# AUBURN UNIVERSITY SYLLABUS

**Course Number:** COUN 7340 OC

**Course Title:** Group Counseling

**Credit Hours:** 3 Semester credit hours/Graded

**Class Meeting:** Wednesdays 4:00 PM – 6:50 PM CST

**Class Location:** HC 1212

**Office Hours:** By Appointment

**Professor:** Lindsay Portela, PhD, LPC, NCC

**Email:** lkp0004@auburn.edu

# Required Textbook: .

Corey, G. (2012). *Theory and practice of group counseling* (10th ed.). Belmont: CA: Brooks/Cole.

# Additional Readings: TBA

# Related Websites:

American Counseling Association: [http://www.counseling.org](http://www.counseling.org/) American Group Psychotherapy Association: [http://www.groupsinc.org](http://www.groupsinc.org/) American Psychological Association: [http://www.apa.org](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://www.asgw.org](http://www.asgw.org/)

# 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.

1. Course Objectives:

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

* 1. Knowledge of the theoretical foundations of group counseling and group work (CACREP II.F.6.a)
  2. Understanding of the dynamics associated with group process and development (CACREP II.F.6.b)
  3. Awareness of therapeutic factors and how they contribute to group effectiveness (CACREP II.F.6.c)
  4. Ability to demonstrate the characteristics and functions of effective group leaders (CACREP II.F.6.d)
  5. Application of approaches to group formation, including recruiting, screening, and selecting members (CACREP II.F.6.e)
  6. Knowledge of types of groups and other considerations that affect conducting groups in varied settings (CACREP II.F.6.f)
  7. Awareness and application of ethical and culturally relevant strategies for designing and facilitating groups (CACREP II.F.6.g)

1. 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 mock groups, plus group debriefings). (CACREP II.F.6.h)
2. **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.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| DATE | CLASS TOPIC | READINGS | ASSIGNMENTS DUE |
| **Week 1** 1/12/23 | Course Overview  Syllabus Review |  |  |
| **Week 2**  1/19/23 | Overview of Group Counseling  Ethical & Professional Issues  Sign up for Group Leadership Dates | Ch. 1  Ch. 2 |  |
| **Week 3**  1/26/23 | Group Counseling Leadership  Discussion of Group Topic | Ch. 3  Ch. 4 |  |
| **Week 4**  2/2/23 | Early Stages in the Development of a Group  Activity of Mock Group Screening |  | Client Persona Forms due in Canvas before class |
| **Week 5**  2/9/23 | Later Stages in the Development of a Group | Ch. 5 |  |
| **Week 6**  2/16/23 | Dealing with Difficult Behaviors in a Group  Challenges of Addressing Diversity Issues  **Group 1 – Orientation and Exploration Stage** | Canvas Reading (Corey)  Anderson (2007)  Burnes (2010) | Reflection Assignment 1 due in Canvas Friday 2/17 by 11:59 PM CST |
| **Week 7**  2/23/23 | Psychoanalytic & Adlerian Groups  Discussion of Article Reflections  **Group 2 – Transition Stage** | Ch. 6  Ch. 7 | Reflection Assignment 2 due in Canvas Friday 2/25 by 11:59 PM CST  Group Proposal Population/Topic Idea Due in Canvas Friday 2/24 by 11:59 PM CST |
| **Week 8**  3/2/23 | Psychodrama & Existential Groups  Discussion of Group Proposal Assignment  **Group 3 – Transition Stage** | Furr (2000)  Ch. 8  Ch. 9 | Reflection Assignment 3 due in Canvas Friday 3/3 by 11:59 PM CST |
| **Week 9**  3/9/23 | NO CLASS: SPRING BREAK | --- | --- |
| **Week 10**  3/16/23 | Group Project Workday |  | Diversity Article Reflection Due in Canvas Friday 3/17 by 11:59 PM CST |
| **Week 11**  3/23/23 | Person-centered, Gestalt, & Transactional Groups Using Theory in Groups  **Group 4 – Working Stage** | Ch. 10  Ch. 11  Ch. 12 | Reflection Assignment 4 due in Canvas Friday 3/24 by 11:59 PM CST |
| **Week 12**  3/30/23 | CBT, REBT Groups  **Group 5 – Working Stage** | Ch. 13  Ch. 14 | Reflection Assignment 5 due in Canvas Friday 3/31 by 11:59 PM CST  Group Proposal Summary Page Due in Canvas Friday 3/31 by 11:59 PM CST |
| **Week 13**  4/6/23 | Choice Theory/ Reality Therapy, SFBT Groups  **Group 6 – Working Stage** | Ch. 15  Ch. 16 | Reflection Assignment 6 due in Canvas Friday 4/7 by 11:59 PM CST |
| **Week 14**  4/13/23 | Comparison, Contrast, & Integration  Evolution of a Group  **Group 7 – Termination Stage** | Ch. 17  Ch. 18 | Reflection Assignment 7 due in Canvas Friday 4/14 by 11:59 PM CST |
| **Week 15**  4/20/23 | Q & A session  Group Project Work Day  (Content Catch All) | Ch. 15 (pp. 392-403) |  |
| **Week 16**  4/2/23 | Group Proposals  Class Wrap-Up |  | Group Proposals due before start of class |
| Last Day of Classes April 28, 2023  \* Last day any late work will be accepted, or any grades adjusted \* | | | |

# Course Requirements/Evaluation:

1. ***Preparation for Mock Process Group****:* Portions of 7 class periods will be dedicated to a mock interpersonal process counseling group, each of which will be followed by a 20-30 minute group debriefing session facilitated by the professor.

The professor will lead the first session as an example to the class. The remaining 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. The client needs to use the same persona for the entirety of the semester. As a class we will decide on the topic of the group for you to develop your personas. Prior to the start of the mock process group, students will complete the following requirement:

*Client Persona Development (10 points):* Students will develop a client persona to act out during the mock group sessions. Students will type up a brief description of their client persona and submit to canvas (**due Wednesday, February 1st before class**). See the *Example Group Personas* form on Canvas for examples of the level of detail I’m looking for. You may choose one of these personas or write your own.

1. ***Mock Process Group Leadership****:* Each student will co-lead one mock interpersonal process group session (as described in the requirement above) during class time. Dates for leadership will be selected by the third week of class. This leadership requirement includes 3 components:
   1. *Group Leadership Plan (10 points):* **By 11:59 PM CST on the Monday before co-leading**, students (as a co-leadership team) are required to submit on Canvas a *Group Session Leadership Plan/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. 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. (see files tab in Canvas for rubric)
   2. *Group Session Co-Facilitation (40 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 20-30 minutes) led by the instructor immediately after the group. (see files tab in Canvas for rubric).
   3. *Leadership Self-Assessment and Progress Note (20 points)*: **By the start of class the week following co-leadership**, students will submit (individually, on Canvas) a self-reflection of their leadership as well as a progress note of the group that was co-led (see Canvas for example). This self-reflection should be 1 to 1 ½ pages (single spaced) in length. A more detailed prompt will be provided in Canvas.
2. ***Diversity in Group Counseling Article Review (50 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 2013-2023.

\* Students may contact the instructor in advance if they want to ensure their selected article meets criteria, however it is not a requirement.

After reading the article, students will write a 2-3 page (double spaced) review of/reaction to the article. The reference citation for the article should be included at the top of the paper (in APA format).

The review should include the following sections with headings:  
a) Summary - a very brief summary of the article  
b) Evaluation - an assessment of how the article relates to other class material  
c) Future Implications – how will this article help you and other future counselors   
d) Response - 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 on **March 17th by 11:59 PM CST**. Students should be prepared to discuss their articles in class in the future.

1. ***Psychoeducational Group Proposal (80 points total):***In groups students will write a detailed proposal for the development of an 8-session psychoeducational group in their preferred setting with a specific client population. The purpose of this assignment is to give you the opportunity to think through the various theoretical and practical issues involved in starting and conducting a short-term therapy group that is psychoeducational in nature. Although you may find group programs that are similar to what you want to develop, you are required to develop your own unique group; any exercises adapted from other sources must be given proper credit. The Furr (2000) article read for class will be a helpful guide in developing your plan. You are also encouraged to discuss your proposal with your instructor, especially if you are uncertain about particular requirements. You will submit this course requirement in four waves:
   1. *Idea for Population/Presenting Issue (10 points****):*Due in Canvas Friday 2/24 no later than 11:59 PM CST,** groups will submit (on Canvas) a brief description of the population/ presenting issue for which they intend to develop their group proposal and what made you choose this population/topic. Students are highly encouraged to submit their idea prior to the due date to allow for more time to complete later assignment requirements, and students who submit this assignment early will be given feedback to be able to begin the next stages of this assignment.
   2. *Group Proposal Overview (20 points):*

This summary page is designed to provide a rationale for the need for your group. This should be in outline form using full sentences. This summary should include a brief overview of the population/presenting concern of interest that shows the scope of the problem (i.e., shows why your group is needed), recruitment and screening plan (inclusion/exclusion criteria, age, etc.), identification and brief description of the theoretical orientation(s) that will inform your group (including a rationale for why this theory is appropriate), and rationale for group-based treatment.

The overview is due in Canvas **no later than 11:59pm CST on Friday March 31st**. The instructor will then provide feedback via Canvas, including any suggestions or requirements for modifying your proposal for the final presentation.

* 1. *Final Group Proposal Presentation (50 points)*: The Group Proposal is to be presented to the class and must include the following sections:

Overview of the population/Presenting Concern   
Theoretical Orientation   
Rationale for Group Based Treatment   
Recruitment and Screening Plan  
Session Outlines/Overviews (8)   
Ethical, Cultural, and Therapeutic Factor Considerations  
Evaluation plan  
References  
  
The completed Group Proposal is to be submitted in Canvas by **Thursday, April 27th** before class begins. Please use either PowerPoint, Canva or Prezi to complete your presentations. Be prepared to present your group proposals at our final class meeting. Further details regarding the assignment will be provided in Canvas and discussed in class.

1. ***Group Reflections* (10 points per reflection/ 70 points total):** You will be provided a reflection prompt that will be due by the Friday after our group meeting. More detailed information will be provided in Canvas.
2. ***Class Participation*** **(5 pts per class meeting/ 70 points total*):***You are expected to be in class every week and to be prepared. 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. 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. Points are earned with consistently active participation in class or in discussion posts.

**\* When meeting via Zoom, students must have video feed throughout the entire class session and must participate in class discussion in order to receive class participation points.**

**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 **350 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% |  |  |

# 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. **No assignments will be accepted after April 28 th under any circumstances.** 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](http://www.auburn.edu/studentpolicies) 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.

Absences due to COVID: Please do the following in the event of an illness or COVID-related absence:

* Notify me in advance of your absence if possible
* Keep up with coursework as much as possible
* Participate in class activities and submit assignments electronically as much as possible
* Notify me if you require a modification to the deadline of an assignment or exam

Finally, if remaining in a class and fulfilling the necessary requirements becomes impossible   
due to illness or other COVID-related issues, please let me know as soon as possible so we   
can discuss your options.

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

Students with Disabilities Statement Disability Accommodations: Students who need accommodations are asked to electronically submit their approved

accommodations through AU Access and to arrange a meeting during office hours the first week of classes, or as soon as possible if accommodations are needed immediately. If you have a conflict with my office hours an alternative time can be arranged. To set up this meeting, please contact me by e-mail. 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

1. found in the Student Policy eHa[ndbook: http://www.auburn.edu/student\_info/](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 group proposal development, 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.

# 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.