

Doane College
COU 634
Group Process

Instructor: Gianene Prentice, MA, LIMHP

Phone: (402) 617-3066. If I am not available, please leave a message with your number and a good time to return your call.

e-mail: gianene@gmail.com or gianene.prentice@doane.edu

Course Objectives

Professional counselors and therapists must possess a thorough understanding of best practice standards and skills necessary for the effective treatment of individuals in group settings. The successful professional must possess knowledge related to group theory and research, the different types of groups, the developmental stages of groups, training and preparation standards for group leadership, and an ability to apply clinical skills effectively in a variety of group settings. Students will examine group theory and research, practice and method, and group processes as they occur in psychotherapy, counseling, psycho educational, task, and support groups. Students will become familiar with the basic skills necessary for successful participation in a group both as a leader/facilitator and participant. Leadership styles and skills, the therapeutic value of groups, and cultural and ethical issues will be examined.

Through classroom experiences, exams, presentations, discussions, role plays, videos, live observation, participation and analysis of a treatment, support, or growth group, and the development of a comprehensive group intervention plan the following competencies will be demonstrated:

- A. a thorough understanding of the principals of group dynamics including the components of group process, developmental stage theories, roles and behaviors of group members, and the therapeutic factors associated with group work
- B. a demonstrated ability to define and distinguish different types of groups, the goals associated with each, and the tasks and roles of the leader and members of each type of group.
- C. an ability to describe different leadership styles and approaches, skills and techniques appropriate for each stage of the group process, and the roles of leaders and members within each phase
- D. familiarity with theories of group counseling, including commonalities, distinguishing characteristics and research literature associated with its application in practice.
- E. a demonstrated ability to discuss different applications of group techniques related to setting and the developmental/life stage of the population being served
- F. demonstrated competency in discussing the legal and ethical issues associated with group counseling and familiarity with ASGW Best Practice Guidelines
- G. an ability to describe the implications of socio-cultural factors and dynamics when working with groups.
- H. a thorough understanding and demonstrated ability to apply best practice standards associated with planning, selection and screening, orientation, and evaluating the effectiveness of the group experience.
- I. competency in discussing and demonstrating group counseling methods and techniques, and in analyzing group leader orientation and behaviors.

- J. an ability to clearly describe how to apply theory in practice and implement groups in professional work settings.
- K. a demonstrated ability to learn through participation in a group experience.

Textbook(s)

Required

Corey, M.S., Corey, G., & Corey, C. (2008). *Groups: Process and Practice* (8th edition). , Brooks/Cole ISBN 978-0-495-60076-3

Research reviews as assigned

Other recommended study materials

Corey, M.S., & Corey, G. (2008) . *Theory and Practice of Group Counseling* (8th edition), Brooks /Cole

Yalom, I. (2005) *Theory and Practice of Group Psychotherapy* (5th ed.)

New York: Basic Books

Forsyth, Donald R. (2005) *Group Dynamics* (5th edition), Wadsworth Publishing

Methods of Instruction

This will be an interactive course which requires an elevated level of classroom participation utilizing brief lectures and presentations by the instructor and students, discussions of reading materials with an emphasis on application in practice, video demonstrations of group work, modeling and demonstrations of group work skills by the instructor and students, experiential learning through participation in a group and role plays, and a comprehensive final requiring the application of all learning objectives in the course and a self- assessment. Students will be required to integrate content, knowledge, and application in practice. Active participation is essential to your learning. **Due to the emphasis on experiential learning, lateness and absences cannot be made up. Written assignments are due on the date indicated in the course schedule. Students will lose 1 point for every day over the due date.**

Basis for Student Evaluation

A. Attendance and participation: Each student will attend all classes and actively participate in all discussions and experiential learning opportunities. The course includes both didactic and experiential components with an emphasis on laying framework upon which to design and conduct groups as a professional in your field. Due to the emphasis on developing skills and application of theories your success depends upon active engagement in the classroom with your peers and the instructor. At the conclusion of **each class session** the instructor will award up to four (4) points in this area . **Points will be awarded in the following manner:** 2 points for being present throughout the entire class session, 1 point for being prepared, 1 point for participating. An absence, no matter what the reason will result in no (0) points earned for that session.

Total possible points to be awarded in this area = 32

B.Group experience: Students will be required to engage in learning through observation and participation in groups during class sessions and outside of the class sessions. These **two distinct learning opportunities** will provide the student with an awareness of the vast array of groups available in the community, an opportunity to observe and analyze group process, and experience group process as a facilitator, member, and observer.

- 1) Each student will be **required to attend 6 consecutive sessions of an existing OPEN psycho educational, or support group in the community. This must be the same group for all six sessions.** Students will be strongly encouraged to explore groups that are related to their areas of interest or areas in which they have limited experience. Reviewing local papers or doing an internet search might be helpful in contacting a group for attendance. Prior approval of the group you will be attending will be required. Groups available in the community will be discussed in the first class session as well as guidelines for selection and attendance. A process journal will be required. In this journal you will focus on your observation of the group process including developmental stages, leadership style, norms and roles, curative factors observed, individual roles, and analysis of communication patterns and sources of influence. Additionally you will be asked to discuss your own experience in the group and how it related to group process and becoming a group facilitator. **Do not include any names of group members.** The journal is not intended to be a report of group content but an opportunity to experience and analyze group processes. An outline for journal entries will be provided during the first class session. This journal will be due the 8th week of the term. You will be asked to give a brief presentation in class related to the group and your learning experience. The journal will be graded using the following criteria in equal weights: group selection and attendance, use of course information and theory, demonstrated ability to apply information and engage in critical thinking, and form and structure of written work.

Total possible points to be awarded in this area = 20

(2) **Students will be expected to facilitate groups in class, and participate in class discussion of the group process after the group using the Checklist of Group Leadership Skills.** The length of the group will vary. The topic of the group will be determined by the instructor. This is a skills training group. Group members will be expected to come prepared to perform the task of the group. The purpose of the group is to practice and demonstrate basic group leadership skills including:

- Stating a clear purpose
- Setting norms
- Linking members
- Monitoring the group
- Reflecting content, feelings and meaning
- Holding the focus
- Direct teaching on specific points
- Cutting off members
- Drawing out members
- Using rounds
- Encouraging appropriate expression of differences
- Giving feedback
- Balancing participation in the group
- Clarifying goals (group and member)
- Providing structure (beginning, working focus, processing and closure)

Points for this are included in classroom participation

C. Mastery of theory: Students will be assigned a specific group theory and will use this theory to prepare for and facilitate a group experience for their peers. The student will

become the “expert” on the particular group theory and techniques. Each student will be assigned a date to conduct a group using the assigned theory. They will assume the role of a group facilitator. Using the main aspects of the theoretical orientation as their base, the task of the leader will be clearly communicate with group members *how they will work, *what their role is as a leader, *what the members’ roles are, *what the members might expect to experience (techniques of the theory) , *what they might expect to gain (goal) and *what will not happen in this particular group. Following a **brief** orientation, the facilitator will be required to conduct a group using the theory. The group will have, as its focus, personal exploration, growth, and enrichment and should be 30 – 45 minutes in duration. Full participation in the group is required for all students; however students will not be graded on their level of disclosure

A written summary of the theory and a summary of findings from 3 literature reviews related to the use of this approach in group settings should be prepared prior to the class and copies for each student and the instructor should be available at the time of the presentation.

Total points awarded based upon the Presentation Evaluation Form= 10

D. Synthesis of course content:

1) **Quizzes:** There will be weekly quizzes covering the assigned reading material. Quizzes will be multiple choice and worth 4 points each. Each student will be allowed to take scores from the top 2 quizzes.

Total points to be awarded using the top 2 quiz scores = 8

2) **Final Exam:** The final exam represents a comprehensive evaluation of mastery related to the course objectives. Each student will be required to write a 15-20 page proposal for a group including the demographics of the target population, the setting, the type of group, the theory and techniques selected, decisions related to planning and the group environment, decisions related to member selection including referral, screening, and orientation , leadership role, style and skills , the developmental stages of the group including the task, member experiences, events/interactions/behavior, group content, and the role tasks and style of the leader as it is related to each stage. Additionally the paper will discuss post group issues including evaluation and follow-up, significant curative factors related to the group, elements necessary for the success of a group, possible negative side effects of the group experience, and major ethical and cultural issues relevant to the practice of group counseling.

Total points awarded = 30

E. Professional Development

Students will be required to complete a self assessment upon completion of the course. The outline for this will be provided and the assessment will be due with the final exam.

The final will be considered incomplete without the self assessment and subject to loss of point for lateness. It is important that you approach this in a self-reflective and thoughtful manner. One sentence answers to the questions posed will result in the self-assessment being returned and loss of points for lateness.

******* All required written work is due on time. Students will lose 1 point for every day late. Papers may be e-mailed, however it is the students responsibility to verify that the paper was successfully retrieved by the instructor.***

There are a total of 100 points possible in this course. The following table represents the points required for grading assignment:

Points earned	Percentage of total	Grade earned
98-100	98-100%	A+
91-97	91-97 %	A
90	90%	A-
88-89	88-89%	B+
81-87	81-87%	B
80	80%	B-
78-79	78-79%	C+
71-77	71-77%	C
70	70%	C-