

**CPSY 515 Group Counseling With Adults  
Syllabus and Schedule**

Spring 2009

Graduate School of Education and Counseling  
Lewis and Clark College

Time: Mondays, 5:30pm – 8:45pm  
Location: Rogers, 218

Instructor: Karen Hixson, M.Ed., LPC  
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Email: khixson@lclark.edu  
Office hours: By appointment

**Instructor Biography:** I am a Licensed Professional Counselor and have past experience as a Certified Alcohol and Drug Counselor. I received my Master's Degree in Agency Counseling at the University of Puget Sound in Tacoma, WA. Upon moving to Portland, I provided group counseling in a corrections facility and local non-profit as a drug and alcohol counselor and mental health counselor serving outpatient and inpatient populations. Currently, I work in private practice with a focus on providing relational counseling that infuses awareness of political struggles into my work with clients. I am also currently engaged in many projects connected to group work and facilitation.

“As therapists, we must move beyond dealing with individual pain; we must become part of a larger solution by joining with others to transform the social conditions that contribute heavily to individual pain. We cannot continue to pathologize individual adaptations to socially destructive patterns. Therapy should not become a part of the problem by suggesting that the pathology is individual and the solution is individual.”

**-Judith Jordan**

“Recovery can take place only within the context of relationships; it cannot occur in isolation.” **- Judith Herman**

**Catalog Description:** Introduction to the major schools of group therapy and the common factors associated with positive outcomes. Covers group dynamics, obstacles to success in group therapy, and the stages of group process. Role-playing, outside group membership, and demonstrations illustrate principles of effective group leadership.

Prerequisite: CPSY 503.

Credit: 3 semester hours.

**Course Description and Outcomes:**

This is a graduate level course designed to provide students with the theories, concepts and experiences that will increase their competency of group counseling with adults. Students will engage in lecture, readings, in-class activities and observation as well as experiential training groups. The content and experiences in this course provide concepts

and skills necessary to satisfy the group work competencies stipulated in the Council for Accreditation for Counseling and Related Programs (CACEREP) Standards (2001) as outlined below. Students will gain knowledge of group counseling theory and demonstrate the practical skills necessary for the dynamic application to various adult group counseling settings. Students will understand how to adapt various theories and skills to the unique circumstances they find themselves in as professionals and citizens.

### **CACREP Curriculum Standards and Course Objectives**

**GROUP WORK** - studies that provide both theoretical and experiential understandings of group purpose, development, dynamics, counseling theories, group counseling methods and skills, and other group approaches, including all of the following:

- a. principles of group dynamics, including group process components, developmental stage theories, group members' roles and behaviors, and therapeutic factors of group work;
- b. group leadership styles and approaches, including characteristics of various types of group leaders and leadership styles;
- c. theories of group counseling, including commonalities, distinguishing characteristics, and pertinent research and literature;
- d. group counseling methods, including group counselor orientations and behaviors, appropriate selection criteria and methods, and methods of evaluation of effectiveness;
- e. approaches used for other types of group work, including task groups, psychoeducational groups, and therapy groups;
- f. professional preparation standards for group leaders
- g. ethical and legal considerations.

### **Other Intentions of This Course:**

I hope to weave in conversations and learning including but not limited to

- The application of social justice theories to group work. Please note that this may include discussion of topics including oppression and privilege
- Discussions about self-disclosure and its therapeutic utility
- The connection between group work and relational theories of counseling including Relational Cultural Theory (RCT)

### **Required Text:**

Yalom, Irvin D. and Leszcz, Modyn. (2005). *The Theory and Practice of Group Psychotherapy (5<sup>th</sup> edition)*, New York, NY: Basic Books.

### **Articles on Reserve at Library:**

Comstock, D.L., Hammer, T.R., Strentzsch, J., Cannon, K., Parsons, J., and Salazar II, G. (Summer 2008). "Relational-Cultural Theory: A Framework for Bridging Relational, Multicultural, and Social Justice Competencies." *Journal of Counseling & Development* Summer, 96, 279-287.

Day-Vines, N.L., Wood, S.M., Grothaus, T., Craigen, L., Holman, A., Dotson-Blake, K, and Douglass, M.J. (Fall 2007). "Broaching the Subjects of Race, Ethnicity, and Culture During the Counseling Process." *Journal of Counseling & Development*, 85, 401-409.

Fedele, N. (2004). Relationships in Group: Connection, Resonance and Paradox. Jordan, J. Walker, M. & Hartlin, L.M. (Eds). *The Complexity of Connection* (pp. 194-219).

Hernandez, P, Almeida, R, & Dolan Del-Vecchio, K. (2005). "Critical Consciousness, Accountability and Empowerment: Key Processes for Helping Families Heal." *Family Process*, 44, No. 1, 105-119.

Kramer, C. H. (2000) Revealing Ourselves In M. Baldwin, M. (Ed) *The Use of Self in Therapy* ( 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed pp 61-96.) Haworth Press, Binghamton, NY.

**Attendance Policy:** Students are highly encouraged to make every effort to resolve any attendance conflicts in order to attend all classes and activities. Students can receive an excused absence at the instructor's discretion. Extraordinary conditions such as illness or family emergencies warrant an excused absence. If a student cannot attend class: (1) contact the instructor prior to the absence to explain the reason for the absence (email or phone) and (2) make provisions to obtain class materials and any other information missed. One unexcused absence can lower the student's final grade; two unexcused absences may result in failure. Three late arrivals are equal to once unexcused absence.

**It is essential that everyone is present at all of the sessions as this also impacts group dynamics, group cohesion and our ability to be fully present with each other.**

**Confidentiality Policy:** Confidentiality is extremely important to the integrity of this course. Confidentiality cannot be guaranteed in any situation but we are collectively accountable to maintain a safe, trusting environment throughout the course including the experiential training groups. While it can be compelling to share personal information about group members with others, all students are bound by the ACA ethical code of confidentiality with respect to any material shared by other members of the class. The disclosure of personal information to anyone outside this class would be considered unethical. Please explore any concerns you have about confidentiality during class time, after class or during a training group.

By taking this course, you agree to the opportunity to challenge yourself to become familiar with the territory of group work through participation in the activities provided—including the experiential training group. If you become uncomfortable and feel as though you are unable to continue or participate during any aspect of this course, you may always request the right to pass. If you find yourself repeatedly doing so, please discuss this with me or another trusted colleague. Your participation is vital to your learning.

### **Course Format and Requirements:**

**Lecture:** interactive lecture of relevant theories, concepts and skills

**Readings:** assigned text and supplemented materials

**Participation:** during interactive lecture, discussions and class activities

**Exam:** a written mid-term exam

**Experiential Training Group:** participation as a member, observer and facilitator

**Written Papers:** written assignments, pre and post experiential training group as well as various other short writing assignments

**Activities:** Psychoeducational Group Demonstration

### **Course Requirements:**

Grades will be based on your effort and ability to explore and apply the group concepts and experiences in this course towards the needs of adults in a group counseling setting. Your ability to use personal reflection, critical thinking and your ability to share the comments, questions and challenges that come out of this reflection and thought are essential in earning a successful grade in this course. Evaluation in this course is not based on the content of your personal experiences, specifically, how “well” you participate in the group as members, but on your facilitation of groups, your understanding of group theory/process and your participation in the process.

#### **A. Class participation (25% of grade)**

1. This includes participation in class discussions, small group discussions, assigned activities and participation in the experiential training group, both as a member and a facilitator. This also includes participation in post-group journaling and debriefing following each experiential training group.

#### **B. Exam (25% of grade)**

1. A written mid-term exam that will demonstrate relevant concepts and theories of group work covered in the first half of the semester.

#### **C. Written Assignments (35% of grade):**

1. Group Training Experience Intentions and Evaluation Paper (25%)

a. Prior to your group experience, you will write about your goals and intentions as both a member and facilitator of the group.

- b. You will also complete a post-group paper exploring what you learned about group dynamics and group leadership from the perspective of both member and facilitator.
2. In class written journal entries following the experiential training group (5%)
3. Various other short writing assignments throughout the semester (5%)

**D. Demonstration (15% of grade):**

1. Mini psychoeducational group demonstration: You will choose a topic/curriculum/skill on which you'd like to demonstrate a psychoeducational group for the class. This includes an outline of the group and any bibliographical references.

**Course Outline and Schedule:**

**1/12/09**

Intro to the Course, Review of Syllabus, Intro to Groups/History, Effectiveness and Recent Developments

**Reading:** Yalom, Ch. 17, Ch 1- Ch 4

**1/19/09 MLK Day- No Class**

**1/26/09**

Characteristics of effective group leaders

Group leadership skills, Therapeutic Factors That Operate in Groups, Cohesiveness

**Reading:** Yalom Ch 5- Ch 7

**2/2/09**

Early Stages of a Group, Establishing Norms

Working in the Here & Now and Process Illumination

Video: Initial Stage of a Group

**Reading:** Yalom Ch 8-10

**Read articles:** a. Comstock b. Day-Vines c. Hernandez

**2/9/09**

Pre-group planning + Logistics, Ethics

Diversity and Social Justice Issues In Groups

System Issues

Video: Corey, dealing with Diversity in Groups

Video clip: Group Counselor Resistant to Termination by the Group?

Demonstration- Mandatory Client Pre-screening/ Orientation Groups

**Reading:** Yalom Ch 11-13

**Read article:** a. Kramer

**2/16/09**

Later Stages, Challenges + Considerations + Self Disclosure

Video: Later Stages of a Group + Closure

Demonstration Group- Challenging Group Member Interventions

**Reading:** Yalom Ch 14 & 15;

Read article: a. Fedele

**2/23/09**

Other Types of Groups and Integrated Group Leadership

Catalysts, Check-ins + Closing Interventions

Demonstration Group- TBA

Video: Task Group in Action

Review of Materials for Psychoeducational Group Presentation + Sign-ups

**3/2/09- Mid term Exam**

Review of Experiential Training Group + Schedule for Rest of Semester

Additional Review of Materials for Psychoed Group Presentation if needed

**3/9/09-** Exp Group

**Assignment Due:** Pre-Group Paper

Psychoed Presentations

**3/16/09-** Exp Group

Psychoed Presentations

**3/23/09-** Spring Break- No Class

**3/30/09-**Exp Group

Psychoed Presentations

**4/6/09-** Exp Group

Psychoed Presentations

**4/13/09-** Exp Group

Psychoed Presentations

**4/20/09** – Exp. Group

Psychoed Presentations

**4/27/09-** Closing Group, Instructor Leads

**Assignment Due:** Post-group paper

## **Bibliography**

- Comprehensive Group Work: What It Means and How to Teach It* By Conyne, R.,K.  
Wilson, F. R., & Ward, D. E.
- Constructing the Self, Constructing America: A Cultural History of Psychotherapy* by  
Philip Cushman
- Critical Incidents in Group Counseling* By Tyson, L.E., Perusse, R., & Whitledge, J.  
*Critical Psychology* by Fox & Prilliltensky
- Groups In Action: Evolution and Challenges Video and Workbook* By Corey, G.,  
Schneider-Corey, M. & Haynes, R.
- Intentional Group Counseling A Microskills Approach* By Ivey, A., Pedersen, P.B., &  
Ivey, M. B
- Relational Practice In Action* By Jordan, J. & Dooley, C.
- The Complexity of Connection* Edited by Jordan, J.V., Walker, M., & Hartling, L.M.
- The Gift of Therapy: An Open Letter to a New Generation of Therapists and Their  
Patients* by Irv Yalom
- The Healing Connection: How Women Form Relationships in Therapy and In Life* by  
Jean Baker Miller & Stiver
- The Heart and Soul of Change* by Hubble, Duncan & Miller
- The Heroic Client* by Duncan, Miller & Sparks
- The Theory and Practice of Group Psychotherapy* By Yalom, Irvin D. and Leszcz,  
Molyn.
- The Use of Self in Therapy* by Michele Baldwin
- This Changes Everything* by Christina Robb
- Transformative Family Therapy* by Almeida, Dolan-Del Vecchio & Parker
- Trauma and Recovery* by Judith Herman
- Trauma Stewardship* by Van Dernoot Lipsky & Burk
- Understanding Group Psychotherapy Videos* by, Yalom, I.
- We've Had a Hundred Years of Psychotherapy—And the World's Getting Worse* by  
James Hillman & Michael Ventura