**AUBURN UNIVERSITY**

**DEPARTMENT OF SPECIAL EDUCATION, REHABILITATION, AND COUNSELING**



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| **Course Number:** | **COUN 7340-D02** |
| **Course Title:** | **Group Counseling** |
| **Credit Hours:** | 3 semester hours credits |
| **Prerequisites:** | None |
| **Course Instructor:** | Denise Bozek, PhD, ALC, NCC, CRC |
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| **Email:** | [dcb0065@auburn.edu](mailto:dcb0065@auburn.edu) |
| **Semester/Year:** | Spring 2025 |
| **Class Time/Location:** | Thursday 4:00-6:50 via ZOOM |

1. ***Textbook/readings:***

Corey, G. (2023). Theory and practice of group counseling (10th ed.). Cengage.

***This textbook is available via AU All Access:*** [http://aub.ie/allaccess](https://nam11.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=http%3A%2F%2Faub.ie%2Fallaccess&data=05%7C02%7Cszm0194%40auburn.edu%7Ce7ad9e60ccbf44ddb8c308dcbd8a8285%7Cccb6deedbd294b388979d72780f62d3b%7C0%7C0%7C638593649861057819%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=SCunxRiOb7tTYHqaDg%2Bx2vf3ms7JPRc0PcwREj6kav4%3D&reserved=0)

1. ***Course Description:***

This course will include 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:***

As a result of successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. theoretical foundations of group counseling and group work (CACREP 3.F.1.)
2. dynamics associated with group process and development (CACREP 3.F.2.)
3. therapeutic factors of group work and how they contribute to group effectiveness (CACREP 3.F.3.)
4. characteristics and functions of effective group leaders (CACREP 3.F.4.)
5. approaches to group formation, including recruiting, screening, and selecting members (CACREP 3.F.5.)
6. application of technology related to group counseling and group work (CACREP 3.F.6.)
7. types of groups, settings, and other considerations that affect conducting groups (CACREP 3.F.7.)
8. culturally sustaining and developmentally responsive strategies for designing and facilitating groups (CACREP 3.F.8.)
9. ethical and legal considerations relative to the delivery of group counseling and group work across service delivery modalities (CACREP 3.F.9.)
10. direct experiences in which counseling students participate as group members in a small group activity, approved by the program, for a minimum of 10 clock hours over the course of one academic term (CACREP 3.F.10.)
11. ***Course Content Outline:***

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| Date | Topic | Reading and Assignments Due |
| **1/16**  **Week 1** | *Course Overview*  *Overview of Group Counseling* | Chapter 1  **Sign up for Group Leadership Dates** |
| **1/23**  **Week 2** | *Group Counseling Leadership* | Chapter 2 |
| **1/30**  **Week 3** | *Ethical & Professional Issues*  *Discussion of Group Topic* | Chapter 3  ASGW MCSJ competencies |
| **2/6**  **Week 4** | *Early Stages in the Development of a Group* | Chapter 4  **Client Persona** |
| **2/13**  **Week 5** | *Later Stages in the Development of a Group Activity of Mock Group Screening* | Chapter 5 |
| **2/20 Week 6** | *Dealing with Difficult Behaviors in a Group*  *Challenges of Addressing Diversity Issues*  ***Group 1 – Orientation and Exploration Stage*** | Leszcz & Yalom (2020)  Weinberg (2021) |
| **2/27 Week 7** | *Psychoanalytic & Adlerian Groups*  *Discussion of Article Reflections*  ***Group 2 – Transition Stage*** | Chapters 6 & 7  **Reflection Assignment 1**  **Group Proposal Population/Topic Idea** |
| **3/6**  **Week 8** | *Psychodrama & Existential Groups*  *Discussion of Group Proposal Assignment*  ***Group 3 – Transition Stage*** | Chapters 8 & 9  **Reflection Assignment 2** |
| **3/13**  **Week 9** | *SPRING BREAK* |  |
| **3/20**  **Week 10** | *\*Group Project Workday\** | **Diversity Article Review** |
| **3/27**  **Week 11** | *Person-centered & Gestalt Groups*  ***Group 4 – Working Stage*** | Chapters 10 & 11  **Reflection Assignment 3** |
| **4/3**  **Week 12** | *CBT & REBT Groups*  ***Group 5 – Working Stage*** | Chapters 12 & 13  **Reflection Assignment 4**  **Group Proposal Summary Page** |
| **4/10**  **Week 13** | *Choice/Reality Therapy & SFBT Groups*  ***Group 6 – Termination Stage*** | Chapters 14 & 15  **Reflection Assignment 5** |
| **4/17**  **Week 14** | *Comparison, Contrast, & Integration* | Chapter 16  **Reflection Assignment 6** |
| **4/24**  **Week 15** | *Course Wrap Up*  *Group Proposals* | **Group Proposals** |

1. ***Assignments:***

**A. Experiential Group Session Leadership Demonstration (70 points):** Each student will lead one experiential group session. Students will submit a plan for the session, a progress note, and a self-assessment of leadership. Student’s plans for session must be submitted one week prior and will be consistent with the goals, topic, and stage of group. The student must state how the simulated group leadership plan is consistent with evidence-based practice and cite relevant resources. Sessions will be followed with a supervision/debriefing in class lead by the course instructor. Subsequently, the leader will submit a one session progress note and individual self-assessment of group leadership skills. Self-assessment and a progress note reflecting the group leadership experiences are due one week after the session and are to be submitted electronically to the instructor. For this purpose, students will develop a group member persona for the simulated group experience and provide peer feedback to each group counseling leader of the simulated counseling group that takes place in class.

**This assignment is a CACREP 2024 Key Performance Indicator (CACREP 3.F. Demonstrates knowledge and needed to conduct group counseling and group work.) and will be uploaded to your comprehensive portfolio in Tevera.**

**Client Persona Development (10 points \*separate from total 70 points):** Students will develop a client persona to act out during the group sessions. Students will type up a brief description of their client persona and submit to canvas. 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 be the same persona for the entirety of the semester. As a class we will decide on the topic of the group to develop personas.

**Group Leadership Plan (15 points):** One week before leading, students are required to submit on Canvas a *Group Session Leadership Plan/Goals Form*. This form helps 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 consider 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.

**Group Session Co-Facilitation (40 points):** On the day of 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.

**Leadership Self-Assessment and Progress Note (15 points):** By the start of class the week following week, students will submit a self-reflection of their leadership as well as a progress note of the group that was led. This self-reflection should be 2 to 3 pages (double spaced) in length.

**B. 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 in the last 10 years.

After reading the article, students will write a 2-to-3-page (double spaced) review/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:

1. Summary – a very brief summary of the article
2. Evaluation – an assessment of how the article relates to other class material
3. Future Implications – how will this article help you and other future counselors
4. Response – your reactions to the thought of working with the particular diversity factor(s) in group counseling.

\*Students should be prepared to discuss their articles in class in the future.

**C. Psychoeducational Group Proposal (80 points):** 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. You will submit this course requirement in four waves:

* + - 1. **Idea for Population/Presenting Issue (10 points):** 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. The instructor will then provide feedback via Canvas, including any suggestions or requirements for modifying your proposal for the final presentation.
      3. **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

* + - 1. The completed Group Proposal is to be submitted in Canvas. 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.

**D.** **Group Reflections (10 points per reflection/60 total):** After each group leadership session students will reflect on their experience, the application of course material, and growth as a group member/leader. This is not a summary of the session. Papers should be 1-2 pages (double spaced).

**F.** **Class Participation (10 points):** Students are expected to be in class every week and 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.**

1. ***Evaluation and Grading Scale:***

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):

***Grading Scale:***

**Assignments Maximum Points**

Experiential Group Session Leadership Demonstration 70

Client Persona 10

Diversity in Group Counseling Article 20

Psychoeducational Group Proposal 80

Group Reflections 60

Class Participation 10

**Total 250 points**

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| A = 90 – 100% |
| B = 80 – 89.99% |
| C = 70 – 70.99% |
| D = 60 – 69.99% |
| F = <60 |

***All late assignments will receive a 10% grade reduction per day.*** No assignments accepted more than 1 week past the due date. Please refer to the Class Policy Statements in the course syllabus for information about excused absences and making up assignments. Students in this course are required to complete the specified course requirements.

1. ***Class Policy Statements:***
   1. 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.
   2. 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.
   3. 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 May 1 under any circumstances.** I reserve the right to make exceptions to my late work policy, for example, in the event of an emergency.
   4. Academic Honesty: All portions of the Auburn University student academic honesty code (Title XII) found in the *Student EPolicy Handbook* will apply to university courses. 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.
   5. Students with Disabilities Statement Disability Accommodations: Auburn University and the Counselor Education program are committed to ensuring student success by providing them with the appropriate supportive resources when necessary. We encourage students to exercise their right under the Americans with Disabilities Act to access academic accommodations. Students who need accommodations should submit their approved accommodations through the AIM Student Portal on AU Access and follow up with the instructor about an appointment. It is important for the student to complete these steps as soon as possible; accommodations are not retroactive. Students who have not established accommodations through the Office of Accessibility but need accommodations should contact the Office of Accessibility at ACCESSIBILITY@auburn.edu or (334) 844-2096 (V/TT). The Office of Accessibility is located in Haley Center 1228. Once a student has begun the process for accommodations, they are responsible for scheduling a meeting with faculty to discuss how these accommodations will be implemented in practice. Faculty are committed to working with students to support their needs in conjunction with the Office of Accessibility.
   6. Course Contingency: If normal class and/or lab activities are disrupted due to 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, and addendum to your syllabus and/or course assignments will replace the original materials.
   7. 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:
      1. Engage in responsible and ethical professional practices
      2. Contribute to collaborative learning communities
      3. Demonstrate a commitment to diversity
      4. Model and nurture intellectual vitality
   8. 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 the Accreditation of Counseling and Related 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.
   9. Counselor Education Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Statement (CACREP 2024 Standard 1.N.6): A central foundation of the mission of the Counselor Education programs is the preparation of counselors and counselor educators to work in an increasingly diverse society. The program’s understanding of diversity encompasses culture, sexual and gender identity, race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, ability, and other aspects of individual identity. The program believes that meeting these goals requires that students and faculty engage in advocacy, equity, inclusion, and culturally sustaining practices. This includes students demonstrating these principles in their academic work, clinical practice, and professional development engagement. These principles are in alignment with our professional, ethical, and accreditation standards including Council for the Accreditation of Counseling and Related Programs (2024 standards) American Counseling Association’s Code of Ethics (ACA, 2016), American Rehabilitation Counseling Association (ARCA), the Commission on Rehabilitation Counselor Certification (CRCC), American Mental Health Counselors Association (AMCHA), and the American School Counselor Association (ASCA). Overall, we seek to create educational and learning environments that support, sustain, and challenge students to address their development as professionals related to and representative of culturally sustaining practice.
   10. The Counselor Education Programs (CED) has a comprehensive policy on the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI). As the acceptable use of AI varies, please consult your instructor on how AI can be used within specific courses and/or clinical settings. Please understand that violations of this policy can be considered a form of plagiarism. Please see the CED Programs Handbook for the full AI policy.
   11. Zoom participation requires you to keep your video on and your microphone muted when you are not speaking.
       1. If you have a need for technology to support your participation in this class or do not have a space conducive for participating - SERC provides private individual counseling spaces (Counseling Lab) that you can reserve and use for class sessions.
       2. Please know that you can blur your background if you are not comfortable sharing your space or environment during classes conducted online.
       3. Please limit all distractions such as your phone or attending to other work on your computer. It is often very apparent that a student is distracted and that impacts the class environment for everyone.
       4. Students can turn off their cameras briefly if needed (e.g., break). These pauses should be *short*. Having students on camera provides a higher level of engagement for all participants.
       5. If you have questions during class, you can raise your hand (in real time or via Zoom).
       6. Please know that sometimes it is challenging to be teaching and attending to students and reading messages in Chat, especially if I am also sharing content. If I don’t respond to a comment or discussion in Chat, please let me know.
       7. Although you may be participating from your domicile, our Zoom meetings are professional interactions.
       8. You should dress and behave as you would in a normal F2F classroom.
       9. Please minimize distractions in the background as much as possible.
       10. Participating in spaces that are not conducive to zoom attendance (e.g., public spaces, vehicles) should be discussed with the instructor prior to the class session and should only be used when there are no other alternatives.
   12. Recording Sessions: Due to the nature of our classes and the possibility that we may be discussing content that is confidential in nature:
       1. Instructors can record sessions and will notify students when the class session is being recorded (e.g., teaching demonstrations, making the session available to other students, speakers)
          1. Confidential content (e.g., supervision sessions) will be retained following appropriate ethical and legal practices as well as CED policies (e.g., password protected BOX folders).
          2. Students can request that the recording be stopped if they wish to discuss a topic that they do not want recorded. *In areas such as supervision this may not be possible*.
       2. You should participate in spaces that allow for these discussions and do not have others present in the room while you are using it for class or supervision.
       3. As per University policies, I reserve the right to dismiss anyone from a Zoom meeting whose environment or behavior is distracting or problematic.
       4. If you have any issues with sharing your video feed, adhering to this policy, or anything else related to your use of Zoom please notify me via email in the first week of class so we can discuss if accommodations are possible.

**Suggested Outline for the Group Proposal Paper:**

1. **Introduction:** This section of your paper will introduce your group idea, including the need that will be met by this group. Use literature to support your idea nad make your theoretical approach clear to the reader.
2. **Literature Review:** Include a thorough review of scholarly literature that relates to your proposal. You will support your choice of theoretical orientation in this review and elaborate on why it may work well for your population.
3. **Methodology:** Discuss whether your group will be open or closed, how often it will meet, how many members will be accepted, how many leaders you will have, and any accommodations that will be available. Additionally, discuss how you will select and screen members.
4. **Purpose and Goals:** What is the purpose of your group? NOTE: This is different than the need. What specific outcomes do you hope to achieve? How will you measure achievement of your goals? Goals should be congruent with both the population and theoretical orientation you choose.
5. **Role of the Leader:** The role of the leader is dependent on theoretical orientation as well as the type of group you are proposing. Is the leader active in group? Does the leader take an expert or collaborative role? Does the leader engage in instruction?
6. **Ethical and Multicultural Issues:** Discuss ethical and multicultural issues important to your group. What issues may you need to consider? How are you making this group appropriate to a diversity of members?
7. **Activities:** Discuss your expected progression of the group including a general schedule for topics, activities, etc. Discuss your rationale for choosing these activities and the ways in which they fit with your theoretical orientation. The schedule may be included in the style of an appendix.