
**THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN
SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK**

Course Number: SW 393R26 **Instructor:** David W. Springer, PHD, LCSW
Unique Number: 63450 **E-mail:** dwspringer@mail.utexas.edu
Semester: Fall 2005 **Phone:** (512) 471-0512
Meeting Time: Wednesday **Office Room:** 2.202C
2:30 - 5:30pm
Meeting Place: SWB 2.132 **Office Hours:** Wednesdays 1:30 to 2:30pm
Or by appointment (contact Hollee Ganner:
hganner@mail.utexas.edu; 512-471-9824)

THEORIES AND METHODS OF GROUP INTERVENTION

I. COURSE DESCRIPTION

The course will cover current group intervention approaches used with children, adolescents, adults, and the elderly across a variety of settings. Students will develop a working understanding of children, adolescents, adults and the elderly from diverse backgrounds, affirming and respecting their strengths and differences in group settings. The course is grounded in the identification, analysis, and implementation of empirically-based intervention strategies for group work with children, adolescents, adults, and the elderly. This course will focus on using multiple perspectives in the advanced application of theories, models, and skills utilized in short- and longer-term group interventions. The framework of the course is based on social work values and the ethical decision-making process, as illuminated by the [NASW Code of Ethics](#).

II. COURSE OBJECTIVES

Upon completion of this course the student will be able to:

1. Demonstrate the ability to integrate theories and empirical research knowledge in selecting and using group work approaches with children, adolescents, adults, and the elderly.
2. Demonstrate an advanced clinical knowledge of group work intervention and leadership roles and skills as they relates to the strengths, the processes involved in human change, and the capacities and resources of children, adolescents, adults, and the elderly.
3. Demonstrate the ability to adapt group work intervention models, programs, and activities for use with children, adolescents, adults, and the elderly to reflect an understanding of persons from diverse backgrounds, including (but not limited to) race, ethnicity, culture, class, gender, sexual orientation, religion/spiritual, physical or mental ability, developmental level, age, and national origin.

4. Demonstrate the ability to evaluate, select, and design group work programs, methods, and activities for children, adolescents, adults, and the elderly based upon their empirical base, practice utility, potential, range of applicability and limitations.
5. Demonstrate the ability to select and design group work programs, methods, and activities, and to then critically evaluate and analyze these group work approaches as to their effectiveness in given situations. This includes: (a) the adequacy of the research and knowledge base; (b) the range of applicability; (c) the value and ethical issues, including the student's own value system; and (d) the policy implications involved in delivery of group work services to children, adolescents, adults, and the elderly.
6. Demonstrate the ability to integrate and apply core and advanced group work skills and processes, including, but not limited to, creation and maintenance of the group, resolving conflict, dealing with challenging clients, working in the here-and-now, and fostering the therapeutic factors of group work.
7. Demonstrate the ability to implement and evaluate the effectiveness of group work interventions for children, adolescents, adults and the elderly.
8. Demonstrate the ability to tailor group work interventions for children, adolescents, adults, and the elderly based on the context in which they are delivered.
9. Demonstrate advanced knowledge of social work values and ethical decision-making processes as they relate to ethical dilemmas in-group work with children, adolescents, adults, and the elderly.

III. TEACHING METHODS

This course is designed to include a variety of teaching methodologies to achieve the expectation of student mastery of theoretically-grounded advanced practice skill competencies in the group work method. Learning activities will include readings, writings, discussions, lectures, speakers, videos, and experiential exercises.

The professor will model group work principles and strategies. The class will be organized as a skill laboratory, utilizing the small group context and role play for development of group leadership skills. Group work role play sessions will be monitored to facilitate the assessment of skill competencies applied differentially to vulnerable populations across the life cycle.

IV. REQUIRED AND RECOMMENDED TEXTS AND COURSE MATERIALS

Required Texts

Yalom, I. (1995). *The theory and practice of group psychotherapy* (4th ed.). New York: Basic Books.

Required Readings

A Course Packet (Springer) of required readings is available for purchase by enrolled students at Speedway Copy and Printing located in Dobie Mall, 2025 Guadalupe St., Phone # 478-3334.

V. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. Students are expected to attend class sessions regularly and to participate in an interactive framework between collegiate students and professor. Students are expected to **complete the readings prior to class**, and should be well prepared to participate in discussions and experiential learning assignments. Failure to regularly attend the class and demonstrate through discussions that one has comprehended the readings will be considered in assigning the final grade. Students will be allowed **one (1) unexcused absence (freebie)**. Role will be taken each class period. In cases where a student misses more than the allotted one freebie, the professor reserves the right to lower that student's final grade by one point for each class missed beyond the one freebie. In extenuating circumstances of absence, students are to notify the professor. Students are responsible for any material missed due to absences.
2. Except in the case of extreme emergencies, and then only with the permission of the professor, **late assignments will not be accepted without penalty**. Students are expected to turn in all required assignments on the agreed upon due date **at the beginning of class**. Assignments turned in after class starts will be considered late. If accepted, late assignments will be assessed point penalties at the rate of two (2) points each day late. If the due date is a problem, then the student should see the professor and negotiate another due date well in advance.
3. Students are expected to both learn and demonstrate knowledge of groupwork intervention theories and skills. This requires a search of the literature in a defined area (as part of the researched group role play and the group intervention protocol) in order to develop specialized knowledge concerning the use of groupwork as treatment of a specific problem area for a specific population. In addition, students will demonstrate their level of applied knowledge of groupwork interventions and skills in a critical reflection/research paper.
4. Student feedback is welcome. Students are also encouraged to provide feedback during office hours, by phone, by e-mail, and by appointment if they desire.
5. If students are concerned about their class performance, the professor is more than willing to work with students to help them improve their course grades prior to the end of the semester. **Final grades assigned in the course are not negotiable!**
6. Small groups are expected to resolve challenges within their group context. The professor is willing to serve as a consultant if group members are unable to resolve their differences.
7. Groupwork can raise emotional issues. The professor and students have the ethical responsibility to their colleagues to see that the class environment is maintained as a respectful and confidential setting.

Special Accommodations for Students with a Disability

Any student with a documented disability (physical or cognitive) who requires academic accommodations should contact the Services for Students with Disabilities area of the Office of the Dean of Students at 471-6259 (voice) or 471-4641 (TTY for users who are deaf or hard of hearing) as soon as possible to request an official letter outlining authorized accommodations.

Policy on Scholastic Dishonesty

Students who violate University rules on scholastic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary penalties, including the possibility of failure in the course and/or dismissal from the University. Since such dishonesty harms the individual, all students, and the integrity of the University, policies on scholastic dishonesty will be strictly enforced. For further information, the student may refer to the Web Site of the Student Judicial Services, Office of the Dean of Students (<http://www.utexas.edu/depts/dos/sjs>).

Policy on Absence for Religious Holidays

The UT *General Information* catalog states that "A student who is absent from a class or examination for the observance of a religious holy day may complete the work missed within a reasonable time after the absence, if proper notice has been given" (p.79). Notice must be given at least fourteen days prior to the classes scheduled on dates the student will be absent. For religious holy days that fall within the first two weeks of the semester, notice should be given on the first day of the semester. For further information, the student may refer to the following link (<http://www.utexas.edu/cee/uex/resources/model.shtml>).

Safety

As part of professional social work education, students may have assignments that involve working in agency settings and/or the community. As such, these assignments may present some risks. Sound choices and caution may lower risks inherent to the profession. It is the student's responsibility to be aware of and adhere to policies and practice related to agency and/or community safety. Students should also notify instructors regarding any safety concerns.

VI. COURSE ASSIGNMENTS

I. Class Attendance and Contribution (Objectives 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, & 9)

Due to the format and content of this course, both attendance and contribution are imperative. The other students in your small group are dependent on you for a quality learning experience; if too many students are absent in any one small group, that group suffers. Thus, students are expected to be in class, or in extenuating circumstances, to notify the professor and at least one other group member that they will be absent. Attendance and quality of contribution as demonstrated by student preparation level will inform grades. Students will be allowed **one (1) unexcused absence (freebie)**. Role will be taken at the beginning of each class period (please don't leave during the break!). Attendance and participation will be worth 10% of the total course grade. In cases where a student misses more than the allotted one freebie, the professor reserves the right to lower that student's final grade by one point for each class missed beyond the one freebie.

II. Researched Group Role Play (Objectives 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 8, & 9)

Students will be assigned to small groups of approximately 7 to 9 members. Students will alternate in task and treatment leadership roles. Each group will role play 1 treatment session in front of class utilizing a specific theoretical framework(s). Each group will reflect adherence to social work values and ethics, and application to a specific (e.g., child, adolescent, adult, or family group) context. The groups should target a population which is diverse, at-risk, or disadvantaged. The session should demonstrate techniques appropriate to the “middle” group developmental stage and the developmental life cycle of the treatment population. The role play will be worth 30% of the total course grade. Evaluation components will include:

- Evidence of preparation
- Theoretical coherence demonstrated
- Group developmental stage (“middle”) represented appropriately
- Intervention modeling associated with “middle” stage of group development demonstrated
- Social work perspective evident in context of role play
- Demonstration of client developmental level (life cycle) taken into account

Additionally, each group is to prepare for dissemination to the class a summary (2 to 3 pages) of their role play and relevant research conducted that should include, but is not limited to:

- Type of group (brief description addressing purpose, location, number of sessions, open-ended versus closed-ended, etc.)
- Theoretical framework(s) being implemented
- Member characteristics (general description)
- Description for each group member’s character (student’s real name with corresponding name adopted for role play; age; ethnicity; individual goal for group; developmental stage in the life cycle; relevant life and environmental circumstances; role within the group, such as monopolizer, scapegoat, and so on; etc.)
- A list of references that your group used to prepare the role play so that others interested have a starting list of resources

Note: Students are required to complete only one of the two following assignments (of their choosing).

III-A. Individual Critical Reflection/Research Paper (Objectives 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, & 9)

Individual students will critically reflect on their own unique group learning experience in the small task and treatment group process. Students will examine what they have learned about themselves as group members, group leaders, and future group leaders in both task and treatment group contexts. Students are to reflect on any peer or professor feedback. In addition to the critical reflection component of this paper, students are to relate their personal reflections to the course readings and to 5 to 7 additional readings/references from outside of the class. This is the research component of the paper. Thus, this paper is a combination of personal reflections that relate to any small group experience (from this class as well as other small group experiences, past or present) and to readings covered in class and readings from outside of class that the student finds particularly relevant or germane to his or her development as a social work group leader. This is an integrative written assignment (approximately 25 typed pages), worth 60% of the final grade, which is to give detailed and specific examples to document student conclusions. For this reason, it is recommended that students journal their group experience as they progress throughout the semester. One way to structure the paper is by weeks in the course. For example, Week 1, Week 2, and so on, where the student addresses the above based on what is covered in class and small groups each week. This is just a suggestion, however, and students are welcome to structure the paper in other formats with the professor's approval. The professor's evaluative criteria, with corresponding possible points earned for each criteria, will include the following:

<u>Evaluative Criteria</u>	<u>Points</u>
• Personal critical reflection (how much critical self-reflection about the student's experiences and the readings is evident in the paper)	[10]
• Integration of critical thought, experiences, and readings blended together (how well does the student demonstrate the ability to integrate critical thought, the small group experience, role plays, and the readings into a cohesive framework that makes sense)	[10]
• Integration of self with group method (how well does the student demonstrate that he or she has struggled with the integration of personal characteristics [e.g., values, ethical dilemmas, personality traits, spirituality, etc.] with the group method)	[10]
• Analysis of student strengths (how well does the student analyze his or her strengths as a groupworker)	[7]
• Analysis of student areas for growth (how well does the student critically reflect on what his or her areas for growth are as a groupworker at this point, as well as how he or she plans on addressing these areas in future professional development once graduated)	[7]
• Feedback documentation (how well does the student incorporate formal and informal feedback from other students and the professor into the paper when relevant)	[4]
• Conclusion (sum it all up in a page or two)	[4]
• Five to seven additional references, as well as readings from class, included in the paper	[4]
• Use of APA 5 th edition format, as well as correct spelling and grammar	[4]

TOTAL = [60]

III-B. Group Intervention Protocol (Objectives 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 & 9)

This group intervention protocol will integrate the relevant groupwork literature pertaining to a particular treatment issue and population. The treatment issue and population to be addressed in the protocol project will be determined by the student's particular area of interest. However, please be sure to receive prior approval for your topic from the professor. The protocol will be graded according to the outline provided below, and is worth a possible 60% of the final grade. Students may work individually or together in a group (2 to 4 students per group) on one protocol – each student in a group will receive the same grade for the protocol project. The group protocol should cover a minimum of 8 group sessions; assume a closed-ended group format. Each protocol should include the following:

<u>Evaluative Criteria</u>	<u>Points</u>
• Brief description of the group; include treatment issue and population you are targeting (no more than one page)	[5]
• Brief description of the theoretical framework(s) and model(s) of practice that your group intervention protocol is guided by	[5]
• Justification for the group; how will such a group be beneficial to clients (cite literature as needed to support your claims that this group will be helpful)	[5]
• Structure of group (e.g., recruitment, size, composition, physical and social setting, policy considerations, costs to agency and to group members [budget], refreshments, transportation issues, day care issues, safety issues, confidentiality issues, etc.)	[6]
• Overall group objectives (what you want group members to accomplish by the end of the group)	[5]
• Brief description of what you expect to happen in <u>each</u> group session	[6]
• Objectives for <u>each</u> session (be specific) (what group members should gain by attending that particular group session)	[5]
• Suggested agenda items and/or procedures for <u>each</u> group session; how objectives will be met (if group members complete all agenda items and/or participate in the group activities, the group objectives should be met). This should include suggested group exercises with complete descriptions. Remember, a minimum of 8 group sessions should be covered.	[10]
• Brief description of how you will monitor client progress. In other words, how will you know that the group has produced positive treatment outcomes. If you plan to use standardized measurement instrument(s), include a copy of the instrument(s).	[5]
• Comments, Warnings, and Notes (provided for each group session) for potential group leaders following your protocol	[5]
• Materials needed to conduct the group	[3]
A. Equipment (specify)	
B. Handouts (if not attached, specify where and how they can be located)	
	TOTAL = [60]

Note: If it helps, you may write the group intervention protocol as if I am your supervisor in the field, and you are submitting a proposal to begin a group. The purpose of this assignment is for you to leave this class with a group intervention protocol that you (and others) can use as a guide to conduct a group in the field.

VII. COURSE GRADING CRITERIA

Student Performance Evaluation

Course Requirement	% of grade	<u>Grading Scale</u>
Attendance and Participation	10%	A= 100 – 90
Researched Group Role Play	30%	B = 89 - 80
Critical Reflection/Research Paper or Group Intervention Protocol	60%	C = 79 - 70 D = 69 - 60 F = 59 and below
TOTAL	100%	

Grading of all written assignments will take into account the quality and content of the writing. The American Psychological Association (APA) – 5th edition format should be used when relevant. Written material should be carefully proofread and errors (punctuation, typographical, spelling) corrected.

VIII. COURSE OUTLINE (TENTATIVE)

<u>Date</u>	<u>Topics, Readings and Assignments</u>
January 19	<u>Topics</u> Introductions, Class Overview and Review Syllabus Introduction to Groupwork <u>Readings (Required)</u> Yalom – Preface (pp. xi-xvii)
January 26	<u>Topics</u> The Therapeutic Factors Interpersonal Learning Stages of Group Development <u>Readings (Required)</u> Yalom – Ch. 1 - The Therapeutic Factors Yalom – Ch. 2 – Interpersonal Learning Northen (1988) - Ch. 8 – Group Development. In <i>Social Work with Groups</i> (2 nd ed.).
February 2	<u>Topics</u> Group Cohesiveness Integrating the Therapeutic Factors Social Group Work Values and Ethics <u>Readings (Required)</u> Corey, G. (2004). Ethical and Professional Issues in Group Practice. <u>Theory and Practice of Group Counseling</u> (6 th ed.). (pp. 56-78). Yalom – Ch. 3 – Group Cohesiveness Yalom – Ch. 4 – The Therapeutic Factors: An Integration

February 9

Topics

Tasks of the Groupworker

Readings (Required)

Yalom – Ch. 5 – The Therapist: Basic Tasks

Yalom – Ch. 6 – The Therapist: Working in the Here-and-Now

February 16

Topics

Tasks of the Groupworker

Planning and Composing Groups

Readings (Required)

Yalom – Ch. 7 – The Therapist: Transference and Transparency

Yalom – Ch. 8 – The Selection of Patients

February 23

Topics

Planning and Composing Groups

Race, Gender and Class

Readings (Required)

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.

Read first part of Hopps & Pinderhughes (1999). Women's and children's groups. *Group work with overwhelmed clients* (pp. 91-115).

Yalom – Ch. 9 – The Composition of Therapy Groups

Yalom – Ch. 10–Creation of the Group: Place, Time, Size and Preparation

March 2

Topics

Beginning Groups

Readings (Required)

Yalom – Ch. 11 – In the Beginning

March 9

Topics

The Advanced Group

Dealing with Difficult Clients

Readings (Required)

Yalom – Ch. 12 – The Advanced Group

Yalom – Ch. 13 – Problem Patients

March 16

SPRING BREAK

March 23

Topics

Group Work with Children

Readings (Required)

Read second part of Hopps & Pinderhughes (1999). Women's and children's groups. *Group work with overwhelmed clients* (pp. 115-124).

Keyser, Seelaus, & Kahn (2000). Children of trauma and loss: Their treatment in group psychotherapy. *Group psychotherapy for*

psychological trauma.

Lomonaco, Scheidlinger, & Aronson (2000). Five decades of children's group treatment – an overview. *Journal of Child and Adolescent Group Therapy.*

Springer, Pomeroy, & Johnson (1999). A group intervention for children of incarcerated parents: Initial blunders and subsequent solutions. *Groupwork.*

March 30

Topics

Group Work with Adolescents and Families

Readings (Required)

Clarke, DeBar, & Lewinsohn (2003). Cognitive-behavioral group treatment for adolescent depression. *Evidence-based psychotherapies for children and adolescents*

Irizarry & Appel (1994). In Double Jeopardy: Preadolescents in the Inner City. *Mutual aid groups, vulnerable populations, and the life cycle* (2nd ed.).

April 6

Topics

Group Work with Adolescents and Families

Readings (Required)

Springer, D. W., & Orsbon, S. H. (2002). Families helping families: Implementing a multi-family therapy group with substance-abusing adolescents. *Health and Social Work: Practice Forum.*

April 13

Topics

Group Work with Adults and the Elderly

Readings (Required)

Cummings (2003). The efficacy of an integrated group treatment program for depressed assisted living residents. *Research on Social Work Practice.*

April 20

RESEARCHED GROUP ROLE PLAYS

April 27

Topics

Inpatient Groups and Other Specialized Formats

Social Group Work Research and Evaluation

Readings (Required)

Yalom – Ch. 14 – The Therapist: Specialized Formats & Procedural Aids

Yalom – Ch. 15 – The Specialized Therapy Group

May 4

Last Day of Class

**CRITICAL REFLECTION/RESEARCH PAPERS
AND GROUP INTERVENTION PROTOCOLS DUE**

Topics

Termination

Readings (Required)

BIBLIOGRAPHY

The following list of supplemental readings is **REQUIRED**. Copies are available for purchase as a **Coursepacket at Speedway Copy and Printing in Dobie Mall**.

Northern, H. (1988). Group development. *Social work with groups* (2nd ed.) (pp 174-184). New York: Columbia University Press.

Corey, G. (2004). Ethical and professional issues in group practice. *Theory and practice of group counseling* (6th ed.) (pp. 56-78). Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole.

Bilides, D. G. (1991). Race, color, ethnicity, and class: Issues of biculturalism in school-based adolescent counseling groups. In K.L. Chau (Ed.), *Ethnicity and biculturalism: Emerging perspectives of social group work* (pp. 43-58). New York: The Hawthorn Press.

Hopps, J. G., & Pinderhughes, E. (1999). Women's and children's groups. *Group work with overwhelmed clients* (pp. 91-124). New York: The Free Press.

Keyser, J. L., Seelaus, K., Kahn, G. B. (2000). Children of trauma and loss: Their treatment in group psychotherapy. In R. H. Klein & V. L. Schermer (Eds.), *Group psychotherapy for psychological trauma* (pp. 209-238). New York: Guilford Press.

Lomonaco, S., Scheidlinger, S., & Aronson, S. (2000). Five decades of children's group treatment – an overview. *Journal of Child and Adolescent Group Therapy*, 10(2), 77-96.

Springer, D. W., Pomeroy E. C., & Johnson, T. (1999). A group intervention for children of incarcerated parents: Initial blunders and subsequent solutions. *Groupwork*, 11(1), 55-70.

Clarke, G. N., DeBar, L. L., & Lewinsohn, P. M. (2003). Cognitive-behavioral group treatment for adolescent depression. In A. E. Kazdin & J. R. Weisz (Eds.), *Evidence-based psychotherapies for children and adolescents* (pp. 120-134). New York: Guilford Press.

Irizarry, C., & Appel, Y. H. (1994). In double jeopardy: Preadolescents in the inner city. In A. Gitterman & L. Shulman (Eds.), *Mutual aid groups, vulnerable populations and the life cycle* (2nd ed.) (pp. 119-149). New York: Columbia University Press.

Springer, D. W., & Orsbon, S. H. (2002). Families helping families: Implementing a multi-family therapy group with substance-abusing adolescents. *Health and Social Work*, 27(3), 204-207.

Cummings, S. M. (2003). The efficacy of an integrated group treatment program for depressed assisted living residents. *Research on Social Work Practice*, 13(5), 608-621.