

**EPSY 5301: Group Processes
Course Syllabus
Educational Psychology Department, School Counseling Program
University of Connecticut
Spring 2023**

Virtual Meetings: <https://uconn-cmr.webex.com/meet/bjf17003>

Mondays 4:40pm-7:10pm

Instructor: Bobbi-Jo F. Wathen, PhD Candidate

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Office Hours: by appointment

Syllabus subject to change, updates will be uploaded to Husky CT

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course is designed to improve understanding of human dynamics and group behavior, gain insight into the student's own behavior and reactions of people to him or her, to compare the actual results of behavior with the results intended, and to improve the student's comfort and ability in group situations. An introduction to group process by comparison of theoretical foundations will be included. Through role play students will be assuming the roles of participant, observer, and counselor. As a participant, you will be actively engaged as a member of a small group during the whole semester. As an observer, you will observe and critically analyze processes that occur within your own group and other groups. Finally, you will begin serving as a counselor to small groups, helping group members understand, analyze, and enact processes that contribute to more effective group problem-solving and decision-making pertain to the subject matter you choose.

CACREP Curricular Content	2016 STANDARD
theoretical foundations of group counseling and group work	2.F.6.a
dynamics associated with group process and development	2.F.6.b
therapeutic factors and how they contribute to group effectiveness	2.F.6.c
characteristics and functions of effective group leaders	2.F.6.d
approaches to group formation, including recruiting, screening, and selecting members	2.F.6.e
types of groups and other considerations that affect conducting groups in varied settings	2.F.6.f
ethical and culturally relevant strategies for designing and facilitating groups	2.F.6.g
direct experiences in which students participate as group members in a small group activity, approved by the program, for a minimum of 10 clock hours over the course of one academic term	2.F.6.h

Course Objective	STANDARD	EVALUATION
Understand theoretical foundations of group counseling and group work	2.F.6.a	Group Leadership Video, Group Counseling Unit Binder
Understand dynamics associated with group process and development	2.F.6.b	Mock facilitation, Group Leadership Video, Group Counseling Unit Binder

Understand therapeutic factors and how they contribute to group effectiveness	2.F.6.c	Group Leadership Video, Group Counseling Unit Binder
Understand and use characteristics and functions of effective group leaders	2.F.6.d	Group Leadership Video, Group Counseling Unit Binder, Mock facilitation
Understand approaches to group formation, including recruiting, screening, and selecting members	2.F.6.e	Group Leadership Video, Group Counseling Unit Binder
Understand types of groups and other considerations that affect conducting groups in varied settings	2.F.6.f	Group Leadership Video, Group Counseling Unit Binder
Understand ethical and culturally relevant strategies for designing and facilitating groups	2.F.6.g	Group Leadership Video, Group Counseling Unit Binder
Participate as group members in a small group activity, approved by the program, for a minimum of 10 clock hours over the course of one academic term	2.F.6.h	Group participation

1.

REQUIRED BOOK:

Corey, M. S., Corey, G., & Corey, C. (2018). *Groups: Process and Practice* (10th edition). Brooks/Cole.

RECOMMENDED: (for reference, not for purchase)

Smead, R. (1995). *Skills and techniques for group work with children and adolescents*. Champaign, Ill.: Research Press.

Tyson, L. E, Pérusse, R., & Whitley, J. (2004). *Critical incidents in group counseling*. American Counseling Association.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

Professional Demeanor/Participation (pts/class, 100 points)

Class participation will be assessed by the following: class attendance (and getting to class on time); evidence of being prepared for class discussions; bringing up points for discussion; being supportive of classmates; completion of in-class assignments, and submitting assignments on time. Students are expected to **actively** participate in all class discussions and group activities. **(Each student must contribute vocally to class discussions at least once per class)** Students are also expected to role play in each other's facilitated group sessions. Attend all classes.

The format of this class will include group activities, role plays, and discussion to help process and integrate the information presented in reading assignments, videos, and mini-lectures. Class attendance and constructive participation in all aspects of the course are required. If a participant is not present in class he/she cannot receive a grade for professional demeanor for that day, regardless of the reason for the absence.

ASSIGNMENTS WILL BE DUE ON THE SUNDAY BEFORE A NEW WEEK BEGINS.

**Reflections (20 points per reflection, must be completed between weeks 2 through week 10).
(Individual Assignment)**

Students will write a **250-500 word** reflection. Include all facets of what you liked and disliked about the lecture. Whether it was helpful to you or not, and how you would/would not apply the knowledge learned during classes it in your work setting. **Five reflections must be completed before week 10/group facilitations begin.**

**Literature Review Summary for Group Counseling Unit (100 points, due week 7)
(Individual Assignment)**

Using at least **five** journal articles that address your topic or how to conduct group counseling in a school, or in general. Make photocopies of the abstracts to include in your binder. Refer back to these articles in your GCU project to show how you incorporated these ideas into your work. Students should be able to show evidence to suggest that the techniques and ideas described in the article are effective. Please describe the most salient aspects of the article selected. Also please list, in a bulleted format, the specific activities you will include in your group counseling unit based on what you read in this article. **Use the articles to help frame your 6 sessions.**

**Group Counseling Unit (GCU) Binder (Due: Week 11 & Week 12, 150 points)
(Group Assignment)**

Working in groups of 2-3, students will prepare a **six-session** group counseling prevention/intervention, using strategies for selected special issues in schools. Topics may include: **Assertiveness for Girls, Multicultural Situations, GLBTQ, Study Skills, Making Friends, Deployed Parents, and so on.** To avoid duplication, students will be required to sign up for a topic of their choice. Students may want to share their work with other class members via copies, email or providing these on disk. **(First three sessions are due: Week 11. Final three sessions due Week 12) (If your group needs more time to complete a session a 1-week grace period will be afforded. Groups must let the instructor know 48 hours in advance.)**

1. Each working pair will develop a 6-session group counseling program/intervention.
2. Using at least **four** journal articles that address your topic or how to conduct group counseling in a school, or in general. Make photocopies of the abstracts to include in your binder. Refer back to these articles in your GCU project to show how you incorporated these ideas into your work. **Use the articles to help frame your 6 sessions.**
3. Include copies of the actual materials which you would use. **Be original.** It is okay for you to borrow ideas from resource materials (references must be included in APA style); however, you must submit only your original work and ideas.

For each of the six lessons, provide a one-page outline: (Follow the lesson plan format provided)

- Goal of the lesson.
- Objectives. What are the specific outcomes or behaviors the students should be able to demonstrate after participating in the lesson?
- Activities and Materials. Will you use role-play, a game, lecture, discussion or other?
- Time. Specify the amount of time you will spend on each activity.

- Evaluation. How will you know students have achieved the objectives? How will you know if the lesson is a success?
- Accountability. What kinds of pre and post data will you use to substantiate your claim that you are making a difference?

Sign-ups for facilitation times will be issued on week 7 and will be closed by **Spring Break.**

Something to consider: presentations can be based on your GCU

The purpose of the mock group is to demonstrate basic group leader skills including:

- stating a clear purpose for the group
- setting clear norms
- providing structure: warm up, action, processing and closure
- using eyes to monitor the group
- using voice to set the tone of the group
- changing the focus to or from a topic, person, or activity
- holding the focus
- giving mini lectures
- cutting off members
- drawing out members
- using rounds effectively
- support appropriate expression of differences by demonstrating sensitivity and empathy
- giving and receiving positive feedback
- giving and receiving corrective feedback
- using linking to connect members
- following guidelines for ethical practice
- Termination

Group Facilitation (17-20min long, 150 points) (Week 10-13). (Individual Assignment)

Students will present a group counseling theoretical orientation (i.e. Gestalt, Psychodynamic, Adlerian, Person-centered, Cognitive, etc.) or group process with working with a certain population (i.e. Chemical dependency, Children of divorce, Grief/bereavement, etc.) to the class using both didactic and experiential methods. The presenters will present the basics of group process within the chosen orientation or issue. Then the presenters will facilitate a group experience demonstrating how the orientation works. Other class members will serve as resource persons for experiential demonstration groups. Please have handouts of your presentation for class members. Each member's contribution to the presentation will be recorded and evaluated and a group grade will be given. Points will be deducted if facilitations go over 20 minutes or under 17 minutes.

****Group Participation, 100 points**

This CACREP requirement is designed primarily to give first-hand experience as a **group participant**. As participants, students are expected to participate in group experiences for one-hour each week for ten weeks. Each student is free to decide the level of self-disclosure, involvement, and participation in the group. Participation in these groups will not be graded, evaluated, nor shared with the course instructor. Confidentiality will be maintained to the extent possible in a classroom setting. This group participation activity will continue for ten weeks and will be led by a group leader who works with children and adolescents in a school district. Please note: **These are not therapy groups.**

Group Proposal/ final assignment (Week 14, 300 points) (Individual Assignment):

You will prepare a proposal, this proposal will have a 2500-word limit. You may go over the 2500-word count by 200 words or 100 words under the 2500-word count.

Select a setting in which you want to implement a group program (i.e., groups designed for children, adolescents, college students, older adults). Please select one of the specialization areas (i.e., task, psychoeducation, counseling or therapy). This proposal should be typed and double-spaced paper should be written using APA style. The paper will include references from at least 5 journal articles and/or texts.

You may use no more than one (1) website as a reference. The purpose of the paper is to propose a group the student is likely to conduct. In addition to including information from the related literature, the student should specify the form and content of each group session, stating an objective for each group meeting. The paper should also include selection and screening techniques.

The topic of the paper must be approved by the instructor. The paper must address the following:

- 1) **Literature Review**-Does it describe the scope of the problem at hand? Does it identify and describe the most important issues faced by group members? Does it identify possible solutions discovered by past research and practice? Does it review and integrate the information from the cited references?
- 2) **Group Logistics**- Is the duration sufficient to cover topic and allow for change? What specific changes will occur as a result of a member's participation? Is the time sufficient for number of members? What potential barriers exist
- 3) **Screening**- When deciding whom to exclude, what are the criteria? When deciding who to include, which of the following are taken into account: gender, cognitive ability, maturity, duration of issue, frequency of issue, intensity of issue, acceptance and/or completion of issue.
- 4) **Individualized Goals**-How do you intend to facilitate change for individuals and the group as a whole (i.e. coaching, role play, support for an opportunity to transfer learning to real life)?
- 5) **Theoretical orientation**-what counseling theory do you most relate to and explain (map out) how this theory connects to your personality, experience, and disposition. How do you see this theory being effective in your groups? How does with diverse and minority populations?

Something to consider: It would be practical to identify a group you might actually lead in your practicum or internship setting. Do not choose a suicide prevention group for your first group attempt. Also, it might be advantageous to choose a group that is not overly "challenging" for your first group experience (**Ex. Bipolar children, bpd group, eating disorders**). Some examples of topics for group papers: **Loss-bereavement, children of divorce, building social skills, stepfamily issues, families of alcoholics, test-taking anxiety**

Week	Topic	Assignments Due	Reading
Week 1 1/22/2023	Introduction to Group Counseling in Schools <i>Ethical and Legal Issues in Counseling</i>		
Week 2 1/30/2023	Types of Groups Group Dynamics Ethics	Sign-ups begin for Facilitations/GCU	Chapter 3
Week 3 2/6/2023	Practice “Opening a Group” Forming Effective Group Leadership/ Problems and Solutions		Chapter 5
Week 4 2/13/2023	Initial Stage/Storming Transition, Working, and Ending Stages		Chapter 6 & 7
Week 5 2/20/2023	Norming/ GCU Workgroups Transition, Working, and Ending Stages	GCU and Group Facilitation Sign up Closes	Chapter 8 & 9
Week 6 2/27/2023	Working/Performing stage		Chapter 10
Week 7 3/6/2023	Adjourning/ Termination/Overview of Group Process	Sign-ups for Group Facilitations Closes	Chapter 1 & 2
Week 8 3/13/2023	Spring Break		
Week 9 3/20/2023	Group Facilitations Begin In Person Class- Location TBD	LIT REVIEW DUE Facilitators-1, 2,3, 4	
Week 10 3/27/2023	Group Facilitations In Person Class- Location TBD	Facilitators-5, 6, 7, 8	
Week 11 4/3/2023	Group Facilitations In Person Class- Location TBD	Facilitators- 9, 10	
Week 12 4/10/2023	Work in your group on GCU on your own	GCU (1-3) DUE	
Week 13 4/17/2023	Review of Group Process & Final Proposal Support	GCU (4-6) DUE	
Week 14 4/24/2023	Internship Prep (Pre-Service Counselors)	Group Proposal Due	

GRADING:

Class Participation	Percent 10%	Points 100
Reflections	10%	100

Group Facilitations:	15%	150
Group Counseling Units:	15%	150
Literature Review	10%	100
Group Proposal	30%	300
Group Participation	10%	100

Total	100%	1000
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GRADING SYSTEM:

Percentage	Grade Equivalent
93.5-100%	A
90-93.4%	A-
87-89.9%	B+
83.5-86.9%	B
80-83.4%	B-
77-79.9%	C+
73.5-76.9%	C
Below 73.5%	F

Point Total	Grade Equivalent
935-1000	A
900-934	A-
870-899	B+
835-869	B
800-834	B-
770-799	C+
735-769	C
Below 735	F

CLASSROOM POLICIES

NOTE: This syllabus is subject to change. Any changes to the syllabus shall be distributed in writing, which may include electronic communication.

Late Assignments

Late assignments will be accepted. Assignments can be submitted 24 hours from the original due date without penalty (i.e. due date is Monday at 11:59p, it can be submitted on Tuesday at 11:59p for full credit, no penalty). Assignments turned in 24 hours after the due date will automatically lose 10 points. After the 24-hour period, the assignment can earn only half credit at maximum. For example, if the assignment is worth 100 points, 24 hours after the due date the most points that can now be earned is

90 points. After the 24-hour grace period has passed (i.e. 2 days, 2 weeks, 2 months) the most points that can be earned is 50 points (or less).

Electronic Devices

As part of your preparation for the counseling profession, students are expected to give their full engagement to the class along with high involvement and a strong display of participation when in attendance. This means, all mobile devices (i.e. cell phones, tablets, laptops, and other electronic devices) used during class must only be used for class purposes and with the intent of meeting those expectations set. All electronic devices should be silenced to avoid disrupting the class. Excessive attention given to your electronic device will negatively impact your professional demeanor and participation grade.

University Policy:

Academic Honesty and Professional Conduct. Students are expected to comply with the policies found in the University of Connecticut's Student Code of Conduct and Academic Integrity, the School Counseling Program Student Handbook, and the ethical guidelines of professional associations (e.g., American Counseling Association, American School Counseling Association). Failing to do so may result in a grade of "F" for the course, as well as further sanctions as determined by the faculty. These sanctions may include dismissal from the school counseling program.

- **Student Conduct Code.** Students are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with UConn's [Student Conduct Code](#).
- **Academic Integrity Statement.** *This course expects all students to act in accordance with the Guidelines for Academic Integrity at the University of Connecticut. Because questions of intellectual property are important to the field of this course, we will discuss academic honesty as a topic and not just a policy. If you have questions about academic integrity or intellectual property, you should consult with your instructor. Additionally, consult UConn's [guidelines for academic integrity](#).*
- **Students with Disabilities.** *The University of Connecticut is committed to protecting the rights of individuals with disabilities and assuring that the learning environment is accessible. If you anticipate or experience physical or academic barriers based on disability or pregnancy, please let me know immediately so that we can discuss options. Students who require accommodations should contact the Center for Students with Disabilities, Wilbur Cross Building Room 204, (860) 486-2020, or <http://csd.uconn.edu/>*

Other policy statements related to the topics below may also be useful:

- UConn [Mental Health Services](#)
- UConn [Sexual Harassment and Relationship Violence](#)
- UConn [Equity, Diversity, Equal Employment Opportunity, and Affirmative Action](#)

Group Counseling Unit (GCU) Lesson Plan Outline

Title of Lesson:

Grade Level:

Standard: FROM NATIONAL STANDARDS AND CSCA STANDARDS

Competency: FROM NATIONAL STANDARDS AND CSCA STANDARDS

Learning Objective(s):

Materials:

Developmental Learning Activities:

Introduction:

Activity:

Conclusion:

Assessment/Evaluation:

Follow-up:

1. evidence suggesting that the techniques and ideas described in this article are effective?

Literature Review Summary for Group Counseling Activity

(These should be about two pages for each article. Do not forget to include a copy of the abstract.)

2. APA reference for Article: (Author (date). Title. Where published.)
3. Is this article research-based (does it contain data?) or qualitative-based?
4. What evidence is there to suggest that the techniques and ideas described in this article are effective?
5. Please describe the most salient aspects of the article selected.
6. Please list, in a bulleted format, the specific activities you will include in your group counseling activity based on what you read in this article.