**COUN 7340**

Group Counseling

***Spring 2018***

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**Department of Special Education, Rehabilitation, and Counseling**

**College of Education**

Instructor Information:

**Marilyn A. Cornish, Ph.D.**

**Assistant Professor**

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Office Hours:

**by appointment**



**SYLLABUS**

**1. Course Number: COUN 7340 003**

**Course Title: Group Counseling – Auburn University**

**Credits: 3 semester hours**

**Prerequisites: COUN 7320/7326 and COUN 7350**

**Instructor: Marilyn A. Cornish, PhD, LP**

**Contact Info: 2068 Haley (mail: 2084); mac0084@auburn.edu; 334-844-7601**

**Class Meeting: Mondays 4:00-6:50pm in 3124 Haley Center**

**2. Date Syllabus Prepared:** 1/2015, modified 1/2016, 1/2017, 1/2018

**3. Required Textbook:**

Jacobs, E. E., Schimmel, C. J., Masson, R. L., & Harvill, R. L. (2015). *Group counseling: Strategies and skills* (8th ed.). Boston, MA: Cengage Learning.

**Additional Required Readings:**

Anderson, D. (2007). Multicultural group work: A force for developing and healing. *The Journal for Specialists in Group Work, 32*, 224-244. doi: 10.1080/01933920701431537

Brown, N. W. (2011a). Evaluation and exercises (Chapter 3). In *Psychoeducational groups: Process and practice*. New York, NY: Routledge.

Brown, N. W. (2011b). Managing conflict and guidelines for confrontation (Chapter 11). In *Psychoeducational groups: Process and practice*. New York, NY: Routledge.

Brown, N. W. (2014a). Open groups: Issues, concerns, and possible strategies (Chapter 5). In *Facilitating challenging groups: Leaderless, open, and single session groups*. New York, NY: Routledge.

Brown, N. W. (2014b). Single session groups: Planned or unplanned groups, managing premature termination (Chapter 10). In *Facilitating challenging groups: Leaderless, open, and single session groups*. New York, NY: Routledge.

Burnes, T. R., & Ross, K. L. (2010). Applying social justice to oppression and marginalization in group process: Interventions and strategies for group counselors. *The Journal for Specialists in Group Work, 35*, 169-176. doi: 10.1080/01933921003706014

Furr, S. R. (2000). Structuring the group experience: A format for designing psychoeducational groups. *The Journal for Specialists in Group Work, 25*, 29-49. doi: 10.1080/01933920008411450

Rapin, L. S. (2014). Guidelines for ethical and legal practice in counseling and psychotherapy groups. In J. L. DeLucia-Waack, C. R. Kalodner, & M. T. Riva (Eds.), *Handbook of group counseling and psychotherapy* (2nd ed; pp. 71-83). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Yalom, I. D. (with Leszcz, M.). (2005). The therapist: Working in the here-and-now (Chapter 6). In *The theory and practice of group psychotherapy* (5th ed.). New York, NY: Basic Books.

**4. Course Description:**

This course consists of a didactic (theoretical and empirical) and experiential introduction to group counseling. Topics include group dynamics, therapeutic factors of group counseling, developmental stages of groups, effective group leadership, ethics and diversity in group work, planning and implementation of groups, and evaluation of effectiveness.

**5. Course Objectives:**

Upon successful completion of this course, students will demonstrate the following (consistent with CACREP 2016 and APA 2017 standards):

1. Knowledge of the theoretical foundations of group counseling/psychotherapy;
2. Understanding of the dynamics associated with group process and development;
3. Awareness of therapeutic factors and how they contribute to group effectiveness;
4. Ability to demonstrate the characteristics and functions of effective group leaders;
5. Understanding of approaches to group formation, including recruiting, screening, and selecting members;
6. Understanding of types of groups and other considerations that affect the facilitation of counseling and therapy groups in varied settings;
7. Awareness and application of ethical and culturally relevant strategies for designing, facilitating, and evaluating groups;
8. Ability to integrate awareness and knowledge of individual and cultural differences in the conduct of group counseling;
9. Ability to implement group therapy interventions informed by theories of group therapy consistent with counseling psychology, evidence-based practices, and needs of the group and group members;
10. Increased capacity to use interpersonal skills to manage difficult conversations in groups;
11. Accrual of 10+ clock hours of direct group experience in which students participate in a small group activity throughout the academic term (participation as co-leaders and members in 7 mock interpersonal process and 5 psychoeducational groups, plus group debriefings)

**6. Course Schedule:**

An overview of the course content and schedule is included below. This schedule may change based on the learning needs of the class or other unforeseen circumstances. Due dates for non-leadership assignments are included here. Due dates/times for assignments associated with group leadership are described under Course Requirements, as they differ according to leadership date. All Readings should be completed before the class period with which they are listed.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| DATE | CLASS TOPIC | READINGS | ACTIVITIES | DUE DATES |
| Jan 15 | NO CLASS: MLK DAY | -- | -- | -- |
| Jan 22 | Types & Purpose of Groups  Group Stages  Therapeutic Factors  Content versus Process | Ch. 1  Ch. 2  Ch. 3 | “Looking at Process” activity  “Pass the Ball” Group Stages activity |  |
| Jan 29 | Planning and Screening  Basic Leadership Skills  Doing Therapy in Groups | Ch. 4  Ch. 6  Ch. 14 | Mock Pre-Group Screenings | Client Persona Form Mon 4pm  Pre-Group Screening Note Thurs 11:59pm |
| Feb 5 | Beginning Stage of Groups  Working in the Here-and-Now | Ch. 5  Yalom (2005) | Consider Cultural Make-up of Mock Group  Mock Process Group 1 |  |
| Feb 12 | Establishing Focus  Dealing with Problem Situations  Ending a Group Session | Ch. 7  Ch. 16  Ch. 15 (pp. 376-392) | Mock Process Group 2 |  |
| Feb 19 | Middle Stages of Group  Groups with Diverse Populations | Ch. 12 | Mock Process Group 3 | Diversity Article Reflection Mon 4pm |
| Feb 26 | Cutting Off and Drawing Out  Rounds and Dyads | Ch. 8  Ch. 9 | Mock Process Group 4 |  |
| Mar 5 | Attending to Culture in Groups  Social Justice Group Work | Anderson (2007)  Burnes & Ross (2010) | Mock Process Group 5 |  |
| Mar 12 | NO CLASS: SPRING BREAK | -- | -- | -- |
| Mar 19 | Psychoeducational Groups  Use of Exercises in Groups | Furr (2000)  Ch. 10  Ch. 11 | Mock Process Group 6 |  |
| Mar 26 | Using Theory in Groups  Groups for Specific Populations | Ch. 13  Ch. 17 | Mock Process Group 7 |  |
| Apr 2 | Evaluating Group Effectiveness  Open Groups  Single Session Groups | Brown (2011a)  Brown (2014a)  Brown (2014b) | Psycho-ed Group Prep: bring laptop/tablet |  |
| Apr 9 | Managing Conflict/Confrontation in Structured Groups  Ethical Issues in Groups | Brown (2011b)  Rapin (2014) | 2 Mock Psycho-ed Groups |  |
| Apr 16 | Ending a Group | Ch. 15 (pp. 392-403) | 2 Mock Psycho-ed Groups |  |
| Apr 23 | Discussion of Student-Selected Group Programs |  | 1 Mock Psycho-ed Group |  |
| Apr 30 | NO CLASS: FINALS WEEK | -- | -- | Group Program Review Mon 4pm |

**7. Course Requirements/Evaluation:**

Course Requirements:

*A. Mock Process Group Preparation:* Portions of 7 class periods will be dedicated to a mock interpersonal process counseling group, each of which will be followed by a 30 minute group debriefing session facilitated by the instructor. Sessions will be facilitated by students (in rotating pairs). In sessions in which students are not leading, they will serve as mock clients of the group. Students are required to adopt a client persona for these group sessions, as the groups will not cover students’ real-life concerns. Prior to the start of the mock process group, students will complete the following 2 requirements:

*a) Client Persona Development (10 points):* Students will develop a client persona to act out during the mock group sessions. Guidance on selecting an appropriate client will be given in the first class period. Students will complete a *Client Persona Form* (available on Canvas) and post it to Canvas no later than **4:00pm on January 29**. Students must also bring a hard copy of this form to class on January 29.

*b) Mock Pre-Group Screening (15 points):* During class time on January 29, students will conduct mock pre-group screenings in pairs. Each student will serve as a screening counselor once and as a mock client once (using the client persona developed). An interview guide will be provided in class for conducting the screenings. By **11:59pm on Thursday, February 1**, students will post a completed *Pre-Group Screening Note* on Canvas (template and sample note are provided on Canvas). These notes will be made available to the entire class to allow for session planning by student co-leaders.

*B. Mock Process Group Leadership:* Each student will co-lead one mock interpersonal process group session (as described in the requirement above) during class time. Pairings and dates for leadership will be selected during the second class period. This leadership requirement includes 3 components:

*a) Process Group Session Goals (20 points):* By **11:59pm on the Thursday before co-leading**, students (as a co-leadership team) are required to submit on Canvas a *Process Group Session Goals Form* (available on Canvas). This form helps you determine general goals for the group session, along with possible interventions or leadership strategies for making progress toward those goals. Provide a rationale for each goal you make. The goals and interventions should take into account the group’s developmental stage and recent events in the group. Because this is a process group, interventions/strategies should be broad and flexible rather than highly structured and time-consuming. The instructor will review these goals no later than 3pm on the Friday before co-leading and submit comments back to the co-leadership team via Canvas. Students are expected to review these comments before leading the session, discuss them as a co-leader team, and (if requested by the instructor) incorporate any changes into their group session preparation. If students wish to receive feedback earlier than Friday at 3pm, they must submit their materials early on Canvas with a submission comment requesting early feedback.

*b) Process Group Session Co-Facilitation (15 points):* On the day of co-leadership, students will facilitate the 50-minute experiential group. All students will then engage in a debriefing session (approximately 30 minutes) led by the instructor immediately after the group.

*c) Process Group Leadership Self-Reflection (20 points)*: By the **start of class the week following co-leadership (4:00pm on Monday)**, students will submit (individually, on Canvas) a self-reflection of their process group leadership. This self-reflection should be ¾ to 1 ½ pages in length (single spaced) and include the following sections: 1) specific strengths and limitations of your leadership, including things you would do differently next time, 2) reflection on therapeutic factors present or absent from the session, and 3) reactions to leading the group that may be important as you develop as a therapist in general and a group therapist in particular.

*C*. *Diversity in Group Counseling Article Review (40 points):* Students will select and review a journal article (from a peer-reviewed journal) focused on working with a particular diverse population or diversity factor in group counseling. “Diversity” in one or more of the following areas is appropriate for this assignment: race, ethnicity, national origin, disability, socioeconomic status, sexual orientation, sex, gender identity, and religion. The article can be empirical (analyzing quantitative or qualitative data) or based on a review of the available literature. The article must have been published between 2008-2018. Students may contact the instructor in advances if they want to ensure their selected article meets criteria. After reading the article, students will write a 1-2 page (single spaced) review of/reaction to the article. The reference citation for the article should be included at the top of the paper in APA style. The review should include a) a very brief summary of the article, b) an evaluation of how the article relates to other class material, c) a summary of implications for group counselors, and d) your reactions to the thought of working with the particular diversity factor(s) in group counseling. This reflection paper must be turned in to Canvas no later than **4:00pm on February 19**. Students should be prepared to discuss their articles and the implications for working with diverse populations in class that day.

*D. Mock Psychoeducational Group Leadership:* Each student will co-lead one mock 45-minute psychoeducational group session during class time, which will be followed by a 15-20 minute group debriefing session facilitated by the instructor. For groups in which they are not co-leading, students will serve as mock clients for the sessions. Co-leadership teams and dates will be determined before April 2. This leadership requirement includes 3 components:

*a) Psychoeducational Group Session Plan (60 points):* No later than **11:59pm on the Thursday before co-leading**, students (as a co-leader team) are required to submit on Canvas their *Psychoeducational Group Session Plan Form* (available on Canvas) and accompanying materials. The instructor will review the submitted materials no later than 3pm on the Friday before co-leading and submit comments back to the co-leadership team via Canvas. Students may be required to make changes to their session plan based on this feedback. If students wish to receive feedback earlier than Tuesday at 3pm, they must submit their materials early on Canvas with a submission comment requesting early feedback.

*b) Psychoeducational Group Session Co-Facilitation (20 points):* On the day of co-leadership, students will implement their psychoeducational group plan in a 45-minute session. Before the group begins, co-leaders are expected to aid the other students in serving as mock clients by describing the target population and any relevant details of the group. All students will then engage in a debriefing session led by the instructor immediately after the group.

*c) Psychoeducational Leadership Self-Reflection (20 points)*: By the **start of class the week following co-leadership (4:00pm on Monday)**, students will submit (individually, on Canvas) a self-reflection of their psychoeducational group leadership. This self-reflection should be ¾ to 1 ½ pages in length (single spaced) and include the following sections: 1) specific strengths and limitations of your leadership, including things you would do differently next time, 2) the extent to which you stayed with your plan and why, and 3) your assessment of the success of your group plan in meeting the stated objectives (with specific examples and use of your evaluation tool results).

*E. Review of a Group Counseling Program (80 points):* Students will conduct a review of a previously-developed group counseling program for a specific population and/or presenting concern. Students are highly encouraged to select a population/concern they expect to encounter in their clinical work. Students must select a Program for which the group sessions are clearly detailed in available materials (e.g., treatment manual, book, website, and/or journal articles). The instructor will provide guidance in selecting your Program to review. Your review of the program will answer the following questions (with specific examples):

* What is the purpose and what are the goals of this Program?
* How adequate is the Program length (session length AND total number of sessions) and what factors do you think influenced the length?
* What is your assessment of the quality, appropriateness, and effectiveness (in meeting Program goals) of session activities?
* How well does this Program utilize a group counseling theory? In what ways is theory present in this Program?
* What considerations are given in this Program to stages of group development, and how adequate are those considerations?
* What do you see as the relevant cultural, ethical, and therapeutic factor considerations in this Program?
* What tools/procedures are available for counselors to evaluate the effectiveness of the Program with their specific group, and how adequate/appropriate are those tools?
* What evidence has been accumulated for the effectiveness of this Program, and how adequate is the available evidence?

You will complete this Review using the *Group Program Review Form* available on Canvas. In addition to the questions above, the form will ask you to provide an APA-formatted reference list of all resources consulted as part of this review. The Review is due on Canvas by **4:00pm on Monday, April 30**.

Course Evaluation:

Grading rubrics for each course requirement are posted on Canvas. Students are highly encouraged to review these grading rubrics prior to assignment completion in order to ensure they meet expectations for each assignment.

As described above, course requirements total to 300 points. Letter grades will be assigned on the following scale according to percentage of total points earned (proportions of a percentage will be rounded to the nearest whole percentage):

A 90% or greater D 60-69%

B 80-89% F 59% or lower

C 70-79%

**8. Class Policy Statements:**

Late Work Policy: It is expected that you have completed all assignments by the due date and time. All late assignments will receive a 10% grade reduction per day (a “day” constitutes each 24-hour period starting at the date and time the assignment was due). Assignments that are not submitted within one week of the due date and time (not including any university breaks) will not be accepted and will thus receive a score of 0. I reserve the right to make exceptions to my late work policy, for example, in the event of an emergency.

Attendance and Participation: You are expected to be in class every week and to be prepared. Active, cooperative, and collaborative learning are strongly emphasized in this class. Skill-based learning occurs best when students are open to self-exploration and reflection, as well as a willingness to learn about diverse perspectives. Thus, open and active participation is expected from students.

Students are granted excused absences for the following reasons: illness of the student or serious illness of a member of the student’s immediate family, death of a member of the student’s immediate family, trips for student organizations sponsored by an academic unit, trips for university classes, trips for participation in intercollegiate athletic events, subpoena for a court appearance, and religious holidays. Students who wish to have excused absences from class for any other reason must contact the instructor in advance of the absence to request permission. The instructor will weigh the merits of the request and render a decision. When feasible, the student must notify the instructor prior to the occurrence of any absences. Appropriate documentation for excused absences may be required. Please see the *Student Policy eHandbook* at [www.auburn.edu/studentpolicies](https://cas.auburn.edu/owa/redir.aspx?C=ef2eb0b81d90495098a27dc4053361aa&URL=http%3a%2f%2fwww.auburn.edu%2fstudentpolicies) for more information on excused absences.

You are responsible for any and all material missed during your absence. You should first contact peers for missed information, then follow up with the instructor as needed. Because assignments are submitted on Canvas, deadlines do not change as a result of absence.

Respect: This course will require students to practice new skills. During class discussions and experiential activities, students are expected to be respectful of one another. Any feedback provided should be done in a way that communicates respect, facilitates your peers’ learning, and conveys your interest in learning from your peers. Cell phones are to be turned off or set to silent. Please do not engage in texting or other messaging during class. In addition, laptops and other devices should only be used for note-taking. Late arrivals and early departures are disruptive, so please plan your schedule to arrive on time and stay until the end of class.

Accommodations: Students who need accommodations are asked to electronically submit their approved accommodations through AU Access and to arrange a meeting with me during the first week of classes, or as soon as possible if accommodations are needed immediately. If you have not established accommodations through the Office of Accessibility, but need accommodations, make an appointment with the Office of Accessibility, 1228 Haley Center, 844-2096 (V/TT).

Honesty Code: All portions of the Auburn University student academic honesty code (Title XII) found in the Student Policy eHandbook: http://www.auburn.edu/student\_info/

student\_policies/ will apply to this class. All academic honesty violations or alleged violations of the SGA Code of Laws will be reported to the Office of the Provost, which will then refer the case to the Academic Honesty Committee. Academic dishonesty may result in failure of an assignment and/or the course.

Professionalism: As faculty, staff, and students interact in professional settings, they are expected to demonstrate professional behaviors as defined in the College’s conceptual framework. These professional commitments or dispositions are listed below:

* + - Engage in responsible and ethical professional practices
    - Contribute to collaborative learning communities
    - Demonstrate a commitment to diversity
    - Model and nurture intellectual vitality

Office Hours: Rather than having an established office hour, I will meet with students by appointment. I encourage you to make an appointment with me if you have any questions or concerns about the course or your performance in it. In this class, I frequently meet with students about co-leadership planning and other assignments, so please do not hesitate to schedule a meeting for these or other reasons.

Course Contingency: If normal class activities are disrupted due to serious illness, emergency, or crisis situation, the syllabus and other course plans and assignments may be modified to allow completion of the course. If this occurs, an addendum to your syllabus and/or course assignments will replace the original materials.

**9. Justification for Graduate Credit:**

This course includes advanced content in graduate counselor education and counseling psychology, and is designed to partially meet standards for accreditation by American Psychological Association (APA) and the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP). This includes rigorous evaluation standards of students completing the student learning outcomes specified in this syllabus. As a course designed to teach group counseling skills to future counseling professionals, only students enrolled in approved counseling-related masters or doctoral programs are eligible to take this course.