

**Course Syllabus**  
**PSYC 6308, Methods of Group Process**  
**Spring 2013**  
**School of Education and Behavioral Sciences**

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

This is a course in learning how to lead out-patient psychotherapy groups. Mock groups are conducted which allow students opportunities to practice group leadership. Feedback is provided by classmates and the professor.

*This course fulfills the Texas State Board of Examiners of Professional Counselors' academic requirement for licensure regarding "counseling methods or techniques - the methods or techniques used to provide counseling treatment intervention including: the theory and types of groups, including dynamics and the methods of practice with groups" as noted in Title 22, Part 30, Chapter 681, Subchapter E, Rule 681.8 (a) (5) (B).*

**PREREQUISITE:**

EPSY 5323

**INSTRUCTOR:**

Roxy M. Riefkohl, Ph.D.

Cell (281.703.0285)

Email: [rriefkohl@hbu.edu](mailto:rriefkohl@hbu.edu)

**LEARNING RESOURCES:**

Required Course Text: Corey, G. (2012). *Theory and practice of group counseling* (8<sup>th</sup> ed.). Belmont, CA: Brooks/Cole.

Other Required Materials: *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (6<sup>th</sup> ed.). (2010). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

**COURSE OBJECTIVES**

The basic purpose of this course is to provide counseling students with the primary group theories as well as the essential knowledge and skills for understanding, organizing, and working with groups within the counseling field. Upon completing this course, the student should be able to demonstrate significant knowledge and skills regarding group work in counseling.

Learning to apply course material (to improve thinking, problem solving, & decisions).

Developing specific skills, competencies, and points of view needed by professionals in this field.

Gaining factual knowledge (terminology, classifications, methods, trends).

Learning how to find and use resources for answering questions or solving problems.

Upon completion of this course, students should be able to:

1. counsel individuals and small groups using appropriate counseling theories and techniques in response to students' needs, including commonalities, distinguishing characteristics
2. teach small and large groups by actively engaging students in the learning process
3. demonstrate effective communication skills through oral, written, and nonverbal expression
4. apply knowledge of group dynamics and productive group interaction; including group process components, developmental stage theories, group members' roles and behaviors, and therapeutic factors of group work
5. promote positive change for individuals, groups, and the school community
6. use reflection, self-assessment, and interactions with colleagues to promote personal professional development
7. apply counseling-related research techniques and practices as well as technology and other resources to facilitate continued professional growth
8. adhere to and model professional, ethical, and legal standards; candidates for other professional roles know their fields and can explain principles and concepts delineated in professional, state and institutional standards
9. identify group leadership styles and approaches, including characteristics of various types of group leaders and leadership styles
10. apply group counseling methods, including group counselor orientations and behaviors, appropriate selection criteria and methods, and methods of evaluation of effectiveness
11. describe approaches used for other types of group work, including task groups, psychoeducational groups and therapy groups
12. trace the historical development, present day role, and the future orientation of group work in the counseling field
13. recognize the specific needs of a variety of populations involved in group work; the appreciation for diversity when working with groups; field experiences or clinical practice in settings with exceptional populations and students/clients from different ethnic, racial, gender, and socioeconomic groups are designed for candidates to develop and practice their knowledge, skills, and dispositions for working with all students/clients.

## **RELATION TO GOALS AND PURPOSES OF SCHOOL OF EDUCATION AND BEHAVIORAL SCIENCES:**

This course contributes to the Master of Psychology and Master of Christian Counseling by providing an education program that is "committed to academic excellence in an intellectually free and objective environment..." that provides "physical resources and a campus environment which acknowledges the uniqueness of the individual...and encourages the development of the whole person." Thus, this course endeavors to:

- 1) provide students the opportunity to develop interpersonal communication skills,
- 2) promote the development of critical thinking skills,
- 3) utilize and promote the development of technology skills,
- 4) create a learning environment based on constructivist teaching/learning strategies,
- 5) contribute to the student's degree program by enhancing his/her basic understanding of the scientific and systematic study of behavior and mental processes.

**RELATION TO THE PURPOSE STATEMENT OF THE UNIVERSITY:**

The mission of Houston Baptist University is to provide a learning experience that instills in students a passion for academic, spiritual, and professional excellence as a result of our central confession, "Jesus Christ is Lord."

Given that Houston Baptist University is founded on Christian principles and values, this course is taught in a manner that encourages honesty and accountability. Open inquiry and the integration of scholarship, service, and spirituality will be supported in this course.

In accordance with Houston Baptist University's purpose this course endeavors to:

- 1) provide a supportive atmosphere for students from all backgrounds which fosters intellectual and social interaction in the learning process,
- 2) encourage academic excellence, freedom, and objectivity
- 3) promote the development of critical and creative thinking, compassion, responsibility, and continuing interest in learning.

**CLASS POLICIES****Academic Honesty**

Please refer to the current catalog for the university's policy and procedures regarding academic honesty. Note that the university utilizes "Turn-It-In" and other programs to investigate possible plagiarism activities.

**Children in Classroom**

In almost all instances, children are not allowed in the classroom nor are they allowed to be on campus unattended. Class sessions are for enrolled students only unless other arrangements are approved by the instructor in advance.

**Classroom Behavior Expectations**

The classroom environment is to be conducive to learning and is under the authority of the instructor. In order to assure that all students have the opportunity to gain from the time spent in class, students are expected to demonstrate civil behavior in the classroom and show appropriate respect for the instructor and other students. Inappropriate behavior toward the instructor, in or out of the classroom, may result in a directive to the offending student to leave the classroom or the course entirely.

Classroom behaviors that disturb the teaching-learning experiences include the following behaviors: activated cellular phone or other device, demands for special treatment, frequent episodes of leaving and then returning to the class, excessive tardiness, leaving class early, making offensive remarks or disrespectful comments or gestures to the instructor or other students, missing deadlines, prolonged chattering, sleeping, arriving late to class, dominating discussions, shuffling backpacks or notebooks, disruption of group work, and overt inattentiveness.

**Early Alert**

As an instructor, I am committed to your success, not only in this class, but in all aspects of HBU life. To ensure that every student takes full advantage of the educational and learning opportunities, HBU has implemented an *Academic Early Alert Referral System (EARS)*. If I think you would benefit from some of these special programs or services available to you, I will make the appropriate referral. You, in turn, will be expected to take advantage of the help offered to you.

**Email Policy**

All university and class email communication will be sent to your HBU email account. You are responsible for checking this frequently. If you choose, you may reroute your HBU email to another email address. Your emails should be in a professional format with correct spelling, capitalization, and grammar.

**Grievance Procedures**

The Academic Grievance Policy may be found in the catalog currently in use, in the Academic section of the HBU Forms section of the HBU Portal, and on the Registrar's page on the HBU Website.

**Late Work**

Turning in work late may result in the student receiving a lowered grade on individual assignments.

**Learning Disabilities/Academic Accommodations**

Houston Baptist University complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 regarding students with disabilities. Any student who needs learning accommodations should inform the professor immediately at the beginning of the semester that he/she will be requesting accommodations. In order to request and establish academic accommodations, the student should contact the Coordinator for Learning Disability Services at 504@hbu.edu to schedule an appointment to discuss and request academic accommodation services. Academic Accommodations must be applied for and written each semester. If academic accommodations are approved, a Letter of Accommodations will then be sent to the professor(s). Please refer to the website, [www.hbu.edu/504](http://www.hbu.edu/504) for all accommodation policies and procedures.

**Missed Tests**

Make-up exams, when necessary will be allowed, and may be different from the original exam.

**Confidentiality**

In this course it is expected that all students adhere to the ethical codes and standards of counselors in Texas. **Anything that is discussed in this class or in your groups is to remain confidential.** The exceptions to this confidentiality are disclosures of harm to self, harm to others; abuse of a child, elderly person, or disabled person; court summons; and disclosure of sexual abuse by a therapist.

**Attendance**

**Please see the official Attendance Policy in the HBU Classroom Policy on Blackboard. Students missing more than 25% of the class will be given a failing grade.**

For this course, you will be penalized for more than one absence. Ten points will be deducted from your overall, final grade for each absence over one. Four absences is an automatic F. Regular attendance in class is important for student success.

**TEACHING STRATEGIES:**

This course will be a combination of lecture, discussion, simulation activities, research, videos and experience in being a group member as well as a group leader.

**ASSESSMENT OF LEARNING/****EVALUATION:**

Group Reaction Papers	100 points total (10 points each)
Article Reflections	100 points
Outside Group Report or Interview	100 points
Progress Examinations (2)	200 points total (100 points each)
Group Leadership Case Study and Log	200 points
Participation in assignments/discussions	100 points

<b>TOTAL POINTS</b>	<b>800 points</b>
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**GRADING SCALE:**

785-800=A

770-785 = A-

755-770 = B+

740-755 = B

725-740=B-

710-725 = C+

695-710 = C

695 and below = F

**TOPICAL OUTLINE**

See attached table last page of syllabus

## ASSESSMENT OF LEARNING

**1. DIDACTIC:** The student is expected to participate in didactic activities for half of each class period. The student is expected to read the assigned materials in preparation for discussion and experiential activities during this didactic part of the class. The instructor is primarily responsible for providing supportive material not provided in the textbook.

**2. GROUP MEMBERSHIP:** The student is expected to become a functioning and contributing member of a personal growth counseling group for half of each class period. (Course grade is based on attendance but not on level of participation.)

### **3. GROUP REACTIONS:**

After each group meeting, the students will write a reaction paper to that group session. This reaction paper will focus on what the student learned about group work and themselves in that particular session and should be approximately two paragraphs in length. This is an important assignment and is to be done with careful reflection prior to the group experience. Please do not write about any content (specific topics) or put the name of any other member in your reaction paper. This will be a personal reflection/reaction paper, and writing in first person is appropriate. **All reaction papers are to be typed.** 10 points for each week's reaction paper. If you are absent, you cannot do a reaction paper to the missed session, and you will lose the 10 points. If you know you will be absent for the next week, it is your responsibility to get the reaction papers in for that week in order to get credit. If I do not have the reaction papers by class time, the points are lost. **100 points total**

The group leaders may have the opportunity to read the papers you hand in each week.

**4. ARTICLE REFLECTIONS:** The student is expected to read four journal articles related to group work published within the past ten years. The articles can relate in some way to the group you are proposing (midterm exam) if possible, but they do not have to. Article reflections should be no longer than two pages, double spaced. ACA or APA journals are appropriate sources for articles.

**BE SURE TO PAY ATTENTION TO INDENTATION, CAPITALIZATION, ETC. FOR APA REFERENCES. POINTS ARE TAKEN OFF FOR MISSPELLED WORDS AND GRAMMATICAL ERRORS.** Use APA format.

**100 points. (25 pts. each)**

**5. PARTICIPATION:** Students are expected to complete all assigned readings and to be an active participant in class activities and discussions. **100 points**

**6. OUTSIDE GROUP REPORT:** The student will contact an outside group and ask permission to observe ONE session. The student will then write a report to cover this session. The report should include (1) the credentials of the group leader; (2) how the group was formed; (3) screening issues; (4) discussion of confidentiality; (5) ethical issues aside from confidentiality; (6) the group process; (7) the group stage and (8) type of group

(open/psychoeducational, etc...). This paper will focus on process and **not what was said in the group**. Reviewing local papers for group meetings will be helpful in contacting a group for attendance. **If you do not observe any of the above eight topics, it is your responsibility to synthesize your class information with the readings in order to respond to each of the sections.**

Resources that students have used in the past:

Weight Watchers

AA or NA Groups

Montgomery County Women's Center

Hospitals and churches that have self-help groups on illnesses or issues

**OR**

**INTERVIEW A GROUP COUNSELOR:** Interview a counselor who regularly conducts groups. Use the questions provided on the handout. Contact either a counselor in private practice, at an agency or organization, or a school counselor. The counselor must regularly conduct groups.

The paper must be typed (using standard type size), double spaced and be approximately 2-3 pages. Your grammar and writing style should be consistent with your status as a graduate student.

**100 points**

**7. EXAMINATIONS:** There will be two evaluations for this class. The midterm will involve a group proposal, and the final will be multiple choice/matching from both your **readings and class discussions and handouts.**

**100 points each (200 points total)**

**8. GROUP LEADERSHIP:** Students will be responsible for 5 hours of group leadership, and it is suggested that groups are organized around 30 minute time periods for a total of 10 group sessions, but other formats are acceptable. It is possible to complete these hours by co-leadership with another member of the class. The groups can be organized at one's work site if appropriate or with colleagues or peers, with children, or in connection with an agency or counselor. The student should consult with the professor of the course in order to make sure that the arrangements for the group meet the expectations for the course. Each student will present to the class a session case study of their group leadership experience. The student will choose a group session to discuss a specific element of group process or leadership and discuss the experience overall by addressing the questions on the handout. Students will turn in a log of hours showing completion of the required 5 hours.

**100 points – completion of the 5 hours & 100 points – presentation (200 points total)**

I have read and understand the syllabus for this class. I understand that the content of this syllabus and any attached materials or schedules are subject to change and update at the discretion of the professor.

I have read and understand the HBU Classroom Policy posted on Black Board. **I promise to uphold the Code of Academic Integrity at Houston Baptist University and will not tolerate its violation by others.**

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Student's Signature

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Date



## TENTATIVE COURSE SCHEDULE

- 1/9      Orientation/Introductions/Syllabus
- 1/16    (Chapters 1 & 17)  
          Introduction to Group Work  
          Considerations in beginning a group
- 1/23    (Chapters 2 & 18)  
          Group Leadership  
          Movie (Part 1)  
          Small groups begin  
          **Group proposal due- Share ideas**
- 1/ 30   (Chapter 3)  
          Ethical and Professional Issues in Group Practice  
          Movie (Part 2)  
          **Article Reflection 1 due**
- 2/6      (Chapter 4)  
          Early Stages in the Development of a Group
- 2/13    (Chapter 5)  
          Later Stages in the Development of a Group  
          Various member roles  
          Group leadership skills (Chapter 16)
- 2/20    **Outside Group Report or Interview Due**  
          **Share with Classmates**
- 2/27    (Chapters 6 & 7)  
          **Article Reflection 2 due**
- 3/6      (Chapters 8 & 9)  
          **Mid – term Exam**
- 3/13    Spring Break
- 3/20    (Chapters 10 & 11)
- 3/27    (Chapters 12 & 13)  
          **Article Reflection 3 due**
- 4/3      (Chapters 14, 15, & 16)  
          Last small group session

**Presentations:**

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4/10    **Article Reflection 4 due**  
Presentations:

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4/17    **Leadership Logs due**  
Presentations:

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4/24    Review for final exam  
Presentations:

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5/1    Final Exam

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Please also note these important university/academic dates:

- Last day to add a class: Jan 11, 6pm
- Last day to drop without a "W": Jan 23
- Last day to drop with a "W": Mar 22

### Suggested Resources

Gladding, S. T. (2003). *Group work: A counseling specialty (4th ed.)*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Merrill Prentice Hall.

Schaffer, J., & Galinsky, M. (1989). *Models of group therapy*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Shaw, M. (1981). *Group dynamics (3rd ed.)*. New York, NY: McGraw Hill.

Yalom, I. (1985). *The theory and practice of group psychotherapy (3rd ed.)*. New York: Basic Books.

### **Recommended Journals:**

Journal of Counseling and Development

The Journal for Specialists in Group Work