

**George Mason University
College of Education and Human Development
Counseling & Development**

EDCD 608 003: Group Processes and Analyses (4.0 credits)

Spring 2012

Instructor: George McMahon
Office: Krug 201B
Email: hcmaho3@gmu.edu
Phone: 703-993-2087 (office)
404-725-3244 (cell—texts are fine)
Class: Tuesdays 4:30 – 7:10 p.m.
Location: Student Union I 3008
Office Hours: M 10:00 – 12:00; T 7:30 – 9 *or by appointment (preferred)*

Course Prerequisite: *EDCD 602; 603; Either 606 or 609*

Course Description

This course is designed to familiarize students with fundamental concepts and theories of group counseling. A mastery of basic interpersonal and facilitation skills will be emphasized inclusive of issues related to racial and ethnic diversity, gender, and social justice. The course includes an intensive laboratory group experience to facilitate interpersonal awareness, sensitivity, and skills that are critical to being an effective group counselor/ group therapist..

Required Reading:

Trotzer, J. (2006). *The counselor and the group: Integrating theory, training, and practice* (4th ed.). NY:Routledge.

Yalom, I. & Leszcz, M. (2005). *The theory and practice of group psychotherapy* (5th Ed.). NY: Basic Books.

Professional articles will be assigned and distributed via Blackboard as indicated on the course schedule, and further articles may be assigned at any time during the semester.

Relationship to Program Goals and Professional Organization:

Group Counseling is a key issue in counseling and provides a core course in the Counseling and Development Program. It addresses the program goals and mission and provides information about how to more effectively work with systems and facilitate personal, social, and institutional change through group work. This will provide a core foundation in highlighting self awareness, interpersonal skills and awareness, and system skills as an advocate and change agent including important skills necessary in practicum and internship. CACREP standards that are met through this course include: foundations of counseling, contextual dimensions of counseling, knowledge and skill requirements, and clinical instruction. In addition EDCD 608 fulfills the requirements and standards for Group Counseling in the following professional organizations: Council for the Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) Section II K.f: Theoretical and experiential understanding of group purpose, development, dynamics, counseling theories, group counseling methods and skills, and other group approaches, American Counseling Association(ACA), Virginia Departments of Education and Health Professions.

Student Outcomes and Learning Objectives:

The following 5 goals and corresponding objectives will guide the course. At the end of this course, students will:

1. Gain personal awareness of one's own interpersonal style.
2. Learn various process and outcome issues that structure group experience.
3. Acquire and demonstrate group counseling skills in class demonstrations and experiences.
4. Learn about culturally diverse populations and effective group interventions with those specific populations.
5. Gain an understanding of different K-12 students and clients that may participate in groups and learn about how to effectively intervene with those groups.
6. Study ways to evaluate the group experience.
7. Experience group process personally and gain insight, awareness and enhanced interpersonal skills.
8. Begin to develop a personal style as a group facilitator.

EVALUATION:**Grading Scale**

- A = 97-100
- A- = 94- 96
- B+ = 91- 93
- B = 87- 90
- B- = 84- 86
- C = 83- 80
- F = Below 79

Course Requirements:

1. **Students must have taken all prerequisites**
2. **Students must have an active GMU email account. *This is the official email address used by the Registrar, the Dean's office, and will be used for this class via Blackboard.* Students are responsible for all university of class email communications via their GMU email address. Thus, GMU email should be checked regularly.**
3. **Students will use Blackboard as the primary web link to obtain course information and documents, turn in assignments, as well as to communicate with each other and with the instructor.**
4. **Students are expected to be on time for class and to actively participate and contribute to the class. It is the expectation of all C&D faculty that students will be on time and stay for the entire class periods. If you know that you will miss one class, you may want to think about taking the course another semester.**

Course Assignments:

1. Participation (20 pts)

As a skills-based class, this class places a heavy emphasis on processing of information through class discussion, small group discussion, and participating in experiential activities. In addition, this class will be utilizing an “inverted classroom” format where many lectures are online, allowing class time to be freed for experiential activities and for working on assignments. Moreover, because the class will be so interactive and experiential, there is no way to “get the information” from a missed class—the class experience cannot be replicated. For these reasons, your class attendance and active participation is vital not only to your learning, but to your classmates learning as well. *Note: providing feedback to classmates on their online Blogs via Blackboard is considered class participation.* Several factors will go into your participation grade, including:

- a) **attendance** (every student is expected to be at every class),
- b) **punctuality** (every student is expected to be ready to go when class begins, and to stay for the duration of class time),
- c) **active participation** in class exercises (key is *active*, contributing ideas, giving feedback, participating in group discussions)
- d) **substantive contributions** to class discussions (not quantity of contributions, but contributions that demonstrate thoughtful analysis of information; comments that move discussion forward; comments based on knowledge and experience, not just opinion; and a demonstrated ability to propose new ideas and/or build on others' ideas in a meaningful way).

2. Group Process Observation (20 points)

Groups are everywhere, and this assignment takes advantage of that. Students will spend time observing a group and write a short paper (2-3 pages) analyzing a group. Groups may be real or fictional (i.e., from a movie or TV show) but you must spend at least 45 minutes of observation time and you must not interfere with the functioning of the group, nor can you observe

a group in which you are an active participant. In addition, if the group you are observing is a real group (i.e., not on TV or not fictional), no identifying information about the group is to be written about group members. *Be creative in choosing a group to observe.* In the write-up, discuss the group dynamics you observe—such as factors of group membership, member roles, group leadership style, group norms, and any events you believe affected group process. Be sure to discuss group issues regarding cultural, age, or gender variables. **Remember, this is about what you observe, so be specific about what you see/hear (rather than your impressions only) and how it relates to what you’ve learned about group dynamics.**

3. Blog Entry (10 points)

Students will create their own blog entry using Blackboard in which they write in some detail about an aspect of the group class that had an impact on them, and how they see themselves applying this new knowledge/awareness/skill/experience in their future work. The topic of the blog entry is up to the student, as long as it is grounded in some event (reading, discussion, experience, etc) from the class, and articulates the student’s reflection upon their experience and its meaning beyond what was talked about in class. Blogs will be expected to be completed by Class 10, so that other students may read on comment on them. Students are free to do more than one Blog, including Blogs after Class 10, but one is required. Blogs will be graded based on whether they meet the criteria (including the due date), but will not be evaluated by the instructor for content. Students will also be expected to read and comment on each other’s blogs as they would provide feedback in class discussions (this is another way to earn participation points).

4. Special Interest Exploration Project (35 points total)

Students will have the opportunity to develop their own project related to group work specific to a particular population and/or professional setting in which the student is interested. The project may take the form of a review and critique of the relevant research literature, a prospectus for a group experience, or student may propose another project to the instructor for his approval. Whatever the final product is, students will be expected to create an annotated bibliography reviewing the literature informing the project.

a) Annotated Bibliography (10 points)

b) Final Project (25 points)

5. Group Facilitation and Membership Skills Reflection paper (15 points)

Students will reflect upon and synthesize feedback they received from peers and the instructor throughout the class, and in particular the experiential components, and provide a self-assessment of the student’s current skill across 5 dimensions: basic facilitation skills, understanding group process, building group cohesion, working in the here-and-now, and specific intervention strategies. Students will provide a brief (3 page) narrative discussing strengths, areas for growth, and strategies to improve during the program.

George Mason University Policies and Resources for Students

1. Academic integrity (honor code, plagiarism) – Students must adhere to guidelines of the George Mason University Honor Code [See <http://academicintegrity.gmu.edu/honorcode/>].
2. Mason Email – Students are responsible for the content of university communications sent to their George Mason University email account and are required to activate their account and check it regularly. All communication from the university, college, school, division, and program will be sent to students solely through their Mason email account. Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing [See <http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/1301ge.html>].
3. Counseling and Psychological Services – The George Mason University Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) staff consists of professional counseling and clinical psychologists, social workers, and counselors who offer a wide range of services (e.g., individual and group counseling, workshops, and outreach programs) to enhance students' personal experience and academic performance [See <http://caps.gmu.edu/>].
4. Office of Disability Services – Students with disabilities who seek accommodations in a course must be registered with the George Mason University Office of Disability Services (ODS) and inform their instructor in writing at the beginning of the semester <http://ods.gmu.edu/>.
5. Students must follow the university policy stating that all sound emitting devices shall be turned off during class unless otherwise authorized by the instructor.
6. The Writing Center (Optional Resource) – The George Mason University Writing Center staff provides a variety of resources and services (e.g., tutoring, workshops, writing guides, handbooks) intended to support students as they work to construct and share knowledge through writing [See <http://writingcenter.gmu.edu/>].
7. University Libraries (Optional Resource) – The George Mason University Libraries provide numerous services, research tools, and help with using the library resources [See <http://library.gmu.edu/>].

Core Values Commitment

The College of Education and Human Development is committed to collaboration, ethical leadership, innovation, research-based practice, and social justice. Students are expected to adhere to these principles.

Counseling & Development Program Professional Dispositions: Professional Performance Criteria (Effective February 25, 2003).

The American Counseling Association (ACA) code of ethics requires counselors and counselor trainees to maintain standards of professional competence and possess good moral character. The Counseling and Development Program in the Graduate School of Education at George Mason University has adopted a set of professional performance criteria that is consistent with the ACA code of ethics. Please refer to the dispositions found on the C & D Homepage at:

http://gse.gmu.edu/programs/counseling/professional_performance.htm

Tentative Schedule for EDCD 608 Spring 2012**

Date	Topics	<i>Reading/Assignments Due</i>
Jan 24 Class 1	Course Goals and Expectations Building an ILC Overview of Group Work	Syllabus Trotzer Preface & Prologue
Jan 31 Class 2	History and Trends, Definitions, Group Development, Therapeutic Factors	Trotzer, 1-2 Yalom, 1
Feb 7 Class 3	Rationale for Group Counseling, Group Process, Interpersonal Learning,	Trotzer 3-4 Yalom, 2
Feb 14 Class 4	Group Cohesion, Basic Group Facilitation Skills	Yalom, 3-5
Feb 21 Class 5	Creating Groups, Member Selection, Beginning Groups, Best Practices	Trotzer 7-8, 11 Yalom, 8-10
Feb 28 Class 6	Process to Practice, Group Leadership, Focal Conflict Theory & Practice	Trotzer, 5-6 Yalom, 11 <i>Kline</i>
March 6 Class 7	Cultural Diversity and Group Work	Trotzer 9 <i>DeLucia-Waack</i>
March 13	Spring Break	
March 20 Class 8	Types of Group, Working in the Here and Now	Trotzer 10 Yalom 6
March 27 Class 9	Advanced Group Work Skills, Communication activities Managing Difficult Members	Trotzer 13 Yalom 12 - 13 Group Process Observ.
April 3 Class 10	Evaluating Groups, Group Research Internal experience of Group facilitator, Co-Facilitation	Trotzer 12, 16 Yalom 7 <i>Fall, Landreth</i> Blog Entry Due
April 10 Class 11	Crisis Group Work, Working with Specialized Populations Termination	Trotzer 15, Yalom 15 Special Interest Bibliography Due
April 17 Class 12	Group work with Children and Adolescents	<i>DeLucia-Waack</i>
April 24 Class 13	Special Topics	<i>TBA</i>
May 1 Class 14	Discussion of Final Papers, Summary & Closing	Facilitation Skills Reflection Due
May 8	Final Exam	Special Interest Project Due

** Deviations may occur to support student learning and unique circumstances.