COURSE NUMBER: SOWO 765, Section 002
January- March, 2018

COURSE TITLE: Social Work Practice with Groups- Short course

SEMESTER & YEAR: Spring, 2018

TIME: Tuesdays, 2-4:50 pm

LOCATION: Room 102

INSTRUCTOR: Marilyn Ghezzi, MSW, LCSW
TTK, 563-C
919-962-6490
mghezzi@email.unc.edu

OFFICE HOURS: Tuesdays, 12-2 or by appointment

COURSE WEBSITE: is available through https://sakai.unc.edu

Course Description: The course is designed to enable students to become more knowledgeable and skillful as direct practice group workers.

Course Objectives:

1. To develop and deepen understanding of the dynamics and development stages of small groups.
2. To understand the professional social work roles, values, and ethics associated with social work interventions with small groups.
3. To develop and deepen skills for assessing group problems.
4. To select and apply appropriate theoretically based interventions with clients in small groups based on evidence based practice principles and to develop practice skills consistent with these perspectives.
5. To develop awareness of one’s own role as a practitioner and as a member in various group situations, and to understand the impact of this role on group dynamics and development.
6. To understand the implications and importance of race, gender, ethnicity, class, and sexual orientation on group work practice.
7. To understand the importance and relevance of the ecological environment and community setting on assessment and intervention with groups.
**Expanded Description:**
This course is designed to provide students with knowledge and skills relevant to group work practice across all areas of direct practice. Students learn basic information through course readings, lectures and experiential exercises and apply this information about social interventions with groups to their specific areas of interest. This course builds on the human behavior and practice foundation courses.

Areas of skill to be developed during the course of the semester focus on: (1) assessment of group structure and processes; (2) interventions in support of individual member goals, group goals, and group development; and (3) evaluation of worker interventions and goal achievement. Particular skills are associated with each segment of the syllabus: composition; group development; group assessment; group dynamics; goal setting and contracting; co-leadership; interventions at individual, group and environmental levels; diversity and cultural competence; programming; problematic group situations; and evaluation.

**Readings:**
Required text:


Other readings will be posted on our Sakai site.

**Class Participation and Teaching Methods:**
Class participation counts for 20% of your final grade. Participation is a higher percentage for this class due to the emphasis on experiential methods. Everyone will receive a standard score of 20 for participation, in recognition of a norm of attendance, contributions to small group activities and informed participation in class discussion. Informed participation means that you clearly demonstrate that you have completed assigned readings and can offer analysis, synthesis and evaluation of written material. In order to fully participate in and benefit from each class session, students must complete required readings and come to class prepared to discuss them. Excellent participation also means that your comments are thoughtful, focused and respectful. Points will be deducted from the base score if you miss class, are late, leave early, disappear for long periods on break or are unprepared. Please turn off cell phones during class.

This class will use a variety of teaching and learning methods to cover the content. These different methods include: small group activities; role plays; lecture; videos; and class discussions. The development of a supportive learning environment is fostered by respectfully listening to the ideas of others, being able to understand and appreciate a point of view which is different from your own, clearly articulating your point of view, and linking experience to readings and assignments. If you will not be able to attend a class, it is your responsibility to obtain handouts, information about class content, and information about announcements, etc., from your classmates.
Assignments and Evaluation: Refer to description of assignments at the end of this syllabus.

1. Group development paper- 45% of grade
2. Take home exam- 35%
   For the exam I will provide three brief group scenarios. Students will answer some basic questions about these scenarios based on what they have learned in the course to that point. Students will have one week to complete the quiz.
3. Class participation- 20%

Grading System:
H = 94-100
P = 80-93
L = 70-79
F = 69 and below

Policy on Submission of papers, Late Assignments and Incompletes:
A course grade of “Incomplete” will be given only in extreme extenuating circumstances and in accordance with SSW and University policy.
All papers and assignments are to be submitted electronically to the Drop Box on our Sakai site and are due at the beginning of class on the dates noted on this syllabus. Ten percent will be deducted from your grade for each day that a paper is late. If you have a situation arise that may prohibit you from completing the assignment on time, any request for an extension on the papers must be done in advance of the due date (at least 24 hours) for the paper. Approved delays will not affect the grade.

Your cover sheet for the paper should contain your name, PID# and honor code pledge. Do not put your name in the body of the paper that you submit to Sakai, instead use your PID# as a running head on each page.

Policy on Academic Dishonesty:
Students are expected to conduct all academic work within the letter and spirit of the Honor Code of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, which prohibits the giving or receiving of unauthorized aid in academic processes.

Please refer to the APA Style Guide, The SSW Manual, and the SSW Writing Guide for information on attribution of quotes, plagiarism and appropriate use of assistance in preparing assignments. All written assignments should contain a signed pledge from you stating that, "I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in preparing this written work."

In keeping with the UNC Honor Code, if reason exists to believe that academic dishonesty has occurred, a referral will be made to the Office of the Student Attorney General for investigation and further action as required.
Accessibility and Resources Services:

The School of Social Work aims to create an educational environment that supports the learning needs of all students. The University of North Carolina – Chapel Hill facilitates the implementation of reasonable accommodations, including resources and services, for students with disabilities, chronic medical conditions, a temporary disability, or pregnancy complications resulting in difficulties with accessing learning opportunities. The Accessibility Resources and Service (ARS) Office at UNC has been established to coordinate all accommodations. If you might need accommodations at any point during the semester, please contact ARS prior to the beginning of the semester or as early in the semester as possible so that they can assist you; this process takes time. You can visit their website at http://accessibility.unc.edu, and contact ARS by email: accessibility@unc.edu or phone at 919-962-8300. The accommodations process starts with ARS and helps instruct Faculty at the School of Social Work on how best to proceed. As a School, we are committed to working with ARS and students to implement needed accommodations for all of our students. In addition to seeking ARS supports, please also reach out to your instructor to communicate how best your needs can be met once you have begun the ARS process.

Writing Support:

Clear, cogent writing is an essential skill for social work professionals. Writing support is available to all students through the School’s Writing Support Team; they can help you strengthen your writing skills by sharing strategies for organizing information, presenting a cohesive argument, ensuring clear communication, and mastering APA style. Writing Support offers a learning opportunity for students but does not merely copy edit student papers. Writing support is available in-person, by e-mail, or by phone. E-mail a requested appointment day and time to SOSWwritingsupport@gmail.com. In addition, see the Writing Resources and References page on the School’s website (under the Current Students tab: https://ssw.unc.edu/students/writing).

Class Schedule and Readings

Week One – January 16 - Introduction to the course; therapeutic factors; history of group work; group dynamics

Yalom text – Therapeutic factors, Interpersonal Learning- pp. 1-52


Week Two – January 23- Group Development; Group composition

Yalom text- Group cohesiveness- pp. 53-76.

Yalom text- Composition of therapy groups- pp. 259-280.

Yalom text: In the Beginning- pp. 309-344.

This article is obviously old and is a bit “dry” in tone. I assign it because it is the seminal work on group development and as graduate students, it is important that you read some original source material. That said, feel free to skim the article a bit.


**Optional reading** *(These readings might be needed for your final paper which covers group development)*


**Week Three – January 30- Overview of intervention techniques**

Yalom text: Basic tasks, pp. 117-140.


Week Four - February 6 – Tailoring interventions for group purposes

Take home exam due- Submit to Dropbox by 2:00 pm
(beginning of class)

Yalom text: Specialized therapy groups, pp. 475-524.


Optional reading:


Week Five- February 13 - Working in the “Here and Now”

Yalom text: The therapist: Working in the here and now, pp. 141-199.

Week Six- February 20 - Managing conflict/Dealing with group problems

Yalom text: Problem group members, pp. 391-428.


**Week Seven- February 27- Ethics, Endings and Evaluation**

Yalom text: Termination, pp. 382-390.


**Group Development Paper Due- Saturday, March 3rd at 11:59 pm. Submit to Dropbox**

**Additional Readings:** These articles and books cover a range of topics which may be of interest to students for the future

**Articles and Book chapters:**


**Books:**

Brown, N. W. (2013). *Creative activities for group therapy.* New York, NY: Routledge. (*One chapter from this is posted on supplemental readings on Sakai*)


**ASSIGNMENTS**

**Paper on Group Development- 45% of grade- Students have a choice of two options for this final paper**

**Option #1**
This paper offers students an opportunity to apply their learning this semester to a group they may be observing, leading or co-leading in their field placement. In this 7-10 page paper you will discuss your group's development using one or more of the group development frameworks and other appropriate references from your reading throughout the semester. The group development frameworks include Tuckman, Schiller, Galinsky & Schopler. Yalom does not have a group development framework per se, but you may want to incorporate some of his ideas about group development. Evaluate the group's progress and leader interventions, indicating any future plans, and ideas for improvement.

In summary, the paper should include:

**An analysis of group development**

- **What stage is the group in?** Describe what is currently happening in the group in order to provide evidence about the current stage of development.
- **How did it get there?** Describe the process that you observed. Give examples of events or interactions that occurred in the group that illustrate how the group developed.
- **What factors affected this development?** Now that you have described what happened in the group and how it reached a particular stage of development, please analyze the factors that led the group to arrive at that point.
  - In this section, students should consider everything they have read and learned this semester about analyzing groups. For example, if the group did not advance through the stages of development, why not? Was there a problem with composition, problematic group members, diversity issues, unclear group purpose, lack of support from sponsoring agency, etc. Students should consider ALL course readings in completing this section of the paper.

**An evaluation of the group experience**

- Discuss how individuals in the group progressed as well as the progression of the group itself.
- How did the leader’s interventions contribute to goal achievement and group development; what could the leader have improved on?
What methods, both formal and informal could be used to evaluate the group? How could you measure individual and/or group progress using an evaluation tool? (If your group has an existing evaluation measure, please attach it and critique the measure).

Use **group development references and other references from** the course. Please include citations and a reference list in APA style.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grading criteria</th>
<th>Points Possible</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Description of group events and their development is clear. Examples are given to illustrate main points.</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analysis of group development exhibits critical thinking and incorporates course readings. This section includes application of one of the group development frameworks such as Tuckman, Schiller, etc.</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation of group and individual progress is clear and exhibits critical thinking. Paper critiques leader’s interventions. Discussion of formal and informal evaluation methods is cogent and incorporates course readings.</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The paper is well written, free of spelling and grammatical errors. APA format is followed. Paper is well organized. <em>Client confidentiality and anonymity is maintained.</em></td>
<td>5</td>
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<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>45</strong></td>
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**Option #2**
This paper offers students an opportunity to research a type of group they may want to lead in their future career. In this 7 to 10 page paper you will write a plan for a proposed group. The paper should include the following:

**Type of Group and Target Population, Group Purpose and Goals:**
In this section describe what type of group you want to lead for what type of clients and explain the purpose of the group. What are the broad goals of the group? What factors would you need to consider in recruiting and screening clients for the group and what issues would be important in thinking about the ideal group composition?

**Strategies to be used to promote goal achievement and group development:**
In this section include a description of the sequence of meetings. Specify whether the group is meeting for a specific number of sessions; or, indicate how you would handle the beginning stage and facilitate movement into a more “mature” phase if the group will be ongoing or open-ended. Describe your proposed intervention strategy and give the rationale for this in terms of composition, purpose, and group development. The group development frameworks include Tuckman, Schiller, Galinsky & Schopler. Yalom does not have a group development framework per se, but you may want to incorporate some of his ideas about group development. Include ideas for program activities/exercises that you think would be useful in helping the group achieve goals and promoting group development. Discuss the probable nature of group development and worker behavior needed to enhance development. Also, consider beginning and ending, as these are central issues, and note how you would deal with them.
• **Evaluation:** How would you evaluate the group and member progress? What would be your measures of goal achievement? What methods, both formal and informal could be used to evaluate the group? How would you involve members in the evaluation process?

Use **group development references and other references from** the course. You may need some readings that were not on the class syllabus in order to explain and discuss your particular type of group. Please include citations and a reference list in APA style.

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<td>screening, recruitment and consideration of group composition.</td>
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<td>Discussion of intervention strategies to promote group development is clear and</td>
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<tr>
<td>exhibits critical thinking. Course readings are incorporated and outside readings</td>
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