EDCP 651: Group Counseling in Schools  
Fall 2016

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Class Meeting Site: Benjamin 3236  
Class Meeting Time: 4:15-7:00pm  
Office Hours: By appointment

Course Description:  
Students investigate practical and theoretical concepts of group dynamics and group process to acquire skills in facilitating various kinds of group interaction with children, adolescents, and adults. They will examine how group counseling approaches with adults may be applied to group work with children and adolescents. Students explore interpersonal dynamics, personal communication styles, fundamental group counseling strategies, and group facilitation skills through class and applied experiences both in and outside of class.

The course helps beginning group leaders apply their new knowledge to working in groups with children, adolescents, and adults across diverse settings. Through the use of experiential group activities, students acquire experience in conducting counseling, psychoeducational and task/work groups. As required by the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP), students learn to facilitate groups by personally participating in a 10-12 hour in-class group experience (personal growth group). Each class consists of a didactic and experiential component encompassing the discussion of reading materials, experiential exercises, and group role-plays. Students should be prepared to practice their group leadership skills with each other as well as with real clients. When appropriate, students will implement the methods and strategies discussed in class at their internship sites.

Course Objectives:  
By the completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Identify the essential principles of group dynamics;
2. Understand the process components involved in the typical stages of a group’s development;
3. Describe the specific ethical and legal issues that are unique to group work;
4. Identify the personal characteristics, leadership styles, orientations, and behaviors of group leaders and their impact on group process;
5. Discuss various approaches to group work, e.g., task and psychoeducational groups;
6. Discuss the principles of multicultural group work and how culture impacts a group;
7. Teach a classroom guidance lesson/large group psychoeducation group;
8. Understand how counseling theories may be applied to group work with children, adolescents, and adults;
9. Design and propose a counseling, psychoeducational, or task group;
10. Reflect on “self” within the group context and how your beliefs, values, and behaviors affect group process, group members, and yourself as a leader.

INSTRUCTIONAL METHOD: Class time will be devoted primarily to large and small group discussions, videos, presentations, counseling demonstrations, role-plays, and the experiential consciousness raising group. Students are asked to complete the assigned readings prior to coming to class and be prepared to actively engage in discussions.

REQUIRED READINGS: Assigned readings are all uploaded on our Elms space. If necessary, additional readings will be emailed to the class at least one week prior to the date they are due. Books for the book club requirement should be purchased as soon as possible.

GENERAL COURSE EXPECTATIONS:

1. Engagement in a high level of self-exploration and critical self-reflection that includes reflecting on your personal and professional experiences, identifying and questioning assumptions and beliefs that affect your actions, willingness to accept and give feedback, and integrating your experiential knowledge gained in this class with the theoretical and technical learning about group work.

2. Participation in a personal consciousness raising group experience in the classroom and exploring your roles as group members within this group experience. This experience is integral to understanding and practicing the skills and process of group work that are necessary for becoming an effective group leader. Students may feel some discomfort exploring issues of personal development (even though we consistently ask clients to do so).

3. Students are expected to display all of the professional dispositions of counselors including (a) openness to new ideas, (b) flexibility, (c) cooperativeness with others, (d) willingness to accept and use feedback, (e) ability to give feedback constructively, (f) awareness of own impact on others, (g) ability to deal with conflict, (h) ability to accept personal responsibility, (i) ability to express feelings effectively and appropriately, (j) respect for diverse views and openness to diversity, (k) attention and adherence to ethical and legal standards, and (l) showing initiative and motivation. **Given the nature of this class, students are expected to exhibit personal and professional integrity by maintaining the confidentiality of everyone in the class.**

4. To engage in extensive reading outside of class and to be prepared to discuss these readings in class. It is essential to be up-to-date on the readings so that class time can be used for discussion of materials and practice of skills and techniques.

5. To be committed to learning outside of the box by engaging in experiential activities and group work inside and outside the classroom, e.g., at your internship sites, within task groups, applied experiences, etc.

EVALUATION CRITERIA: The course is graded A to F. Late assignments will not be accepted. Poorly written assignments, papers, or tests will receive lower grades regardless of the content; it is suggested that spelling, grammar, and punctuation always be checked. In addition to expecting regular class attendance and informed class participation, course grades will be based on the following:
(a) **Attendance and Active Participation** 15%
(b) **Critical Consciousness Raising Group** 15%
(b) **Task Group Work and Group Proposal** 20%
   (i) **Group Proposal**
   (ii) **Group Proposal Presentation**
(c) **Discussion Facilitations and Group Activity** 20%
(d) **Media Literacy Presentation 2.0** 10%
(e) **Book Club** 20%

A grade of incomplete is available only for work which has been of passing quality throughout the term in circumstances in which there is good reason the work cannot be completed and with the approval of the instructor. Students should discuss anticipated obstacles in a timely fashion (not at the end of the term).

(a) **ATTENDANCE AND ACTIVE PARTICIPATION**: As this is an experiential class with much of the learning occurring in the context of discussions, demonstrations, small group activities, role-plays, and the experiential consciousness raising group, students are expected to attend **ALL** classes. Students are required to read the assigned readings and actively take part in class discussions and group activities as well as in any inside or outside class experiences. Students’ grades will be impacted by failing to display professional dispositions (e.g., adherence to professional ethics, respect for diverse views, tolerance of ambiguity, appreciation and openness to cultural difference, and confidentiality) and demonstrate respect for the professor and their colleagues, (e.g., checking email, im, cell phones, or any other distractions)

(b) **CRITICAL CONSCIOUSNESS RAISING GROUP**: In order to provide you with a firsthand understanding of group process and group leadership skills, you will take part in an in-class group experience. Your grades will not be influenced by the **content** of what you share in the group, but your level of participation will contribute to the evaluation. These groups focus on privilege, oppression, social justice, intersectionality, self-exploration, working on personal goals, sharing thoughts and feelings, and here-and-now interactions. These groups are solely for the purpose of providing students with observations of group facilitation, insights into group development, and an understanding of what clients experience as members of groups. The group is not a therapy group even though it may be therapeutic for some persons. Students are free to determine what personal disclosures they are willing to make and the depth of these disclosures.

(c) **TASK GROUP WORK AND GROUP PROPOSAL**: To prepare for the task of developing and proposing relevant psychoeducational/counseling groups in K-12 settings, you will construct a psychoeducational/counseling group with children or adolescents. Students will work in assigned teams to develop, plan, propose, and reflect on a psychoeducational or counseling group of 8 sessions for elementary, middle, or high children and adolescents in a school. This assignment will consist of two parts: (i) working as a task group to prepare a group
proposal; and (ii) a 45 minute presentation to class.

(i) **Group Proposal:** Students are required to work in task groups to develop a clear and convincing proposal for a group (8 sessions) with children and adolescents in a K-12 school setting. Students (task group members) are required to meet face-to-face at least 3 times to develop the group proposal.

In small task groups of 3 persons, students will collaborate to develop a proposal for an 8 session psychoeducational/counseling group with children or adolescents. The quality of the group proposal should be such that it could be presented to a principal or for a grant proposal (RFP). The group proposal should be targeted to a specific population and should reflect research related to that population. Proposals should include sections outlining a rationale, objectives, practical considerations, procedures, and evaluation plan.

(ii) **Group Proposal Presentation:** Teams will participate in a 45-minute presentation of their group proposal. The teams should approach the presentations as if the class were the school administrators that they need approval from to implement the psychoeducational/counseling groups in a particular school.

(d) **DISCUSSION FACILITATION AND GROUP ACTIVITY:** Each student will facilitate a 50-minute discussion based on the readings once during the semester. The facilitations will include two primary components: (a) leading a class discussion that addresses/summarizes the main points from the readings; and (b) leading an experiential activity (e.g., task group, role-play) that is related to the assigned readings. Also, be sure to maintain a critical lens when reviewing the readings and incorporate in your facilitation any counseling or general dominant discourses you identify (this of course includes anything I’ve written).

(e) **MEDIA LITERACY PRESENTATION 2.0:** In this assignment, you are once again asked to find examples of the theoretical (racism, sexism, classism, heterosexism, and ableism) issues as they are occurring in the larger world around us. At one point in the semester, you will be responsible for bringing in an artifact from the media (television, youtube, movie clip, news article, music video, magazine ad, commercial, etc.) to present to the class and facilitate a group critique. Building on your increased critical consciousness from multicultural counseling last semester and applying additional concepts and theories from class lectures and readings in group work, you will help your peers identify the ways in which your artifact reinforces systems of privilege and oppression in our society. If you decide to present an audio or video clip, it should last up to 5 minutes. The group critique and discussion should last approximately 15 minutes. You may email me before your presentation week to receive feedback about the appropriateness of the artifact you have chosen to analyze. There are four additional expectations for the assignment this semester: 1) your choice of –ism to critique will be different than the one you chose last semester; 2) your artifact will be more subtle and complex; 3) you will connect the dominant discourses identified in your artifact to the educational/professional disparities the marginalized group experiences in society; and 4)
you will conclude by presenting two ideas for a group that you could implement in a K-12 setting that would help raise students’ critical consciousness of the dominant discourses present in your artifact. In terms of the higher level of complexity, the artifact you choose may demonstrate heteronormativity, but your facilitation will help the class see the intersection of heteronormativity and patriarchy. Another example would be an artifact that reflects classism and you challenge the class to see the connection of classism to the segregation of students of color in urban schools.

(f) **BOOK CLUB:** In addition to the weekly assigned readings, you will be reading and discussing two critical consciousness-raising books. Book club discussions will occur at two different points throughout the semester. Please make sure to have the assigned book read before each discussion and be prepared to contribute in the following ways: 1) share 2-3 ways that the book was impactful in terms of your personal awareness/consciousness; 2) identify 1-2 specific passages that were impactful as well as talk about how the book has affected your personal and professional perspectives; 3) share how the book will impact your future career as a school counselor; and 4) share thoughts/suggestions for developing and facilitating group interventions based on issues addressed in the book.

**Books:**

- **Missoula** by Jon Krakauer
  {WARNING: This is a journalistic exploration of the issue of campus sexual assault and includes the stories of women who were assaulted. It is at times difficult, heartbreaking, and may be triggering.}

- **Sister Outsider** by Audre Lorde

**ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:** It is expected that your work will be characterized by academic integrity and honesty. You are expected to be familiar with the University policy on academic dishonesty, as this policy applies to our class as well as to others. One aspect of this expectation is that your work will be referenced and documented appropriately. If you have any questions about proper documentation or any other issues pertaining to academic integrity, please consult appropriate resources (e.g., APA Publication manual).

**ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATIONS FOR PERSONS WITH UNIQUE NEEDS:** In compliance with and in the spirit of the Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA), I would like to work with you if you have a disability that is relevant to your work in this course. If you have a documented disability and wish to discuss academic accommodations, please do not hesitate to contact me.

**MULTICULTURAL STATEMENT:** The CHSE department is committed to creating a multicultural training environment, which is broadly defined as a place where diversity and opinions are respected. All faculty members strive to integrate multicultural and diversity issues in their courses in ways that are relevant to course content and process. It is hoped that students
will contribute their unique perspectives to this effort by considering and raising issues related to multiculturalism and diversity and respecting others’ worldviews throughout this course.

**CourseEvalUM:** Your participation in the evaluation of courses through CourseEvalUM is a responsibility you hold as a student member of our academic community. Your feedback is confidential and important to the improvement of teaching and learning at the University as well as to the tenure and promotion process. By completing all of your evaluations each semester, you will have the privilege of accessing online, at Testudo, the evaluation reports for the thousands of courses for which 70% or more students submitted their evaluations.

* COURSE SCHEDULE *

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5 - 9/28  **Group Work: Elementary Level**


6 - 10/5  **Developing and Planning**

Geroski & Kraus (2010). Chapters 1, 2

7 - 10/12  **Implementation and Preparing for Challenges**

Geroski & Kraus (2010). Chapters 3, 7

8 - 10/19  **Assessment and Leadership**

Geroski & Kraus (2010). Chapters 4, 5, 6

**ASSIGNMENT DUE: BOOK CLUB #1 (Missoula)**

9 - 10/26  **Empowerment Groups for African American Girls**


10 - 11/02  **LGBT Groups**


11 - 11/09 **Groups for Academic Success**


12 - 11/16 **Groups for Older Teens**


**ASSIGNMENT DUE: BOOK CLUB #2 (Sister Outsider)**

13 - 11/23 **No Class—Working Day**

14 - 11/30 **Groups for Specialized Circumstances**


15 - 12/07 **Task Group Presentations**

Course wrap-up & Potluck

**ASSIGNMENT DUE: Group Proposal Paper**