**Group Counseling**

**COUN 7340**

***Spring 2012***

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**Department of**

**Special Education, Rehabilitation, and Counseling**

College of Education

Auburn University

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Office Hours:

**Thursdays 10:00AM- 11:30AM**

**or By Appointment**

Class: Wednesdays (4:00-6:50 p.m.)

3226 Haley Center



**Course Description:** Group experiences in life are ubiquitous for humans.From birth, most people live in small and large groups. Yet few individuals actually study group dynamics and build an understanding of group behavior. Even mental health workers, in the main, receive little training in understanding or facilitating groups. Fortunately, you have chosen to pursue graduate studies in a program that believes in asking you to devote some of your studies and practicum experiences to the area of group work. That’s admirable because most professional counselors and psychologists not only participate in small groups on a regular basis but also lead groups throughout their careers. Therefore, we are going to meet together this Spring for the purpose of studying group dynamics and group leadership to ensure that you not only become an astute observer of group dynamics but also that you learn how to provide quality service in your leadership of small groups. This course is designed to equip graduate students with the knowledge, attitudes, and skills required to lead groups effectively. With group dynamics as a foundation and basic framework, the course will focus on research, theory and practical leadership strategies and techniques. We will study such topics as process-outcome relationships in group work, salient therapeutic factors, types of groups, stages of group development, group structures, multicultural competencies, assumed and assigned roles, the nature of rules and norms, leadership styles, and ethical standards and professional issues.

**Course Content:**

* History of group work in mental health settings
* Types of small groups
* Definitions and conceptual perspectives of groups
* Principles of group dynamics
* Facilitation of cohesion
* Developmental stages of effective groups
* Group member's roles and behaviors
* Group leadership styles and approaches
* Analysis and synthesis of group counseling theories
* Structures and foci for different ages of group members
* Professional guidelines and standards
* Planning, facilitating and managing groups
* Contributions of self-disclosure and feedback
* Observational skill development
* Learning to *trust the process*

**Course Objectives:** Upon successful completion of the course, the student will be able to demonstrate:

A. Knowledge of…………

1. the nature of group work and dominant theories of group work, including  
   commonalties and distinguishing characteristics
2. group leadership styles, principles for effective leadership, and one's own  
   unique leadership style
3. principles of group dynamics, including group process components,  
   therapeutic factors within group work, and group member roles and behaviors
4. stages of group development, appropriate leader interventions, and  
   principles of collaborative group processing
5. principles of assessment of group members and methods for evaluating group process and outcomes
6. environmental contexts and the impact of group member diversity (e.g.,  
   gender, culture, learning style, group climate preference) on group member  
   behavior, group process, and group dynamics;
7. standards for ethical considerations unique to group work, best practices in  
   group work, and diversity competent group work.

B. *Skill in:*

1. leading a group counseling session under controlled conditions, including:  
   encouraging participation of group members; attending to, describing,  
   acknowledging, confronting, understanding, summarizing, and responding  
   empathically to group member behavior and statements, and to group  
   themes; eliciting information from and imparting information to group  
   members; providing appropriate self-disclosure; maintaining group focus;  
   and giving and receiving feedback in a group setting
2. applying theoretical concepts and research findings to the design of a group  
   in collaborative consultation with targeted populations to enhance the  
   ecological validity of planned group interventions
3. observing and identifying group process and employing contextual factors  
   (e.g., family of origin, neighborhood of residence, organizational  
   membership, cultural membership) in interpretation of individual and group  
   data
4. planning for a group work activity including such aspects as developing  
   overarching purpose, establishing goals and objectives, detailing methods  
   to be used in achieving goals and objectives, determining methods for  
   outcome assessment, and verifying the ecological and multicultural validity of a group work plan
5. assessing and facilitating member and group development and evaluating  
   and enhancing the work motivation of others as member of effective work  
   groups
6. reflective evaluation of one's personal leadership style, approach to group  
   work, and personally selected performance goals, and working  
   collaboratively with a co-leader and/or group members
7. identifying the ethical concerns raised by group interventions in different  
   settings with different clients and evidencing ethical and diversity-competent  
   practice in planning, observing, and participating in group activities

C. *Attitudes that:*

1. emphasize the importance of adhering to the ethical, best practice, and  
   diversity standards set by the profession for the conduct of group work
2. emphasize the need for continued re-examination of one's interpersonal  
   style, especially in a group context, and the need for continued growth and  
   change in life, whether counselor or client
3. reflect greater acceptance of others' perspectives and patterns of relating to  
   one another as central to effective group leadership
4. foster more democratic approaches to working with others in the

**Course Format:** Students are reminded that the course syllabus provides a general plan for the course. The format of the class will vary depending on the topic to be covered. The course will provide opportunities for students to examine relevant issues and to demonstrate their group counseling skills in practice exercises regularly scheduled in the class. The course includes didactic content, personal reflection, and experiential elements designed to facilitate students' growth and development as competent group workers. Lecture, discussion, role-plays, small group interactions, structured large group exercises, and in-class presentations are learning strategies that will be used in this course. All these activities are designed to complement the assigned readings and other didactic information provided in class to increase understanding of various group work concepts, to increase awareness of group and interpersonal dynamics, and to help increase understanding of oneself as a group leader. Therefore, personal and active involvement in the process is essential for successful completion of this course (see *The Basic Agreement).*

**Resource Materials:**

A. *Required texts:*

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

Corey, M.S., & Corey, G. (2006). *Groups: Process and Practice*, (7th edition). Belmont, CA: Thompson Brooks/Cole.

B. Resource Texts: *Valuable supplemental texts*

Delucia-Waack, J.L., Gerrity, D.A., Kalodner, C.R., & Riva, M.T. (2004). *Handbook of group counseling and psychotherapy*. Thousand Oaks, CA Sage.

Forsyth, D.R. (2006). *Group dynamics 5th ed*.). Belmont, CA: Thomson Wadsworth.

Fuhriman, A., & Burlingame, G.M., Eds. (1994). *Handbook of group psychotherapy*. New York: Wiley.

Janis, I.L. (1972). *Victims of groupthink*. Boston: Houghton-Mifflin.

Johnson. D.W. (2003). *Reaching out: Interpersonal effectiveness and self-actualization (8th ed.)*. Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

Wheelan, S.A. (2005). *The handbook of group research and practice*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Winston, R., Bonney, W., Miller, T., & Dagley, J. (1988). *Promoting student development through intentionally structured groups.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

###### C. Journal Articles/Chapters

Barlow, S., Fuhriman, A., & Burlingame, G.M. (2004). Therapeutic application of groups: From Pratt’s thought control classes to modern group psychotherapy. *Group Dynamics, Theory, Research and Practice, 4*(1), 115-134.

Barlow, S., Fuhriman, A., & Burlingame, G.M. (2004). The history of group counseling and psychotherapy. In J. Delucia-Waack, D.A. Gerrity, C.R. Kalodner, & M.T. Riva, Eds.). *Handbook of group counseling and psychotherapy*. Thousand Oaks, CA Sage.

Burlingame, G.M., Fuhriman, A., & Mosier, J. (2003). The differential effectiveness of group psychotherapy: A meta-analytic perspective. *Group Dynamics, Theory, Research and Practice, 7*(1), 3-11.

Burlingame, G.M., Kapetanovic, S., & Ross, S. (2005). Group psychotherapy. In S.A. Wheelan (Ed), *The handbook of group research and practice* (pp. 387-406). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Burlingame, G.M., MacKenzie, K.R., & Strauss, B. (2004). Small group treatment: Evidence for effectiveness and mechanisms for change. In M. Lambert (Ed.), *Handbook of psychotherapy and behavior change* (pp. 213-249). New York: John Wiley.

Dagley, J.C. (1999). Restoration of group process in career counseling groups. *The International Journal of Action Methods: Psychodrama, skill training, and role playing, 51*, 4, 141-158.

Dagley, J.C., Gazda, G.M., Eppinger, S.E., & Stewart, E.A. (1994). Group psychotherapy research with children, preadolescents, and adolescents. In A. Fuhriman & G.M. Burlingame (Eds.), *Handbook of group psychotherapy: An empirical and clinical synthesis* (pp. 340-369).

Delucia-Waak, J. (1997). Measuring the effectiveness of group work: A review and analysis of process and outcome measures. *Journal for Specialists in Group Work, 22,* 277-293.

Forsyth, D. (Ed.). (1998). Special issue: Research methods. *Group Dynamics: Theory, Research and Practice, 2(4)*.

Forsyth, D. (Ed.). (2000). Special issue: 100 years of research. *Group Dynamics: Theory, Research and Practice, 4(1)*.

Forsyth, D. (Ed.). (2002). Special issue: Groups: The internet. *Group Dynamics: Theory, Research and Practice, 6(1)*.

Kivlighan, DM., Jr., & Goldfine, D.C. (1991). Endorsement of therapeutic factors as a function of stage of group development and participant interpersonal attitudes. *Journal of Counseling Psychology, 38*, 150-158.

Kulic, K.R., Dagley, J.C., & Horne, A.M. (2001). Prevention groups with children and adolescents. *Journal for Specialists in Group Work, 26,* 3, 2111-218.

Kulic, K.R., Horne, A.M., & Dagley, J.C. (2004). A comprehensive review of prevention groups for children and adolescents. *Group Dynamics: Theory, Research and Practice, 8*, 2, 139-151.

White, R.K., & Lippitt, R. (1968). Leader behavior and member reaction in three “social climates.” In D. Cartwright & A. Zander (Eds.), *Group dynamics: Research and theory* (3rd ed., pp. 318-335). New York: Harper & Row.

D. *Websites*

* American Counseling Association: <http://www.counseling.org>
* American Group Psychotherapy Association: <http://www.groupsinc.org>
* American Psychological Association: <http://www.apa.org>
* APA Division 49: Group Psychology and Group Psychotherapy: <http://www.apa.org/about/division/div49.html>
* Association for Specialists in Group Work: <http://asgw.com>

**Assignments and Evaluation:**

1. *Participation* (15%). Because this course relies heavily upon the ongoing experience of class members with one another in understanding in-class exercises, every effort should be made to attend all class sessions, to be punctual, and to reflect on your experiences. Because theory may only become useful to the extent that it is put into practice, students are expected to participate fully in discussions and in practice sessions of techniques derived from selected theories. All students will be involved in role-plays and experiential exercises and should be prepared to participate in class discussions and activities. Also, students will be expected to co-lead a group activity in class, as assigned. Active participation is essential and will be evaluated in the following way:

*Excellent* (14-15 pts) - Proactive participation: leading, originating, informing, challenging contributions that reflect in-depth study, thought, and analysis of the topic under consideration as well as a demonstrated ability to listen to and build upon the ideas of others.

*Satisfactory* (10-12 pts) - Reactive participation: supportive, follow-up contributions that are relevant and of value, but rely on the leadership and study of others, or reflect opinion rather than study, thought, and contemplation.

*Minimally Acceptable* (5-8 pts)- Passive participation: present, awake, alert, attentive, but not actively involved.

*Unsatisfactory* (0 pts) - Uninvolved: absent, present but not attentive, sleeping, irrelevant ontribuctions that inhibit the progress of the discussion

*B. Personal Reflections Journal (PRJ)* (2 submissions @ 5% each for total of 10%). Keep a journal throughout the semester in which you reflect on issues generated by your participation in the class, your recognition of group dynamics that occur as a natural part of your life, your assessment of your co- leadership opportunities, and on the content journal articles you’ve read. Entries should be made weekly, beginning the first week of class. The journal is meant to be both a tool for personal growth and a method for collecting data on group members' experiences. Notes on personal reflections, feelings, and reactions to course activities, discussion, outside activities, normal daily life, assigned readings, and issues addressed in class are to be recorded at least weekly. Copies of journal entries should be turned in to me in class (or electronically) during the seventh, and thirteenth weeks of class. Journals will be evaluated on the basis of completeness and the quality of analysis.

1. *Case Study* (10%). Each student will be required to apply the principles of the course to the description and analysis of an outside group (or groups) using a systematic form of data collection such as SYMLOG. This group may be one in which you have had extensive participation, such as a family group, a student cohort group, a work group, or a group in which you have been a leader, helper, and the like. Or it could be an analysis of a group session or two of a public group (county commission, board of directors) or may be a group with which the student has had no previous experience, but the members of which have agreed to permit the student to observe them. Case Study papers, no longer than 5-7 pages, should be written and submitted by April 1, 2012.

*D*. *Group Prospectus* (20%). Prepare a detailed plan/proposal for the development of a group that you might want to lead in your preferred setting. Use the prospectus to describe your own theory and/or approaches to group work. Papers should include a selective review of the group work literature on issues related to the particular focus of the prospectus. Do not rely solely upon secondary sources for your information, but turn instead to the original text whenever possible. References to these studies should not merely be summaries of what authors have written, but should be used selectively to support your own theory or as examples of problems deserving a group intervention. Papers should be 3,000-3,750 words in length (not including title page and any references and/or appendices), typed, double-spaced, conform to APA standards, and should include: (a) an introduction to the relevant issues, including a statement of the problem to be addressed; (b) a review of the relevant literature, including a general introduction to the theoretical approach to be used; (c) a discussion of the issue(s) and their relationship to group work, including the rationale for a group approach, the proposed leadership role, the intended group outcomes, and any specific ethical or diversity issues; (d) the techniques and methods of evaluation that you will use to assess member and leader effectiveness; (f) references; and, (g) an appendix that includes a detailed outline for the proposed group, recruitment announcements, handouts, release forms, and evaluation forms (Papers should conform to the standards of the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (5th ed.) (<http://www.apa.org/books/4200063.html>). Papers should be turned in no later than April 15, 2012.

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*E. Examinations* (60%): Mid-term 20%; Final 40%

***Note: Assignments may be submitted electronically to jdagley@auburn.edu under the same conditions and timelines as hard copy submissions.***

Class Schedule:

Week One (Jan 11)

Introductions-Group Formation. Review of Syllabus. Pre-Assessment Self Inventory (Familiarity with Terms; Names of Groups). **Therapeutic Factors.** Interaction Styles of First Group (FOO). Defining Characteristics of a Group. Social Interest/ Belonging as Hearthstone.

Reading: Chapter 1 of each text - The Therapeutic Factors

Week Two (Jan 18)

Review of History of Group Work.Multicultural Framework for Group Work. Principles for Diversity-Competent Group Workers (ASGW). Individualism and Collectivism. Research Evidence of Effectiveness. Observing and Identifying Roles (Assigned and Assumed; SYMLOG). Understanding Importance of Goal Alignment. Impact of Norms and Expectations. Group Formation Activities (Observation/Coding). Personal Aspects of Leading Groups. Evidence of Effectiveness. Research perspectives.

Reading: Yalom & Leszcz - Chapter 2 - Interpersonal Behaviors

Corey & Corey – Chapter 2

Week Three (Jan 25) **Basic Tasks** of Leader. Types of Groups. Alternative Structures of Groups. Stages of Group Development. Best Practices Guidelines (ASGW). Ethical and Legal Aspects of Group Work. Structure. Group Composition. Groupthink – positives and negatives of identification – in-group/out-group pressures. Personal experiences of cohesiveness

Reading: Chapter 3 Corey & Corey Ethical & Legal

Chapter 3 - Yalom & Leszcz - Group Cohesiveness

Week Four (Feb 1) **Relationship of factors** to types of groups, to member characteristics and behaviors, to early experiences and recollections/expectations. Relationship of factors to stages of groups. Task - identify a series of types of groups, and associate factors of likely importance (i.e., career groups; bullying prevention groups, addiction groups; church groups; grief groups).

Reading: Y & L - Chapter 4 Integration of Factors

Chapter 5 The Therapist: Basic Tasks

Chapter 6 Working in the *Here-and-Now*

Week Five (Feb 8) **Selection of Clients.** **Group Composition** (Membership Characteristics). Screening Interviews: Expectations and Influence. Development of Planning Prospectus for Group Work.

Readings: C& C–Chapter 4 - Forming;

Y &L –Chapter 8 Selection of Clients

Weeks Six/Seven (Feb 15) **Creation of the Group.** Group Leadership. Cohesion and Development. Influence and Power. Group Process Stages. Problem-Solving and Conflict Resolution Skills.

Reading: C &C –Chapter 5 Initial Stages

Y & L Chapter 7 Transference and Transparency

Chapter 9 Composition

Chapter 10 Group Creation

Week Seven: (Feb 22) **In the Beginning.** Forming & Storming

Reading: Y & L Chapter 11 In the Beginning.

C &C Chapter 6 Transition Stage

**Week Eight: (Feb 29) Mid-Term Exam**

Week Nine: (Mar 7) **Conflict.** Problem Group Members, Disclosure, Norms, Cooperation

Y & L – Chapter 12 – Advanced Group Interaction

C&C- Chapter 7 Working Stage/Termination

Week Ten: (Mar 14).Problem members. Intra-group dynamics – handling negative roles

Reading: C&C Chapter 8

Week Eleven: (Mar 21) Special Situations – CoLeaders, Leaderless groups; Practice Leadership. Special Groups: Children, Adolescents, Problem-Specific, Elderly

C&C – Chapters 9-10

Week Twelve: (Mar 28) Special Groups; Structured/Less Structured/Protocols. **Specialized Groups.** Virtual Groups. Cinema Portrayals of Groups. Crowds and Collective Behavior. Sharing of Group Observations. Role of Process Observer.

Reading: Y&L Chapter 14 The Therapist: Specialized Formats, Procedural Aids

Chapter 15 Specialized Therapy Groups

C&C – Chapters 11. 12

Week Thirteen: (Apr 4) Theoretical Perspectives and Frameworks for Group Work. Theory-Based Intervention Strategies and Techniques. Formative/Summative Evaluation.

Reading: Chapter 16 Group Therapy: Ancestors and Cousins

Chapter 17 Training the Group Therapist

Week Fourteen: (Apr 11) Integration and Review

Week Fifteen: (Apr 18) Presentations of Group Prospectus; Leadership Practice

Week Sixteen: (Apr 25) Leadership Practice

Week Seventeen: (May 2) Final Exam

The Basic Agreement\*

It is important that participation, observation, and feedback in the course be conducted in a way that provides psychological comfort and security for each member in the group. Each person who becomes a part of the course enters into the following basic agreement:

1. I will use the structured experiences in this course as opportunities to learn. This agreement means that I am willing to engage in specific behaviors, seek out feedback about the impact of my behavior on others, and analyze my interpersonal interactions with other class members in order to make the most of my learning.
2. I will make the most of my learning by a) engaging in specific behaviors and in being open about my feelings and reactions to what is taking place in order that others may have information to which to react in giving me feedback and in building conclusions about group work; b) setting personal learning goals that I will work actively to accomplish -which means that I will take responsibility for my own learning and not wait around for someone else to "make me grow;" c) being willing to experiment with new behaviors and to practice new skills; d) seeking out and being receptive to feedback; e) building conclusions about the experiences highlighted in the exercises.
3. I will help others to make the most of the learning by a) providing feedback in constructive ways; b) sharing observations in ways that will serve to enlighten and encourage others; c) helping build the conditions (such as openness, trust, acceptance, and support) under which others can experiment and take risks with their behavior; and d) contributing to the formulation of conclusions about the experiences highlighted in the exercises.
4. I will use professional judgment in keeping what happens among class members in the exercises appropriately confidential and not transmit any identifiable personal information about any member to anybody outside the course. I agree that each member has the right to control whatever information he or she may provide about him or her self.

5. Like most students, I will probably feel some mild anxiety occasionally, in participating,

observing, or making or receiving feedback reports. Although such reactions are highly predictable and quite normal, I may meet with the instructor at any time to discuss any problems I may be experiencing as part of the course. I am aware that alternative means to meeting the requirements of the course may be explored.

6. The Department of Special Education, Rehabilitation, Counseling/School Psychology cooperates with the Office of Student Disabilities (OSD) to make reasonable accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. I understand that if I am person with a disability, I should register with OSD and present my written Accommodation Request to the instructor during the first week of class. If I experience any problems in getting reasonable accommodations, I understand that I should speak with the instructor, the Department Head, or contact OSD.

7. I understand that the Department complies with Auburn University policies as well as the ethical guidelines of the American Psychological Association and the American Counseling Association concerning discrimination and sexual harassment. I understand that if I have any ethical complaints that I am to discuss them with the instructor, the Department Head, or the Auburn Equal Opportunity Office. Complaints made to the EOO may be done anonymously with no action taken if that is my choice. I am aware that even seemingly small or trivial incidents may lead to increased discomfort in some students. Faculty or students may not be aware of the impact their statements have on others, so it is important that all members of the educational community are sensitive to, or sensitized to concerns of potential harassment. I understand that the best way to address these issues is by sharing my concerns as they are encountered so that an early resolution may be achieved through mutual understanding. I understand that it is my obligation as a graduate student training to become a counselor or psychologist to facilitate growth and development of my clients, my colleagues, and their clients, and myself as a person and as a professional. By engaging one another in dialogue I recognize that we can enhance our own interpersonal understanding while running the risk of misunderstanding and potentially offending one another. When such offenses occur, it is more facilitative to develop an educational and informative approach as a first step in resolving differences.

8. I agree to treat my fellow students and all members of our program and department with respect and dignity; to "play well with others" and to share with classmates or the instructor or department head when others aren't playing well, so that we can address the problem in a timely manner.

9. I understand that it is my obligation as a professional counselor to facilitate growth  
and development of my clients, my colleagues, and their clients, and myself as person and as a professional. By engaging one another in dialogue, I recognize that we as students can enhance our own interpersonal understanding while running the risk of misunderstanding and potentially offending one another. When such offenses occur, it is more facilitative to develop an educational and informative approach as a first step in resolving any differences.

10. Finally, I understand that students in the Department found in violation of the University's academic honesty policies or professional codes of ethics are subject to review and may be expelled from the programs offered in the Department.

\* Adapted, in part, from: Bales and Cohen (1979, pp. 510-511) and Johnson and Johnson (1982, p. 15)

## Academic Honesty

I understand that all students are responsible for maintaining the highest standards  
of honesty and integrity in every phase of their academic careers and that  
specifically:

1. No student shall receive or attempt to receive assistance not authorized in the  
   preparation of any laboratory reports, examinations, essays, themes, term  
   papers, or similar requirements to be submitted for credit as a part of a course  
   or to be submitted in fulfillment of a University requirement. When direct  
   quotations are used, they should be indicated, and when ideas of another are  
   incorporated into a paper, they must be appropriately acknowledged.
2. No student shall knowingly give, or attempt to give, unauthorized assistance to  
   another in such preparation.
3. No student shall sell, give, lend, or otherwise furnish to any unauthorized  
   person any material which can be shown to contain the questions or answers to  
   any examination scheduled to be given at some subsequent date or time in any  
   course of study offered by the University, excluding questions and answers  
   from test previously administered.
4. No student shall take or attempt to take, steal, or otherwise procure in an  
   unauthorized manner any material pertaining to the conduct of a class,  
   including test, examinations, grade change forms, grade rolls, roll books,  
   laboratory equipment.