I. COURSE PURPOSE

This course is designed to introduce students to the theory, philosophy and methods of working with people in groups. The role of the leader and strategies of intervention will be emphasized. Also emphasized will be a framework for assessing, practicing and evaluating group practice and methods. During this seminar, students review the fundamentals and elaborations of the theories and interventions pertaining to groups and critically assess the usefulness of these theories and methods to the field of practice. This analytic framework will include: theory base, major concepts, processes and principles; basic value premises; strengths and limitations; historical development and projected trends; and applications in social work practice.

II. EDUCATIONAL OBJECTIVES

A. Knowledge Objectives (What do I need to know?)

1. To understand the structure, function and historical development of the major social work intervention strategies with groups.
2. To understand the group as a dynamic system as well as the interactive processes inherent in the various types of groups.
3. To understand when group intervention is appropriate along with or in place of individual or family intervention.
4. To understand the application of group methods to a variety of needs in social work practice.
5. To show how group intervention methods are applicable to all peoples, including people of color, children, aged people, and members of ethnic groups.

B. Affective Objectives (How does who and what I am affect my work with clients?)

1. To acquire a sophisticated level of awareness of ways in which the worker’s self (e.g., his/her life stance values, qualities and personal family history) are a part of his/her present work as a social work practitioner with groups.
2. To assess one’s own views and beliefs concerning oppression and to see the effect of this on one’s work with oppressed groups.
3. To assess one’s own bias regarding clients who are different from oneself: of race, of gender, social class, etc.
4. To experience the similarities and differences of leadership and membership roles in the various group intervention approaches through classroom exercises.

C. Skill Objectives (What do I need to be able to do?)

1. To build upon skills obtained in the foundation year in gathering information about a client and in organizing the information into an assessment, intervention plan and specific strategies to operationalize the plan.
2. To acquire an advanced level of skills in assessing and preparing clients for group intervention.
3. To critically assess the apparent results, potentials and limitations of the traditional and newer forms of group treatment.
4. To identify the basic assumptions and concepts common to all practitioners who advocate the treatment of the group as an entity.
5. To critically assess the conceptual problems inherent in small group research and the therapy approaches that derive from them.
6. To refine skills in observing conscious and unconscious processes in clients and in using the affective self in the therapeutic process.
7. To acquire an advanced skill level in the utilization and evaluation of existing social work literature and research.
8. To acquire an advanced level of skill in preparing and presenting case material in a way that will be useful and accessible to fellow professionals.
9. To recognize fully and appreciate social, ethnic and cultural factors which attribute to dysfunction.
10. Through choices of assignments, integrate the knowledge of group assessment and treatment process with various fields of practice concentrations.
III. COURSE REQUIREMENTS
Required and recommended texts may be purchased at the CUA Bookstore. They are also available on loan from the Mullen Library. Recommended journal readings are on reserve at the Mullen Library.

A. Required Texts


B. Recommended Texts and Journals (for your library)


C. Course Assignments

READINGS: Written Summary of Required and Recommended Readings

Each student will complete a one page written summary of one required and one recommended reading, distribute a copy of summary to students and the instructor, and make a ten minute presentation of the main points on the day the readings are assigned to the class. Students will sign up at beginning of semester.

MIDTERM ASSIGNMENT

Demonstration Task Group and Accompanying Short Paper (5 pages).

A forty-five minute demonstration task group will be conducted twice as a classroom exercise during the first half of the semester. Each class member will have the opportunity to participate as a group member of the task group exercise during one rendition and then to act as ‘observer’ for the other rendition of the exercise. The goal is to cultivate the ‘observing participant/participating observer’ skill that is central to all group
approaches. The paper should describe both the subjective and objective dimensions of the class member’s experience in both the role of group member and observer.

SECOND (FINAL) ASSIGNMENT:
Treatment Group Observation Paper (10 pages, APA format).

Students will select a currently ongoing group from their placement experience to track over the course of the semester. A group observation report form will be completed for six group sessions over the course of the semester. The accompanying paper will describe the group from one of these vantage points: Formal Change Theory, Member Experience, Structural Factors, Leader Interventions, and Small Group Processes.

For those without a group available to them for observation, a film may be substituted as the group. Six segments of the film will be recorded on the group observation report and a paper written will be written.

Final paper requirement will be waived for those attending an experiential group conference arranged by instructor.

D. Attendance and Participation: Students are expected to attend all classes, participate meaningfully in class discussion and call upon their fieldwork experiences for class contributions. If you cannot attend class, please notify the professor.

E. Grading Policy: Grades for this course will be based on the University grading system as described in the catalog. The total grade will be comprised of the following:

Constructive class participation 20% (Mid-term feedback is available)
Mid-term assignment 40%
Second assignment 40%

The grade will be determined by the extent to which course objectives are met as demonstrated by class participation and required assignments. Class participation will be graded on quality of contribution.

F. Course and Instructor Evaluation
NCSSSS requires electronic evaluation of this course and the instructor. At the end of the semester, the evaluation form may be accessed at http://evaluations.cua.edu/evaluations using your CUA username and password. Additional, informal written or verbal feedback to the instructor during the semester is encouraged and attempts will be made to respond to requests.
IV. CLASS EXPECTATIONS

A. Scholastic Expectations

Please refer to NCSSS Announcements, or appropriate Program Handbook for Academic Requirements, including scholastic and behavioral requirements. All written work should reflect the original thinking of the writer, cite references where material is quoted or adapted from existing sources, adhere to APA format, and be carefully proofread by the student before submission to the instructor for grading.

B. Academic Honesty

Joining the community of scholars at CUA entails accepting the standards, living by those standards, and upholding them. Please refer to University Policy and appropriate Program Handbooks.

C. Accommodations

Students with physical, learning, psychological or other disabilities wishing to request accommodations must identify with the Disability Support Services (DSS) and submit documentation of a disability. If you have documented such a disability to DSS that requires accommodations or an academic adjustment, please arrange a meeting with the instructor as soon as possible to discuss these accommodations.

CLASS SCHEDULE

Class 1 - LECTURE TOPIC: THE MAKING OF A GROUP LEADER
BASIC CONCEPTS; HISTORY OF SOCIAL WORK WITH GROUPS

Required readings


McKenzie: Chapters 1, 2.


Recommended readings


Class 2 – LECTURE TOPIC: TYPES OF GROUPS IN SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE & THE CENTRALITY OF RELATIONSHIPS

**Required readings**

McKenzie: Chapter 3, 4, 5.


Yalom: Chapters 1, 2.

**Recommended readings**


Class 3 – LECTURE TOPICS: RELATIONSHIP OF GROUP INTERVENTION TO INDIVIDUAL OR FAMILY INTERVENTION; ROLE OF GROUP THERAPIST/FACILITATOR

Required readings

Yalom: Chapters 3, 5, 6

McKenzie: Chapter 12, 13.

Recommended readings


Alsonso et al: Chapters 17, 18 and 19, pp. 309-370.


Class 4 – LECTURE TOPIC: PLANNING AND PREPARATION OF GROUPS--HOMOGENEOUS, HETEROGENEOUS, ISSUES OF RACE AND CULTURAL DIFFERENCES.

Required readings

McKenzie: Chapter 6, 7.

Yalom: Chapters 8, 9 and 10.

Recommended readings


Class 5 – LECTURE TOPIC: BEGINNING PHASE OF GROUP: SPECIAL CONSIDERATION OF SHORT-TERM AND OPEN-ENDED GROUPS.

Required readings

McKenzie: Chapter 8, 9.

Yalom: Chapter 11.

Recommended readings


Class 6 – LECTURE TOPIC: RESISTANCE

Required reading


Yalom: Chapter 13
Recommended readings


Class 7 – MID-TERM ASSIGNMENT DUE. LECTURE: CREATIVE GROUP INTERVENTIONS

Required readings

Yalom: Chapter.

Class 8 – VIDEO: THERAPY GROUP DEMONSTRATION

Class 9 – LECTURE TOPIC: WORKING THROUGH PHASE OF GROUP

Required reading

McKenzie: Chapter 10

Yalom: Chapter 12

Recommended readings


Class 10 – LECTURE TOPIC: TRANSFERENCE/COUNTERTRANSFERENCE IN GROUP

**Required readings**

Yalom: Chapter 7

**Recommended readings**


Class 11 – LECTURE TOPIC: INTERPRETATIONS IN GROUP

**Required readings**

Yalom: Chapter 6

**Recommended readings**

Class 12 – LECTURE TOPIC: THE ENDING PHASE OF GROUP; SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS OF SHORT-TERM GROUPS, OPEN-ENDED GROUPS, LEADER LEAVING

**Required readings**

Yalom: Chapter 12

McKenzie: Chapter 11.


**Recommended readings**


Class 13 – ETHICS, EVALUATION/RESEARCH & PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

**Required Reading:**

McKenzie. Chapter 14, 15, 16.
Brabender, V. 2006. The Ethical Group Psychotherapist. *International Journal of Group Psychotherapy* (56 (4)).

Class 14 – LECTURE TOPIC: PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES.

Class 15—FINAL/PAPERS DUE