



**Angelo State University
Department of Psychology, Sociology, and Social Work
SWK 4313: Social Work and Groups**

Course Dates, Time, and Location

Summer Semester, 2011: July 6, 2011 to August 5, 2011
Online Course via Blackboard

Instructor Contact Information

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Office Hours: MTWRF 8:00 am - 10:00 am

Course Description

An introduction to group theory and practice. Topics include group formation and development, stages of the group process, ethics and legal issues relating to group practice, and group work with diverse populations. Prerequisite: SWK 2307 and SWK 2317

Course Introduction

This course provides an introduction to social work practice with groups. In this course, group work is broadly defined to encompass treatment groups as well as task groups. Attention is given to the individual person in the group, the group as a whole, and the environment in which the group exists. Evidence supported practice principles are highlighted as well as group leadership skills. Group practice (or what may be called mezzo level practice) is presented within the context of the general intervention model used in generalist social work practice; while incorporating both micro and macro practice skills.

(The instructor reserves the right to modify this syllabus throughout the semester if necessary.)

Student Learning Outcomes/Course Competencies: Social Work Knowledge, Values and Skills

EP 2.1.1 -- Identify as a professional social worker and conduct oneself accordingly.

Students will gain client advocacy skills in a supervised volunteer experience. Students will gain knowledge of professional social work (e.g., history, philosophy, values, etc.) and what it means to be a professional social worker in relationship to social work roles, functions, and professional boundaries. Students will gain knowledge of the professional values of the social work profession and work to recognize their personal values in relationship to the professional values of the social work profession. Students will begin gaining the skills necessary to identify as professional social workers and conduct themselves accordingly in their behavior, appearance, and communication (written and oral). Students will gain skills in utilizing supervision and consultation in an applied experience.

EP 2.1.2 -- Apply social work ethical principles to guide professional practice.

Students will gain knowledge of the *NASW Code of Ethics* and their importance in generalist social work practice with groups. Students will recognize and manage personal values in a way that allows professional values to guide practice with groups. Students will begin to learn the skills of applying their professional values to the social work profession's ethical standards of practice.

EP 2.1.3 -- Apply critical thinking to inform and communicate professional judgments.

Students will gain knowledge of what critical thinking is and how it can be applied to group practice. Students will learn the value of critical thinking as it relates to scientific inquiry, reasoned discernment, and its importance to competent social work practice with groups. Students will practice their critical thinking skills in written and oral class assignments.

EP 2.1.4 -- Engage diversity and difference in practice.

Students will gain knowledge of how culture, social organization, and personal values may oppress, marginalize, alienate, or unjustly create power or privilege for certain groups. Students will recognize their own personal values and biases when working with diverse groups in efforts to respect the dignity and worth of every person and promote social justice in practice. Students will gain skills in recognizing and communicating differences between people. They will begin to gain skills in recognizing clients as informants about various areas of diversity.

EP 2.1.6 -- Engage in research-informed practice and practice-informed research.

Students will gain knowledge on to incorporate evidenced based practice in social work practice settings. Students will develop the skills needed to evaluate the efficacy of social work practice interventions in group settings.

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EP 2.1.7 -- Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment.

Students will gain knowledge of how human behavior is shaped by the social environment; and how to apply this knowledge in a practice setting. Students will learn the skills necessary to apply the knowledge learned in a practice setting. Students will gain insight as to how values affect the application of theories relating to human behavior and the social environment.

EP 2.1.9 -- Respond to contexts that shape practice.

Students will gain knowledge of the dynamic nature of social work practice with groups including evolving organizational, community, and social context.

EP 2.1.10 -- Engage, assess, intervene, and evaluate with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.

Students will gain the knowledge necessary to engage, assess, intervene, and evaluate with groups. Students will apply professional values to generalist practice activities (i.e., engagement, assessment, intervention with, and evaluation of groups). Students will discuss and learn skills necessary to engage, assess, intervene, and evaluate groups.

Course Materials

Required Texts:

Toseland, R. W., & Rivas, R. F. (2009). *An introduction to group work practice* (7th ed.). Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon. ISBN: 978-0-205-82004-7

American Psychological Association. (2010). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (6th ed.). Washington, DC: Author. ISBN: 978-1-4338-0561-5

NOTE: All assignments submitted in this course are to be written in strict accordance with the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (6th ed.)^{2nd} Publication.

Grading Information

Grading Scale:

90 – 100 = A
80 – 89 = B
70 – 79 = C
60 – 69 = D
59 or Below = F

(The instructor reserves the right to modify this syllabus throughout the semester if necessary.)

Point Values and Description for Assignments and Examinations:

Professional Performance 10%

This is relevant to attendance; engaging in class activities, including frequency and quality; professional presentation; and so forth.

- PB2 Practice personal reflection and self-correction to assure continual professional development.
- PB3 Attend to professional roles and boundaries.
- PB4 Demonstrate professional demeanor in behavior, appearance, and communication.
- PB7 Recognize and manage personal values in a way that allows professional values to guide practice.
- PB10 Apply strategies of ethical reasoning to arrive at principled decisions.
- PB11 Distinguish, appraise, and integrate multiple sources of knowledge, including research-based knowledge, and practice wisdom.

Chapter Discussion Questions 30%

Each student will be required to respond to discussion questions posted on Blackboard for each chapter every week. Students will be required to reply to at least two classmate's responses each week. Instructor will provide feedback to responses, review each student's responses to ensure they are keeping with the topic, appropriate, and show critical thinking skills.

- PB2 Practice personal reflection and self-correction to assure continual professional development.
- PB5 Engage in career-long learning.
- PB7 Recognize and manage personal values in a way that allows professional values to guide practice.
- PB11 Distinguish, appraise, and integrate multiple sources of knowledge, including research-based knowledge, and practice wisdom.
- PB14 Recognize the extent to which a culture's structures and values may oppress, marginalize, alienate, or create or enhance privilege and power.
- PB15 Gain sufficient self-awareness to eliminate the influence of personal biases and values in working with diverse groups.
- PB16 Recognize and communicate their understanding of the importance of difference in shaping life experiences.
- PB22 Use research evidence to inform practice.
- PB27 Continuously discover, appraise, and attend to changing locales, populations, scientific and technological developments, and emerging societal trends to provide relevant services.
- PB29 Substantively and affectively prepare for action with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.

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Examinations

40%

There will be four (4) online, open book, multiple attempt, timed, examinations in this course. Each of these examinations is worth 10% of your total course grade. You will take each of these examinations via Blackboard using the Respondus LockDown browser.

- PB10 Apply strategies of ethical reasoning to arrive at principled decisions.
- PB11 Distinguish, appraise, and integrate multiple sources of knowledge, including research-based knowledge, and practice wisdom.
- PB12 Analyze models of assessment, prevention, intervention, and evaluation.
- PB14 Recognize the extent to which a culture's structures and values may oppress, marginalize, alienate, or create or enhance privilege and power.
- PB15 Gain sufficient self-awareness to eliminate the influence of personal biases and values in working with diverse groups.
- PB16 Recognize and communicate their understanding of the importance of difference in shaping life experiences.
- PB17 View themselves as learners and engage those with whom they work as informants.
- PB18 Understand the forms and mechanisms of oppression and discrimination.
- PB19 Advocate for human rights and social and economic justice.
- PB20 Engage in practices that advance social and economic justice.
- PB21 Use practice experience to inform scientific inquiry.
- PB22 Use research evidence to inform practice.
- PB23 Utilize conceptual frameworks to guide the processes of assessment, intervention, and evaluation.
- PB27 Continuously discover, appraise, and attend to changing locales, populations, scientific and technological developments, and emerging societal trends to provide relevant services.
- PB29 Substantively and affectively prepare for action with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.
- PB30 Use empathy and other interpersonal skills.
- PB32 Collect, organize, and interpret client data.
- PB33 Assess client strengths and limitations.
- PB40 Facilitate transitions and endings.
- PB41 Critically analyze, monitor, and evaluate interventions.

Group Presentations

20%

There will be in class group presentations. The groups will consist of 3 members each (which I will assign), a topic of your choice (related to social work and group practice), topic must be cleared with instructor, must include a power point presentation, an outline to be turned in, and will last at least 20 minutes. Each group member will be asked to grade the other group members on contribution, division of task, accessibility and attitude. This evaluation will be part of the overall grade.

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The group presentation should cover the following:

1. The nature of the particular area of social work practice.
2. The role and function of social workers in that particular area of social work practice on the micro and macro levels of practice, policy issues, and content from human behavior and the social environment.
3. Related professional organizations; degree level, licensure, and/or certification required for practice in the particular area; and salary.

Guest speakers are not permitted. Each student group will have 20 minutes to present. Power-Point slides are required. Students will be awarded a group grade based on the quality of presentation and PowerPoint Slides. You will submit your Power-Point slides to me through Blackboard, so that I can upload to Wimba. All students are required to be logged into Wimba during the Presentations, even if you are not presenting.

Plagiarism is the presentation of someone else's information as though it were your own. If you use the words or ideas of another person; or if you use material from any source--whether a book, journal, magazine, newspaper, business publication, broadcast, speech, electronic media, or any other source--you must acknowledge that source. Plagiarism on the presentation will result in the student group not receiving credit for the presentation.

- PB2 Practice personal reflection and self-correction to assure continual professional development.
- PB3 Attend to professional roles and boundaries.
- PB4 Demonstrate professional demeanor in behavior, appearance, and communication.
- PB11 Distinguish, appraise, and integrate multiple sources of knowledge, including research-based knowledge, and practice wisdom.
- PB13 Demonstrate effective oral and written communication in working with colleagues.
- PB24 Critiques and applies knowledge to understand person and environment.
- PB27 Continuously discover, appraise, and attend to changing locales, populations, scientific and technological developments, and emerging societal trends to provide relevant services.
- PB29 Substantively and affectively prepare for action with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.

Course Policies

- Please do ask questions that are relevant to the course and feel free to utilize my office hours. I am here to help you and I want you to succeed.

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- Classroom attendance and participation is necessary and expected. Students are responsible for understanding Angelo State University's Class Attendance Regulations, which is available on the web at: http://www.angelo.edu/forms/pdf/2010-2011_Undergraduate_Catalog.pdf
- All students are expected to follow the National Association of Social Workers [*Code of Ethics*](#).
- Angelo State University expects its students to maintain complete honesty and integrity in their academic pursuits. Students are responsible for understanding the Academic Honor Code, which is available on the web at: http://www.angelo.edu/forms/pdf/Honor_Code.pdf
- Make-up examinations will be considered on a case by case basis and will only be allowed for university approved absences.
- Late assignments are not accepted for any reason unless the reason is approved by the course instructor.
- Electronic devices, including cell phones, Blackberries, laptops, and so forth, are not to be turned on or used in class. If the use of these devices is detected by the course instructor, the particular student using the device will be asked to leave the class for that day.
- This class will utilize Wimba, a collaborative tool from Blackboard. This will allow myself to interact with you in a real time fashion, using audio and chat sessions. We will meet on Wimba once a week and during the final week presentations will be presented using Wimba.

Persons with Disabilities

Persons with disabilities which may warrant academic accommodations must contact the Student Life Office, Room 112 University Center, in order to request such accommodations prior to their being implemented. You are encouraged to make this request early in the semester so that appropriate arrangements can be made. Additional information can be found at:

http://www.angelo.edu/services/student_life/disability.html

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Course Schedule

Week/Dates	Lecture Topics/Readings/Assignments
Week 1 7/6-7/8	<p>Course Introduction</p> <p>Reading: Chapters 1-3</p> <p>Lecture Topic: Introduction to Group Work; Historical Developments; and Understanding Group Dynamics</p>
Week 2 7/11-7/15	<p>Reading: Chapters 4-6</p> <p>Lecture Topic: Leadership; Leadership and Diversity; and Planning the Group</p> <p>Exam 1: Chapters 1-6; 7/15/2011 to 7/17/2011</p>
Week 3 7/18-7/22	<p>Reading: Chapters 7-9</p> <p>Lecture Topic: The Group Begins; Assessment; Treatment Groups-Foundation Methods;</p> <p>Exam 2: Chapters 7-9; 7/22/2011 to 7/24/2011</p>
Week 4 7/25-7/29	<p>Reading: Chapters 10-12</p> <p>Lecture Topic: Treatment Groups-Specialized Methods; Task Groups-Foundation Methods; and Task Groups-Specialized Methods</p> <p>Exam 3: Chapters 10, 11, & 12; 7/29/2011 to 7/31/2011</p>
Week 5 8/1-8/5	<p>Reading: Chapters 13 & 14</p> <p>Lecture Topic: Ending the Group's Work; and Evaluation</p> <p>Presentations: 8/3 and 8/4 TBA (You must be logged in Wimba, even if you are not presenting.)</p> <p>Exam 4: Chapters 13 & 14; 8/5/2011</p>

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