SWRK 798 – Social Work Practice With Groups

2018

Course Purpose

Group work is an essential part of social work direct practice. Every social service agency utilizes groups, and social workers will engage with a variety of groups during the course of their careers. Given the fact that collective group and collective processes are especially salient for marginalized communities, group work is essential to practice that seeks to expand social justice. Moreover, group work has been shown to be a superior form of intervention for clients battling chronic conditions, entrenched behaviors and social stigma. In an era of evidence-based practice, successful and cost-effective group skills are a vital component of every social worker's toolkit. This class will help students develop their skills in facilitating therapeutic, task, decision and community groups, while helping them to explore how to start, manage and terminate groups in various social work settings.

Course Format

The course is designed to train students in evidence-based best group practices when working in clinical and macro settings. The weekend class format at the beginning of the semester allows students: 1) to train in group intervention protocols in their entirety before working with clients and systems in their agencies/placements for the rest of the semester, and 2) greater flexibility with their schedules so a wider swath of macro and direct practice students can be trained in these modalities. The class is driven by daily, end-of-the-day workshops designed to: 1) provide a hands-on training/ implementation (through role-playing and other methods) of the skills/processes that were discussed in the day's sessions, 2) connect students with experts and important stakeholders in a workshop setting, in order to discuss on-the-ground issues of implementation of the skills/issues discussed during the day, and 3) connect the skills/issues of the topic in question to the final project and presentations that students will be working on.

The format of the workshops will reflect these goals by being divided into three sections: 1) the first will engage students in role-playing and other methods to actualize the skills/processes discussed in the morning session, 2) the second part of the workshop will be a discussion with invited experts/stakeholders about implementation issues, and 3) the final section of the workshop will be a discussion of how the topic and the discussions connect with the final project

(i.e. an assessment of how to implement the intervention with clients and client systems that students are working with in their placements).

Finally, while the class meetings will be completed by the second weekend, the final project working in a group setting at your agency/placement will be due at the end of the regular semester. This will allow students to develop the project in discussions and reflections during class settings, implement it through the semester, and report results after implementation.

Educational Objectives:

Upon completion of this course, students will demonstrate:

1.   An understanding of social work practice with different types of groups.

2.   An understanding of the theories of collective and group behavior.

3   An understanding of group process and how it shapes engagement in collectives and groups.

4.   The ability to start, manage and terminate a group in various clinical, organizational and community settings.

5.   An understanding of the manner in which groups can be utilized to mobilize strengths, and collectively resist oppression and marginalization.

Course requirements:

Expectations
Students are expected to: 1) attend and participate substantively in seminar discussions; 2) read on a weekly basis and come to class prepared to discuss the reading assignments; 3) participate in the class-room group, and 4) submit written assignments by the due date and in accordance with the specified format.

Assignments
Students are responsible for submitting all written assignments, regardless of whether they are graded. The specific assignments and class participation will be given the following weights:

Assignment	Due Date	Value
Workshop exercises	weekly, starting week 2	30%
Reading presentation	will be assigned	10%
Project proposal presentations	session 15, day 3	20%
Final group paper	week 12	30%
Participation (attendance, discussions)	ongoing	10%

Academic Integrity

Students are expected to adhere to the University's Code of Academic Integrity. Care should be taken to avoid academic integrity violations, including: plagiarism, fabrication of information, and multiple submissions (see descriptions below).** Students who engage in any of these actions will be referred to the Office of Academic Integrity, which investigates and decides on sanctions in cases of academic dishonesty.

1. Plagiarism: using the ideas, data, or language of another without specific or proper acknowledgment. Example: copying, in part or in its entirety, another person's paper, article, or web-based material and submitting it for an assignment; using someone else's ideas without attribution; and failing to use quotation marks where appropriate.
2. Fabrication: submitting contrived or altered information in any academic exercise. Example: making up data or statistics, citing nonexistent articles, contriving sources, etc.
3. Multiple submissions: submitting, without prior permission, any work submitted to fulfill another academic requirement.

***It is the student's responsibility to consult with the instructor if the student is unsure about whether something constitutes a violation of the Code of Academic Integrity.*

Format for Written Assignments

All papers must be typewritten, double-spaced, page-numbered, with 1" margins all around, that is left, right, top, and bottom. The first page should include the heading and the title of the paper. The heading should include the course number, semester/year and instructor's name (top-left) and student's name and date of assignment (top-right). Do not use folders, title pages, or other extra pages. Papers should be stapled, not paper-clipped. Please proofread all papers carefully for spelling, punctuation, and other similar errors. APA (American Psychological Association) style is required for citing and referencing for all written assignments. Please use footnotes only as a tool to explain, and not as a reference tool. All ideas of others should be cited properly, whether you use a direct quote or not. Direct quotes must also include the page number(s) cited. Quotations longer than four typewritten lines must be single-spaced and indented. A list of references cited or consulted must be included at the end of each paper in proper APA bibliographic form. You should keep a copy of each paper submitted.

Any questions regarding format will gladly be answered by the instructor. Papers written in fulfillment of other courses may not, under any circumstances, be submitted for this course.

The Bases for Evaluating your Work

1) Quality of written assignments: Papers will be evaluated on the basis of their conceptual clarity, organization and writing, incorporation of course concepts, evidence of critical thinking, and the extensiveness of the use of literature.

2) Class participation: attendance, quality and quantity of oral participation, participation in experiential exercises, evidence of preparation for class, and small group discussion assignments.

3) Demonstration of your having done assigned readings and having understood course concepts. This is evident in class participation and in the incorporation of concepts and references from the readings in written assignments.

4) Demonstration of integration of theory and practice in classroom and field.

Grading Policies

The final course grade is based on the student's overall performance, including demonstrated ability to integrate theory and practice, in both classroom and field work. A grade of B- or above is required to pass the course.

Readings

It is expected that students will not only read required class assignments, but also read comprehensively from relevant materials of their own choosing. In addition, students are expected to begin to analyze critically the professional literature they review.

Required Texts (Available from Amazon)

Zastrow, Charles, H. (2009). Social Work with Groups: A Comprehensive Workbook. 7th Edition. Belmont, CA.: Brooks/Cole, Cengage Learning

Yalom, Irwin & Leszcz, Molyn (2005). The Theory and Practice of Group Psychotherapy. 5th Edition. Cambridge, MA.: Basic Books.

All other required readings will be on Canvas.

Class Schedule

Day 1.

Session 1: Introduction and Setting the Stage 9AM-12PM

Introductions, discussion of groups in field settings. 9-10 AM

Group rationale, appropriateness, selection 10AM-12PM

Zastrow Chapters 1, 2

Yalom Chapters 1, 2

Lunch 12PM -1PM

Session 2: Initial Stage I: Forming. 1PM – 3 PM.

Initiating a group, session 1, group norms 1PM-3PM

Yalom Chapters 8-11

Zastrow pg. 74-79

Session 3: Workshopping: Initiating a group 3PM-5 PM.

Group initiation session role-plays

Work shopping role-plays

Day 2.

Session 4: Engaging and Managing I. 9AM-12 PM

Engaging, utilizing group process 9-10 AM

Zastrow Chapter 4

Yalom Chapters 5, 6

Watching and discussing video sessions: Engaging hard clients 10-12 PM.

Lunch 12 PM-1PM

Session 5: Engaging and Managing II 1PM- 3PM

Presentation by student group 1. 1PM- 2PM

Northen, H. (1998). Ethical dilemmas in Social Work with Groups. *Social Work with Groups*, 21(1/2). Haworth Press, Inc.

Confidentiality, conduct, group roles 2 PM-3 PM

Zastrow Chapters 5, 12

Session 6: Workshopping engaging and managing: 3 PM–5 PM.

Guest speaker 3PM-4PM

Role playing working with difficult clients 4PM-5PM

Day 3.

Session 7: Advanced stages in group. 9 AM-2 PM

Video sessions: watching and discussing video sessions of groups. 9 AM-10 AM

Storming, norming, performing, and terminating 10 AM- 12 PM

Yalom Chapter 12

Zastrow Chapter 13

Lunch 12 PM- 1 PM

Presentation by student group 2. 1PM-2PM.

Yalom Chapter 13

Session 8: Group modalities. 2-4PM

Working in different modalities 2 PM- 3 PM

Banks (2005). Solution focused group therapy. *Journal of Family Psychotherapy*, 16:1-2, 16-21.

Mo-Yee Lee PhD & Richard Gaucher HonBa (2001) Group Treatment for dually diagnosed adolescents: An empowerment-based approach, *Social Work with Groups*, 23:2, 55-78

Whitfield G. (2010). Group cognitive-behavioural therapy for anxiety and depression. *Advances in psychiatric treatment*. 16, 219–227.

Selekman, M. (1999) The solution-oriented parenting group revisited. *Journal of Systemic Therapies*. 18(1), 5-23

Presentation by student group 3. 3PM-4PM

Zastrow Chapter 8.

Session 9: Workshopping 4 PM–5 PM

Roleplaying CBT and solution-focused groups.
Guest lecturers including peer group counselors discussing the CHATS intervention.

Day 4.

Session 10: Task groups and modified groups 9AM-12PM

Task groups 9AM-10AM

Zastrow Chapter 6

Presentation by student group 4. 10AM-12PM

Yalom Chapter 15

Lunch 12PM-1PM

Session 11: Family and diverse groups 1PM-3PM

Working with family groups 1PM-2PM

Okamura & Quinnet (2000). *Family Group Decision-Making Models for Social Workers in the Child Welfare Setting.* CALSWEC. Pg 79-89

Zastrow Chapter 9

Working with diverse groups. 2PM-4PM

Zastrow Chapter 7

Presentation by student group 5

Okamura & Quinnet pg 31-53

Bilides, D. G. (1991). Race, color, ethnicity, and class: Issues of biculturalism in school-based adolescent counseling groups. *Social Work with Groups*, 13(4), 43-58.

Session 12: Workshopping engagement with diverse and structurally precarious clients. 4PM-5PM.

Roleplays
Workshop discussion with peers and members of the Center for Carceral Communities

Day 5.

Session 13: Group and community 9AM-11AM

Zastrow Chapter 10

The Community Tool Box. (2013). Developing facilitation skills.
http://ctb.ku.edu/en/table-of-contents/leadership/group-facilitation/facilitation-skills/main

Occupy's Consensus Model
http://what-democracy-looks-like.com/occupy-wall-street-and-consensus-decision-making-historicizing-the-preoccupation-with-process/

A guideline for feminist group process
http://www.solidarity-us.org/feministprocess

Session 14: Workshopping Community engagement groups 11-1PM

Roleplaying community, mobilization, advocacy and social movement groups
Workshopping with community activists.

Lunch 1PM-2PM

Session 15: Presentations and Wrap-up. 2PM-5PM

Student presentations 2PM-4PM
Wrap-up 4PM-5PM.

Assignment Summary

In-class workshop exercises

Students will participate in group role plays and workshops with invited guests and lecturers in end-of-the-day workshop sessions. Students are expected to engage with the roles in groups and practice the techniques discussed during the day. Students will be graded on participation rather than expertise. There will be 10 percentage points assigned to each workshop (a total of 30 points for 3 workshops.

Proposal Presentations   **Due final session (15), 3ʳᵈ day**

A 10-minute presentation of a proposal to work in a group at the field placement. Proposals will be developed in workshops held in previous days. Students will present theories, modalities, a description of settings, and proposed groups they will work with during the rest of the semester. Anticipated challenges and facilitating factors will be discussed. The class will provide feedback on the proposals.

Reading Presentations   **Due date assigned by group**

Students will be assigned to one of five groups and will lead one class discussion (per group) for an assigned set of readings. Students will be expected to do a group PowerPoint presentation on the readings, and are encouraged to use in-class small group formats to facilitate discussion of the readings.

Final Research Paper   **Due week 12 of semester**

A 7-10 page paper on a group you are facilitating/observing/are a member of. The paper will describe/analyze the following:

1. the group, its members, and its purpose
2. the manner in which members were recruited.
3. the life-history of the group.
4. the roles inhabited by group members.
5. interventions utilized in the group (draw on group process, modalities etc.).
6. the role of support and conflict in the group.
7. the challenges experienced in the group (or in implementing it), and the manner in which they were negotiated.
8. The effectiveness of the group and the factors facilitating it.
9. the manner in which marginalization, social stigma and power differentials were handled in the group.