

Group Dynamics in Clinical and Congregational Settings
PC 221-3
Summer 2008

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This online syllabus should be used to gain a better understanding of the content and focus of a course. The syllabus given out in the class may differ from this online version and its content supersedes that of the online syllabus.

Course Description

This introductory course is designed to assist students in gaining the rudimentary skills and knowledge of conducting group counseling in a practical way. The course will focus on psychotherapeutic, psychoeducational, and support groups in a brief format. An integration of psychological, theological, and systems thinking will be presented through theories, literature, and class interaction and personal reflection. Specific concepts and techniques will be framed in systemic ways of addressing group processes. Participants will explore and experience the interplay of therapeutic forces within the group process, their role as group leader in facilitating growth of the group as well as individual members, and the skills and responsibilities of the leader.

Objectives

1. Have a working knowledge of selected group theories and group processes.
2. Develop a beginning process to understand how to identify, respond to, and facilitate therapeutic forces which interact in groups in such a manner as to enhance the growth of the group and its members.
3. Understand how to integrate theological and psychological thinking when working with groups from a systems perspective.
4. Demonstrate basic group leadership skills and application across various stages of group development.
5. Understand and have a working base for ethical issues relevant to group boundaries and group process.
6. Meet selected core competencies of AAMFT.
7. Complete individualized learning goals reflecting ability in leading groups.

Course Requirements

The professor will . . .

- Provide structure for learning about group counseling through presentations, creating a format for discussions, role plays, and assignments.
- Supplement reading materials with articles to be used in individual presentations.
- Address core competencies of AAMFT in group counseling.
- Help students set and complete individualized learning goals.

Students will . . .

- Be in attendance, understanding excused/unexcused absences will require additional work.
- Take an active role in the group process and in learning skills and knowledge of group counseling by completing the readings, participating in discussions and role plays, and working toward specific learning goals.
- Demonstrate an integration of reading assignments in written material, class discussions, and group process.
- Demonstrate critical thinking, theological reflection, and an understanding of systems in group process.
- Set individual learning goals and complete them by the end of the semester. (Learning goals must be approved by the instructor.)
- Complete all reading and written assignments on time.

Evaluation

	Grade Points
1. Participation	10%
✓ Complete reading assignments	
✓ Openly engage other participants	
✓ Critical reflections	
✓ Prompt, regular attendance	
2. Class presentation	5%
Participant will be responsible for leading class, providing key bullet points for instructor (approx. 2 pages) and summarizing their assigned reading (to be assigned on first class day). PowerPoint may be used for this presentation with submission of a hard copy of slides to instructor.	
3. Written work	
✓ Reflection papers	25%
Complete two papers (5 typed pages each) reflecting a particular theory, group process, or theme. Both papers need to incorporate elements of your learning goals.	
✓ Final paper	25%

Complete a final paper (12-15 typed pages) demonstrating how you would develop and implement a group in your future career setting. Integrate a particular theory and explain how you would incorporate it into your leadership role and group process.

- ✓ Demonstration..... 30%
In-class small group demonstration reflecting on a therapy group in process, indentifying the type and purpose of the group, group interactions, outcomes to achieve, integration of theological, psychological, systemic issues. (Total percentage will be determined by other class participants and given to each group member.)

- ✓ Overall participation 5%

Required Readings

Text

Corey, G. & Corey, M.S. (2006). *Groups: Process and practice* (7th ed.). Belmont, CA: Thomson, Brooks, Cole.

Articles and other readings available on Blackboard and on reserve in the library:

Corey, G. (2000). *Theory and practice of group counseling* (5th ed.). Belmont, CA: Brooks, Cole, Wadsworth Pub.

Yalom, I. (2005). *The theory and practice of group psychotherapy* (5th ed.). New York: Basic Books.

Shapiro, J., Peltz, L. & Bernadett-Shapiro, S. (1998). *Brief group treatment*. Belmont, CA: Brooks/Cole Publishing Co.

Other readings as assigned.

Use of Inclusive Language

Learning is fundamentally concerned with communication, self-expression, and personal and social transformation. Learning in this setting respects individuals, their feelings, their value and worth, and their particular potential for contribution to common knowledge and community virtue. Learning is fundamentally and intentionally inclusive.

Since all learning is inherently ethical and political, and theological discourse has been traditionally patriarchal and gender exclusive, the Seminary has established a policy, in the interest of constructing an inclusive and egalitarian community, that the language (symbols, metaphors) used in all our class discussions and written work shall be gender inclusive and

respectful of all persons and groups as valued human creatures of God. Racism also permeates our society and is detrimental to any learning environment. We need to use language, symbols, and metaphors that honor our commitment to racial inclusiveness.

Academic Honesty

Be careful to fully document any information included in your papers that is not original. Also, be aware when you summarize information, even when you give the complete documentation information, your summaries should be in your own words and not retain too much of the original author's style. A paper that presents the ideas or writing of someone else as if they were one's own is considered plagiarism, and school and departmental policies on academic honesty will be followed. The Academic Support Center has handouts, and/or the Library can be of assistance.

Evaluation of Written Assignments

Graduate level writing is expected in this course. LPTS has adopted the Chicago/Turabian style for all written work.

ASC (Academic Support Center) provides instruction on all matters related to written work and are available at regularly scheduled times. Please call or stop by to make an appointment, or visit their website at http://lpts.edu/Academic_Resources/ASC/Online_Writing_Lab.asp.

Attendance

In line with Seminary policy, prompt attendance at class sessions is expected out of respect for your fellow classmates as well as the instructor. Late arrival for a class affects the learning environment. Learning is a complex activity that requires conceptual and experiential participation by those who wish to learn. While circumstances may require an adult learner to miss class occasionally, absences from more than 10% of the classroom experience will affect student learning and, consequently, the student's grade. Extreme circumstances, such as major health problems, family concerns, etc., must be discussed with the professor **prior** to multiple missed classes. Students unable to attend at least 75% of classes are advised to drop the class prior to the Registrar's WP deadline, or receive a failing grade.

Keep in mind – one day of a summer course is equal to one week of a semester course.

Class Schedule

June 2-20, 2008

June 2 Introduction and overview of course
 Text Reading: Corey, Chpts 1 & 4
 Blackboard: Yalom, Chpts 1 & 8

- June 3 Class discussion
Text Reading: Corey, Chpt 3
Blackboard: Shapiro, Chpt 7
- June 4 **LEARNING GOALS DUE**
Text Reading: Corey, Chpt 5
- June 5 **1ST REFLECTION PAPER DUE – to be placed in Blackboard digital drop box by noon**
Text Reading: Corey, Chpt 2
Blackboard: Yalom, Chpt 5
- June 6 Text Reading: Corey, Chpt 5
- June 9 Blackboard: Yalom, Chpts 2 & 6
- June 10
- June 11 Text Reading: Corey, Chpt 6
Blackboard: Yalom, Chpt 13
- June 12 **2ND REFLECTION PAPER DUE – to be placed in Blackboard digital drop box by noon**
Blackboard: Shapiro, Chpt 4
- June 13 Small group demonstrations
Text Reading: Corey, Chpt 7
- June 16 Small group demonstrations
Text Reading: Corey, Chpt 8
- June 17 Small group demonstrations
Blackboard: Articles regarding various groups
- June 18 **FINAL PAPER DUE – to be placed in Blackboard digital drop box by noon**
Blackboard: Yalom, Chpt 12
- June 19 Role Plays
Blackboard: Articles regarding group termination processes
- June 20 Wrap-up – Developing your leadership style
Blackboard: Shapiro, Chpt 16