of group growth and intervention systems, strategies, and techniques and be able to choose among them for the development of groups.
5. Demonstrates a familiarity with typical stages of group development, developmentally appropriate interventions strategies associated with each stage, and core group leadership skills used throughout the group process.
6. Indicate an awareness of the most frequently observed facilitative and debilitative roles that group members may assume and relevant management strategies for each role.
7. Be conversant regarding the current and landmark research related to group counseling, particularly as it relates to one’s area of specialty, for example, elementary school, teen eating disorders, or grief counseling.
8. Demonstrate personal behavior and sensitivity to issues of language, race, ethnicity, class, gender, historically devalued and privileged populations, and other issues of culture and diversity relevant to group counseling.
9. Carry out legal and ethical practice in group work throughout the semester.

Professional school counselors provide evidence of competencies by demonstrating ability to:

1. Specify types of problems that are particularly suited to group as contrasted with individual counseling.
2. Display a working knowledge of group dynamics including but not limited to content and process variables, various leadership styles, and conditions under which groups promote healthy growth.
3. Distinguish between group counseling, group psychotherapy, and self-help groups. Display an awareness of other variables related to groups such as process analysis, therapeutic factors in groups, cohesiveness, informed consent, and constructive feedback exchange.
4. Co-lead or lead ongoing psycho-educational group sessions supervised by the professor. Engage in group processing of the experience as leader or member. Reflect in writing concerning the experience of being a group leader or member.
5. Demonstrate appropriate use of blocking, clarification, confrontation, cutting off, linking, holding focus, reframing, rounds, here and now interaction, paraphrasing, imparting information, providing feedback, scanning, self-disclosure, shifting focus, using voice, verbal tracking group processing and processing observing.
6. Organize and prepare for a group in the beginning stage, working stage, and termination procedures. Engage in formative and summative evaluations of group effectiveness.
7. Demonstrate ability to identify and manage member roles such as group joker, silent member, rescuer, intellectualizing member, hostile member, withdrawn member, overly dependent member, the Old Pro, the questioner, and help-rejecting complainer.
8. Demonstrate awareness and practice of professional standards of practice and codes of ethics such as that of the Association of Specialists in Group Work (ASGW).

Demonstrate competence and confidence in working with issues of language, race, ethnicity, class, gender, historically devalued and privileged populations, and other issues of culture and diversity relevant to group counseling.

Professional Standards of Behavior

Attendance and Punctuality: Students are expected to be present for all class sessions. **80% of class time attendance is mandatory** for completion of this course. Students are expected to arrive by the scheduled class time (5:00pm) and stay until the session ends (8:00pm). Exceptions to this requirement will be made only once during the course in case of family emergency, poor health, or other related issues. Students are expected to keep the instructor informed via email/phone calls/messages during the time they may remain absent and/or are running late. Failure to comply by this requirement will affect class participation grade.

Academic Integrity: Cheating is considered the actual attempted practice of fraudulent or deceptive actions for the purpose of improving grade. **In situations where the student may be considered a suspect towards cheating, serious measures such receiving an “F” on the assignment will be**
considered. Taking credit for any thought, idea, or work that is not your own is plagiarism. Any instance of academic dishonesty will be documented and reported to the Dean of the School of Education. Students will be informed of this action and may submit a written response to the charge. The instructor has the right to fail the student for the specific project or the entire course. When writing any paper, reference any information, websites, books, etc. that is not your own, as directed by the *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (6th ed.), (2010). **Plagiarism is a serious offense that will cause you, the student to fail the course and can lead to steps being taken for dismissal from the program and UST. Plagiarism is a violation of integrity.**

**Late Assignments:** Complete all assignments by the due date. It is the instructor’s policy that late assignments will not be accepted. **Prior permission should be sought from the instructor at least two days in advance in situations where students are unable to turn in the assignments by the due date. Late assignments without prior permission will account for zero on that assignment.** Submission of late assignments will only be permitted under extenuating circumstances and will be at the discretion of the instructor. Only hospitalization or other equally serious life experiences can be held as a ground for late assignment.

**Incomplete Grades:** Incomplete grades will only be given for extreme emergencies, at the discretion of the instructor. A death in your family, extreme illness, military activation, or other significant events outside of your control may be grounds for an Incomplete grade.

**Professional Conduct:** Students are expected to maintain professional behavior in the classroom when working in groups with consistent participation, cooperation, sharing responsibilities, and respect for one another during classroom and group discussions. Professional conduct will also incorporate, respect towards the professor and will be gauged in being punctual to class, respectful and professional interactions via email or face-to-face, refraining from using technology for personal purposes when in class and during the class presentations by instructor or colleagues, and adhering to course requirements. Determining professional conduct will be at the discretion of the instructor. Inappropriate professional conduct in any way as mentioned above, will result in drop of a letter grade.

**Use of Personal Technology Devices:** This course expects students to keep their cell phones on silent mode or turned off during class. In emergency situation, students may notify the instructor before class and may step out to attend a call and return to the classroom as quickly as possible. All laptops, iPads, tablets, and other electronic devices should be on mute and could be used only for class purposes. **Accessing cell phones or other electronics for personal reasons during class is considered disrespectful towards other students and the instructors.** If the instructor notices students accessing electronics for personal reason, the student will be called out, it’s would be recorded and documented, and result in lowering of 5 points from overall grade. **Students will NOT be pardoned if identified using electronics for personal reasons.**

**Use of UST email accounts:** All email correspondence will be through the mystthom email system. Please check your email and Blackboard through your mystthom account for correspondence and announcements. In addition, **emails send by students to the instructor must have a clear subject description along with the purpose of the email.** Not adhering to these requirements will affect participation grade.

**Language Diversity:** The University of Saint Thomas values the speaking of more than one language. This course is especially sensitive to issues of language diversity, both on behalf of students for whom English is not their first language and in preparation to work with clients for whom English is not their first language. **The professor is always available to assist students who might need help with written**
English. In addition, it is recommended that students who are bilingual or multilingual bring these gifts to the table in their journey through this course.

Americans with Disabilities Act: In accordance with Section 504 of the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, the professor will make all possible and reasonable adjustments in policies, practices, services, and facilities to ensure equal and optimal educational programs and activities. Whenever a special accommodation is necessary in order to ensure access to full participation by students with disabilities, the student must inform the professor of any disability or needed accommodations. In addition, the student must contact the University Office for ADA Compliance. Only informing the professor is not adequate. The professor must receive a written recommendation for accommodations from the University Office for ADA Compliance.

The University Office for ADA Compliance may be asked to seek proof of disability and specify accommodations as requested. Contact the professor immediately if you have a need. All information regarding accommodations is confidential. You can see the professor before or after class or request time to discuss any matters found on the recommendations of the University Office for ADA Compliance. Any student with documented special needs requiring academic adjustments or accommodations for enhancing potential for success in this course is requested to speak to me during the first two weeks of class. Students with special needs will contact the University Office for ADA Compliance by calling 713-525-3162 or 6953. It is essential that the professor receive official documentation for any accommodations that are made on behalf of students. This protects students’ rights. Please let me know if I can be of any assistance in this regard.

Course Evaluation at the End of the Semester: Students are asked to evaluate the course and instructor at the end of each semester. This evaluation is extremely helpful in the improvement of our courses. Please participate in this important process.

ASSIGNMENTS

1. Participation (14 points, 2 points per course session): Students are expected to comply by the professional standards of attendance and punctuality as mentioned above to receive full participation credit. Being present and actively participating in class discussions, group work, and other course assignments is essential for this course.

2. Topic Presentation (25 points): Students will present on one of the following theoretical approaches below. Each presentation must have a minimum of 10-12 slides and the information presented should be informative, interactional, creative, and must clearly delineate the therapeutic group counseling process. Please note, I do not want to see an overview of the chapter from the textbook. A minimum of 7 references are required for this presentation. Your text may be a reference. A total of 20 minutes will be assigned to each presentation.

- The Psychoanalytic Approaches to Group
- Adlerian Group Counseling
- Person Centered Approach to Groups
- Gestalt Therapy in Groups
Existential Approach to Groups
Psychodrama in Groups
Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy in Groups
Cognitive Behavioral Approaches to Groups
Choice/Reality Therapy in Groups
Solution Focused Brief Therapy and Motivational Interviewing in Groups

3. **Group Counseling Facilitator & Participant Role Play (16 points):** This assignment has been divided into four parts for student convenience. Follow the steps below to complete this assignment.

- **Conducting group:** Students will form an in-class psychoeducational counseling group and conduct a 40-minutes group session. Each student will facilitate only one group session as a group facilitator.

- **Activity template:** Student facilitator will provide a 1-2 page detailed structured group activity based on the various topics/needs of the group. An electronic template for this will be provided by the instructor.

- **Weekly journal:** As the group begins, students will maintain a weekly journal noting their experiences of leading and participating in the group.

- **Reflection paper:** Lastly, student facilitator will write a 2-page reflection paper about their experiences leading the group. The following factors should be highlighted in their papers:
  - The name and type of group formed (1pt)
  - Goals and objectives implemented (1pt)
  - Feelings and thoughts about how useful the stimulating activity was (2pts)
  - Whether the goals of the group were achieved (2pts)
  - The effectiveness of the group process (2pts)
  - Thoughts and feelings related to leading the group (2pts)

An electronic copy of the reflection paper will be submitted to the instructor no later than 5:00pm on the following class day of group role play presentation.

4. **Group Counseling Observation Reflection (15 points):** For this assignment students, will observe professional group counseling sessions within their school campus. Students are recommended to attend at-least two sessions of the same group of the population of their choice. Ethical guidelines of the organization/group and university professional standards should be maintained by students when observing and/or when participating in these groups. Students will then write a 3-4 page reflection paper that includes the following information as it reflects in the text book and the experiential group session:

- Group name, goals, and objectives (use terminologies from the text)
• Populations served (homogenous or heterogeneous)
• What is the theoretical framework of the leader?
• Leadership style(s) observed in the group (use terms from the text)
• Discuss the techniques used
• What would you have implemented differently? (refer to some concepts you learned in your class)
• What have you learned about group process from participating in this group?
• Overall thoughts and feelings (describe your overall experience, and how this resonates with you as a client in group setting)
• APA requirement of title page, running head, headings, page numbers

5. **Comprehensive Final Exam (30 points)**: Students will take a comprehensive final exam. The take home final exam will be emailed on the last evening of the course and will be due *electronically on March 4th, 2018 by 11:59p*. Exams that are not turned in by the due date will not be graded and counted as zero.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grading</th>
<th>ASSIGNMENTS</th>
<th>Possible Earned Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Participation</td>
<td></td>
<td>14</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Topic Presentation</td>
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<td>25</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Group Facilitator &amp; Participant Role Play</td>
<td></td>
<td>16</td>
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<td>4. Group Counseling Observation Reflection</td>
<td></td>
<td>15</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Comprehensive Final Examination</td>
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<td>30</td>
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**Total = 100% (100 points)**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Grade Points</th>
<th>Numeric Range Set by Instructor</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
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<td>A-</td>
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<tr>
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<td>D+</td>
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Criteria for Grading Written Work

- Addresses the topic with accuracy and insight.
- Writing skills are expected to be at a graduate school level.
- Follows directions.
- Presents material in a clear and logical manner.
- Gives evidence of ability to synthesize information from various sources to support the topic.
- Uses elements of form such as grammar, spelling, sentence structure, and punctuation correctly.
- Is on time.

The following APA guidelines must be used for all written papers

- Times New Roman
- Font 12
- Indent new paragraphs five spaces or tab
- Double space the entire paper
- Margins - 1" top, bottom, left and right
- Cover page addressing your name, assignment, and name of the university
- Header according to APA standards
- Reference page

Tentative Course Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session</th>
<th>Day/Date</th>
<th>Instructional Focus</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1       | Jan 18   | Introduction/Syllabus  
Sign-Up  
- Chapter presentation topic  
- Group role play week & topic |
|         |          | Chapter 1. Introduction to Group Work  
Chapter 2. Group Leadership |
| 2       | Jan 25   | Chapter 3. Ethical and Professional Issues in Group Practice  
Chapter 4. Early Stages in Development of a Group  
Chapter 5. Later Stages in Development of a Group  
**Group Role Play (1)** |
| 3       | Feb 1    | Chapter 6. The Psychoanalytic Approach to Groups  
Chapter 7. The Adlerian Group Counseling  
**Presentation Due**  
**Group Role Play (2)** |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Chapters</th>
<th>Assignments</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Feb 8</td>
<td>Chapter 10. The Person-Centered Approach to Groups</td>
<td>Presentation Due</td>
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<td>Chapter 11. Gestalt Therapy in Groups</td>
<td>Group Role Play (3)</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Feb 15</td>
<td>Chapter 13. Cognitive Behavioral Approaches to Groups</td>
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<td>Chapter 14. Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy to Groups</td>
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<td>Chapter 8. Psychodrama in Groups</td>
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<td>Chapter 9. The Existential Approach to Groups</td>
<td>Group Role Play (5)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Group Counseling Observation Reflection Due</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Mar 1</td>
<td>Chapter 15. Choice/Reality Therapy in Groups</td>
<td>Presentation Due</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Chapter 16. Solution-Focused Brief Therapy and Motivational Interviewing in Groups</td>
<td>Group Role Play (6)</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Comprehensive Final Exam Due March 4th by 11:59p</td>
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