EDCP 651: Group Counseling in Schools
Spring 2018

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Class Meeting Site: JMZ 1123
Class Meeting Time: 4:15-7:00pm
Office Hours: By appointment

Course Description:
Students investigate practical and theoretical concepts of group dynamics and group process to acquire skills in facilitating various kinds of group interaction with children, adolescents, and adults. They will examine how group counseling approaches with adults may be applied to group work with children and adolescents. Students explore interpersonal dynamics, personal communication styles, fundamental group counseling strategies, and group facilitation skills through class and applied experiences both in and outside of class.

The course helps beginning group leaders apply their new knowledge to working in groups with children, adolescents, and adults across diverse settings. Through the use of experiential group activities, students acquire experience in conducting counseling, psychoeducational and task/work groups. Each class consists of a didactic and experiential component encompassing the discussion of reading materials, experiential exercises, and group role-plays. Students should be prepared to practice their group work skills with each other as well as with real clients. When appropriate, students will implement the methods and strategies discussed in class at their practicum sites.

Course Objectives:
By the completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Identify the essential principles of group dynamics;
2. Understand the process components involved in the typical stages of a group’s development;
3. Describe the specific ethical and legal issues that are unique to group work;
4. Identify the personal characteristics, leadership styles, orientations, and behaviors of group leaders and their impact on group process;
5. Discuss various approaches to group work, e.g., task and psychoeducational groups;
6. Discuss the principles of multicultural group work and how culture impacts a group;
7. Teach a classroom guidance lesson/large group psychoeducation group;
8. Facilitate a mock psychoeducational group
9. Understand how counseling theories may be applied to group work with children, adolescents, and adults;
10. Design and propose a counseling, psychoeducational, or task group;
11. Reflect on “self” within the group context and how your beliefs, values, and behaviors affect group process, group members, and yourself as a leader.

**INSTRUCTIONAL METHOD:** Class time will be devoted primarily to large and small group discussions, videos, presentations, counseling demonstrations, role-plays, and the experiential group activities. Students are asked to complete the assigned readings prior to coming to class and be prepared to actively engage in discussions.

**REQUIRED READINGS:** Assigned readings are all uploaded on our Elms space. If necessary, additional readings will be emailed to the class at least one week prior to the date they are due. You will come to class with 1-2 prepared questions for each assigned article/chapter.

**GENERAL COURSE EXPECTATIONS:**

1. Engagement in a high level of self-exploration and critical self-reflection that includes reflecting on your personal and professional experiences, identifying and questioning assumptions and beliefs that affect your actions, willingness to accept and give feedback, and integrating your experiential knowledge gained in this class with the theoretical and technical learning about group work.

2. Participation in experiential group activities in the classroom and exploring your roles as group members within this group experience. This experience is integral to understanding and practicing the skills and process of group work that are necessary for becoming an effective group leader.

3. Students are expected to display all of the professional dispositions of counselors including (a) openness to new ideas, (b) flexibility, (c) cooperativeness with others, (d) willingness to accept and use feedback, (e) ability to give feedback constructively, (f) awareness of own impact on others, (g) ability to deal with conflict, (h) ability to accept personal responsibility, (i) ability to express feelings effectively and appropriately, (j) respect for diverse views and openness to diversity, (k) attention and adherence to ethical and legal standards, and (l) showing initiative and motivation.

4. To engage in reading outside of class and to be prepared to discuss these readings in class. It is essential to be up-to-date on the readings so that class time can be used for discussion of materials and practice of skills and techniques.

5. To be committed to learning outside of the box by engaging in experiential activities and group work inside and outside the classroom, e.g., at your practicum sites, within task groups, applied experiences, etc.

**EVALUATION CRITERIA:** The course is graded A to C. Late assignments will not be accepted. Poorly written assignments, papers, or tests will receive lower grades regardless of the content; it is suggested that spelling, grammar, and punctuation always be checked. In addition to expecting regular class attendance and informed class participation, course grades will be based on the following:

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<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Score Range</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(a) Attendance and Active Participation</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>90-100</td>
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<tr>
<td>(b) Leading a Mock Group</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>80-89</td>
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A grade of incomplete is available only for work which has been of passing quality throughout the term in circumstances in which there is good reason the work cannot be completed and with the approval of the instructor. Students should discuss anticipated obstacles in a timely fashion (not at the end of the term).

(a) ATTENDANCE AND ACTIVE PARTICIPATION: As this is an experiential class with much of the learning occurring in the context of discussions, demonstrations, small group activities, role-plays, and experiential groups, students are expected to attend all class meetings. Students are required to read the assigned readings and actively take part in class discussions and group activities as well as in any inside or outside class experiences. Students’ grades will be impacted by failing to display professional dispositions (e.g., adherence to professional ethics, respect for diverse views, tolerance of ambiguity, appreciation and openness to cultural difference, and confidentiality) and demonstrate respect for the professor and their colleagues, (e.g., checking email, im, cell phones, or any other distractions).

(b) LEADING A MOCK GROUP: To prepare for the task of facilitating relevant psychoeducational/counseling groups in K-12 settings, you will practice leading a psychoeducational/counseling group with your peers in class. Students will work in assigned teams to identify and implement three 20-minute small group psychoeducational/counseling sessions. Evidence-based group curriculums will be provided by the instructor. You may choose from the curriculums provided by the instructor or other curriculum after discussion with the instructor. Students should submit a group outline to the instructor at least 48 hours in advance of the assignment.

(c) TASK GROUP WORK AND GROUP PROPOSAL: To prepare for the task of developing and proposing relevant psychoeducational/counseling groups in K-12 settings, you will construct a psychoeducational/counseling group with children or adolescents. Students will work in assigned teams to develop, plan, propose, and reflect on a psychoeducational or counseling group of 8 sessions for elementary, middle, or high school children and adolescents.

This assignment will consist of two parts: (i) working as a task group to prepare a group proposal; and (ii) a 30-minute presentation to class.

(i) Group Proposal: Students are required to work in task groups to develop a clear and convincing proposal for a group (8 sessions) with children and adolescents in a K-12 school setting. Students (task group members) are required to meet face-to-face at least 3 times to develop the group proposal.

In small task groups of 3-4 persons, students will collaborate to develop a proposal for an 8 session psychoeducational/counseling group with children or adolescents. The quality of the group proposal should be such that it could be presented to a
principal or for a grant proposal (RFP). The group proposal should be targeted to a specific population and should reflect research related to that population. Proposals should include sections outlining a rationale, objectives, practical considerations, procedures, and evaluation plan.

(ii) **Group Proposal Presentation:** Teams will participate in a 30-minute presentation of their group proposal. The teams should approach the presentations as if the class were the school administrators that they need approval from to implement the psychoeducational/counseling groups in a particular school.

(d) **DISCUSSION FACILITATION AND GROUP ACTIVITY:** Each student will facilitate a 30-minute discussion based on the readings once during the semester. The facilitations will include two primary components: (a) leading a class discussion that addresses summarizes the main points from the readings; and (b) leading an experiential activity (e.g., task group, role-play) that is related to the assigned readings. Also, be sure to maintain a critical lens when reviewing the readings and incorporate in your facilitation any counseling or general dominant discourses you identify.

**UNIVERSITY POLICIES & RESOURCES:** As a student, you have the responsibility to be familiar with and uphold the *Code of Academic Integrity* and the *Code of Conduct*, as well as for notifying your course instructors in a timely fashion regarding academic accommodations related to absences and accessibility as indicated below.

You also have the right to know the expectations set by University Policy. The University of Maryland values the diversity of its student body and is committed to providing a classroom atmosphere that encourages the equitable participation of all students.

University Policies outlined at this link are particularly relevant to your experience in academic courses: [http://apps.gradschool.umd.edu/Catalog/policy.php?the-academic-record](http://apps.gradschool.umd.edu/Catalog/policy.php?the-academic-record). Topics that are addressed in these policies include academic integrity, student and instructor conduct, accessibility and accommodations, attendance and excused absences, grades and appeals, copyright and intellectual property.

**ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:** It is expected that your work will be characterized by academic integrity and honesty. You are expected to be familiar with the University policy on academic dishonesty, as this policy applies to our class as well as to others. One aspect of this expectation is that your work will be referenced and documented appropriately. If you have any questions about proper documentation or any other issues pertaining to academic integrity, please consult appropriate resources (e.g., APA Publication manual).

**ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATIONS FOR PERSONS WITH UNIQUE NEEDS:** In compliance with and in the spirit of the Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA), I would like to work with you if you have a disability that is relevant to your work in this course. If you have a documented disability and wish to discuss academic accommodations, please do not hesitate to contact me.
**MULTICULTURAL STATEMENT:** The CHSE department is committed to creating a multicultural training environment, which is broadly defined as a place where diversity and opinions are respected. All faculty members strive to integrate multicultural and diversity issues in their courses in ways that are relevant to course content and process. It is hoped that students will contribute their unique perspectives to this effort by considering and raising issues related to multiculturalism and diversity and respecting others’ worldviews throughout this course.

**CourseEvalUM:** Your participation in the evaluation of courses through CourseEvalUM is a responsibility you hold as a student member of our academic community. Your feedback is confidential and important to the improvement of teaching and learning at the University as well as to the tenure and promotion process. By completing all of your evaluations each semester, you will have the privilege of accessing online, at Testudo, the evaluation reports for the thousands of courses for which 70% or more students submitted their evaluations.

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**COURSE SCHEDULE**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>TOPICS, READINGS, AND ASSIGNMENTS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1/30*</td>
<td>Course overview&lt;br&gt;Introductions/getting to know each other&lt;br&gt;Review syllabus and course requirements&lt;br&gt;Needs Assessment</td>
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2/27 **Group Work: Elementary Level**


3/6 **Developing and Planning**

Geroski & Kraus (2010). Chapters 1, 2

3/13* **Implementation and Preparing for Challenges**

Geroski & Kraus (2010). Chapters 3, 7

3/20 **No Class—Spring Break**

3/27 **Assessment and Leadership**

Geroski & Kraus (2010). Chapters 4, 5, 6

4/3 **Empowerment Groups for African American Girls**


4/10* **LGBT Groups**


**4/17**

**Groups for Academic Success**


**4/24**

**Groups for Older Teens**


**5/1**

**Groups for Specialized Circumstances**


**5/8**

**Task Group Presentations**

**Course wrap-up**

**ASSIGNMENT DUE: Group Proposal Paper**