Group Counseling  
(PSY 6324.10)  
Summer 2019  
TTH 2–5pm  
A 213

Instructor: Dr. Drew Curtis

Office: A204D  
Email: drew.curtis@angelo.edu
Office Hours: Tue. & Th. 1-2pm.; Virtual: Tue. and Wed: 8:00-12p.m.  
Phone: 325-486-6932

Required Text:

Recommended Text:

Course Description:
Review of the major theories and techniques of group counseling. Pre-practicum application of selected group counseling methods.

Course Objectives:
1. Gaining a basic understanding of the subject (e.g., factual knowledge, methods, principles, generalizations, theories)
2. Learn to apply course material (to improve thinking, problem solving, and decisions)
3. Develop specific skills, competencies, and points of view needed by professionals in counseling

Student Learning Outcomes:
By the end of this course, you should:
1. Articulate a knowledge of historical and contemporary theories of group psychotherapy
2. Demonstrate a knowledge of therapeutic factors and mechanisms of change in group therapy
3. Identify appropriate goals for group therapy in a variety of settings with different client populations
4. Better understand group dynamics and describe models of group development
5. Engage in and learn from a training group experience
6. Reflect as a member or a therapist during and after a group experience on what is happening and on behavior and interventions that would effectively move yourself or the group toward identified goals

Course Expectations

**Readings**
It is expected that each student will have the required reading completed before the class during which we will discuss the material (see course schedule). Some material in the text may be challenging upon first read, but lectures will be easier to follow if you have read the chapter.

***If I feel the class is not keeping up with the reading, I will have the option to start giving quizzes at any time during any class. Just remember that reading prior to class is really to your benefit!***

**Policies/Expectations**
1. Students are expected to take responsibility for their success in class. You are encouraged to be *active participants* in the education process by asking questions and being alert in class.
2. Distracting or disrespectful students will be asked to leave the class (this includes use of cell phones and other electronic devices).
3. If you have any concerns related to this class, you are encouraged to speak with your instructor *in a timely manner*. **As a general rule, you should raise any issues within one week of receiving a grade or completing a given project.** Please do not ask your instructor for a grade change, bump, or any alteration of your grade at the end of the semester. By asking your instructor to do this, you are fostering
a dynamic of opposition for your instructor.
4. Students will be expected to access the Blackboard online classroom on a regular basis for announcements, course materials, assignments, and grades.
5. The instructor reserves the right to use plagiarism prevention software.

Class Sessions
- The majority of the class will be lecture, discussion, and experiential.
- Experiential means that we will often be practicing group counseling techniques through role-plays or training groups within class. This will often be demonstrated in the presence of your peers. You are expected to participate in experiential class role-plays or training groups.
- **A training group is not the same as a psychotherapy group.** Participants are encouraged to work on personal goals that will assist in their professional development as student-therapists and carefully select issues they do not mind sharing with classmates and a professor. For example, a training group might be a good place to work on interpersonal behaviors like being more outgoing or tendencies for perfectionism. It is not a good place to work on highly personal issues like addictions or recovery from childhood abuse. The ASU counseling center is a good place for these issues.
- Each class students will take turns as facilitators and participants. The professor will act as a consultant and will be available for coaching if the facilitators are unsure what to do next. The first session will be used to establish ground rules and introduce the theme of personal awareness.
- At the end of each group experience, students will have a few minutes to write notes about their own experience and to share process observations. This training group format has some advantages and some risks. The principle advantage is that each student has the opportunity to experience a group as both a facilitator and a participant with others who are learning about group dynamics. The risks of this training format include emotional discomfort and loss of confidentiality. Some of the risks of this training format are associated with the dual relationships that will occur as a result of the group process. You will move back and forth between being a participant and facilitator. Your fellow participants will be classmates. Your professor will observe the group and coach the facilitators. You have probably dealt with these risks in other psychology classes when deciding how much to self-disclose in a class discussion or deciding whether to describe a personal problem in a role play. There are things we can do together to lower these risks. We can all be careful about protecting one another’s confidentiality. We can be careful not to choose activities that feel too risky. You can monitor your own comfort and let the group know if there is a question you don’t want to answer or an area you don’t want to explore. Participation in the training group is not graded so that students don’t feel pressured to disclose in a way that is uncomfortable.
- Class attendance is **mandatory**
- You MUST take your own notes in class in order to pass.
- Media presentations and demonstrations may be used to help illustrate the concepts being discussed.
- Classes may include discussions, group projects, films, and activities.
- Questions and comments are always welcome! (Please be respectful.)

*DISCLAIMER: This class may examine a variety of cultural and personal issues and subjects students to ideas and material that they may find disagreeable. If students are unable or unwilling to tolerate other perspectives or their own value systems in the context of the class, then they are encouraged to speak with the instructor regarding their concerns and may wish to reconsider their enrollment in the course. Should you have any questions, concerns, or suggestions at any time during the semester, please feel free to contact me.*

Communication
- Email is the **best** way to contact your instructor.
- All emails should include this course name in the subject line.
- All emails should include your first and last name.
Grades

Professionalism/Reading Reactions/Participation: Professionalism, participation, and prompt attendance are key elements of competencies needed for therapists. Thus, it is very important that you attend class, actively volunteer, participate in discussion, and maintain a high level of professionalism when responding to your instructor and peers. Students will prepare, prior to each class, a response of discussion questions/reactions based on their readings. These questions/responses are meant to help you prepare for class discussions and as such you should read assigned readings prior to class. Discussions may be based upon reading. Thus, failure to do these assignments will negatively impact your participation grade. Additionally, doing the assignment but not participating or speaking in class or speaking in an unprofessional manner will result in a loss of points or no points for the class. Professionalism/reading reactions/participation will be graded for 8 class periods. Participation will not be graded in the first class and your lowest participation grade will be dropped (meaning that you missed class that day). Thus, if you miss more than one class you will receive a 0 for the class and it will count in your grade for the semester. Grades will be assigned as excellent (10 pts), adequate (7 pts), inadequate (4 pts), or fail (0 pts) or any range in between. To receive an ‘excellent’ you must be present for the entire class, complete the reaction form with meaningful reactions, and participate fully in all in-class activities (meaning that you volunteer for role-plays and demonstrations), including providing your fellow classmates with appropriate, meaningful feedback, and maintain a high level of professionalism in response and demeanor. Some in-class activities will be based on knowledge or competency. In order to receive an ‘excellent’ on those days you must successfully and accurately complete the activity. If you are absent or if you refuse to participate in the in-class activities, you will automatically receive a ‘fail’ for the day (0pts.).

Quizzes
There will be 8 quizzes given throughout the semester. Each quiz will be worth 10 points and you will have no more than 10 minutes to complete the quiz given at the beginning of the class. The quiz will ask questions from the previous class. NO MAKE-UP QUIZZES.

Student Presentations
The Yalom text and the professor’s lectures will focus on an Interpersonal approach to group therapy in depth. However, there are other theoretical approaches (e.g., Corey, 2012) and you will have an opportunity to explore these alternative approaches in your group presentations. Your presentation should cover three main topics: (A) Theoretical approach to group therapy, (B) Key strategies used in this approach, and (C) Research support. Presentations will focus a specific psychotherapy theory. Your presentation should draw upon at various sources (e.g., a chapter from Corey; two other theoretical sources; at least one research study). After a PowerPoint presentation summarizing the approach (50 points), you will have a chance to facilitate our training group using skills and activities drawn from the approach you presented (50 points; each co-leader will be graded separately for their skills).

Group Observation Paper
Each student will be asked to find a group outside of class and observe a group meeting (either behind a one-way mirror or actually sitting in the room). Be sure that you have permission to sit in on the group prior to attending a group. Be sure you have spoken with a group leader or a supervisor. A supervisor at your practicum site may allow you to sit-in and/or observe an already existing group. Other possibilities include:

- Alcoholics Anonymous (see [http://nwta66.org/districts/district14/sanangelo/](http://nwta66.org/districts/district14/sanangelo/))

The paper should be organized in three sections with sections headings:

1) Description. First, describe the group. What type of group are you observing: Psycho-educational, self-help, process, or therapy? Open or closed? Drop-in or fixed? Write a paragraph describing the group.
2) **Conceptualization.** Second, conceptualize the group. What is happening in the group? What processes are occurring in the group? How might you use theory learned in the course to describe the process of the group?

3) **Treatment Planning.** Third, plan interventions for the group. If you were leading the group, where would you go next? What topics might you address? What might be difficulties for you as an individual given your knowledge and growing awareness of your own group process?

This paper should be in APA style and correctly cite both of the assigned texts. This paper cannot be turned in late.

**Course Point Distribution:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Final Grades:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading Reaction/Participation (8):</td>
<td>80 pts. (10 pts. each)</td>
<td>A = 315-350</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Presentations:</td>
<td>100 pts.</td>
<td>B = 280-314</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quizzes (8):</td>
<td>80 pts. (10 pts. each)</td>
<td>C = 245-279</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group Observation Paper</td>
<td>90 pts.</td>
<td>F = &lt; 244</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total Points Possible =</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>350 pts.</td>
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**Tentative Schedule**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Chapter</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6/4</td>
<td>Introduction &amp; American Group Psychotherapy Association Practice Guidelines for Group Psychotherapy</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6/6</td>
<td>Therapeutic Factors, Interpersonal Learning, &amp; Training Groups</td>
<td>1, 2, &amp; 17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6/11</td>
<td>Therapeutic Factors &amp; Group Cohesiveness</td>
<td>3 &amp; 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6/13</td>
<td>The Group Therapist</td>
<td>5 &amp; 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6/18</td>
<td>Transference &amp; Client Selection</td>
<td>7 &amp; 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6/20</td>
<td>Group Composition</td>
<td>9 &amp; 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6/25</td>
<td>Stages of Groups</td>
<td>11 &amp; 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6/27</td>
<td>Problem Group Members &amp; The Therapist</td>
<td>13 &amp; 14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7/2</td>
<td>Specialized Groups</td>
<td>15 &amp; 16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7/4</td>
<td><strong>Holiday</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7/9</td>
<td>Group Presentation: Psychoanalytic</td>
<td>6 (C)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7/11</td>
<td>Group Presentation: Psychodrama</td>
<td>8 (C)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7/16</td>
<td>Group Presentation: Gestalt</td>
<td>11 (C)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7/18</td>
<td>Group Presentation: Existential</td>
<td>9 (C)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7/23</td>
<td>Group Presentation: Cognitive Behavioral</td>
<td>13 (C)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7/25</td>
<td>Integration/Final (Group Observation Paper Due)</td>
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**Syllabus is subject to change at the discretion of the instructor**

(C) = Corey chapters

**STUDENT ABSENCE FOR OBSERVANCE OF RELIGIOUS HOLY DAYS**

“A student who intends to observe a religious holy day should make that intention known in writing to the instructor prior to the absence.”

**ACADEMIC HONESTY**

Academic honesty is expected on all work. Students are expected to maintain complete honesty and integrity in their online experiences. Any student found guilty of any form of dishonesty in academic work is subject of disciplinary action and possible expulsion from ASU.
The Department of Psychology, Sociology, and Social Work adheres to the academic honesty statement as set forth in the Angelo State University Student Handbook (2011-2012) http://www.angelo.edu/content/files/17358-university-honor-code. The University "faculty expects all students to engage in all academic pursuits in a manner that is above reproach and to maintain complete honesty and integrity in the academic experience both in and out of the classroom setting and may initiate disciplinary proceedings against a student accused of any form of academic dishonesty, including but not limited to, cheating on an examination or other academic work, plagiarism, collusion, and the abuse of resource materials."

PLAGIARISM
Plagiarism at ASU is a serious topic. The Angelo State University’s Honor Code gives specific details on plagiarism and what it encompasses. Plagiarism is the action or practice of taking someone else’s work, idea, etc., and passing it off as one’s own. Plagiarism is literary theft.

In your discussions and/or your papers, it is unacceptable to copy word for word without quotation marks and the source of the quotation. We use the APA Style Manual of the American Psychological Association as a guide for all writing assignments. Quotes should be used sparingly. It is expected that you will summarize or paraphrase ideas giving appropriate credit to the source both in the body of your paper and the reference list. Papers are subject to be evaluated for originality via Bb Turnitin. Resources to help you understand this policy better are available at the ASU Writing Center http://www.angelo.edu/dept/writing_center/academic_honesty.php.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES
1. “Angelo State University is committed to the principle that no qualified individual with a disability shall, on the basis of disability, be excluded from participation in or be denied the benefits of the services, programs, or activities of the university, or be subjected to discrimination by the university, as provided by the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act of 2008 (ADAAA), and subsequent legislation.”

2. The Office of Student Affairs is the designated campus department charged with the responsibility of reviewing and authorizing requests for reasonable accommodations based on a disability, and it is the student’s responsibility to initiate such a request by contacting the Office of Student Affairs, University Center, Room 112 at (325) 942-2047 or (325) 942-2211 (TDD/FAX) or by e-mail at studentservices@angelo.edu to begin the process. The Office of Student Affairs will establish the particular documentation requirements necessary for the various types of disabilities.

Reasonable accommodations will be made for students determined to be disabled or who have documented disabilities.

TUTORING
The ASU Tutor Center is located in the Library C301 (3rd floor). Tutoring is free to all ASU students.

WITHDRAWALS
Please review withdrawal policies:
http://www.angelo.edu/services/registrars_office/withdrawals_refunds.php