

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

EDCD 897: Advanced Group Counseling (3.0 credits)

Summer 2012

Instructor: George McMahon
Office: Krug 201B
Email: hmcmaho3@gmu.edu
Phone: 703-993-2087 (office)
404-725-3244 (cell—texts are fine)
Class: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 4:30 – 7:10 p.m.
Location: Innovation Hall 336
Office Hours: Tuesday and Thursdays 2 - 4 or by appointment (*preferred*)

Course Prerequisite: *Master's degree in counseling or related field from an accredited institution of higher education, EDCD 608 or equivalent; EDCD 895; admission to the Counseling and Development Doctoral Program, or Permission of Instructor*

Course Description

This course is designed for doctoral students who have had experience and training in group work. The course will provide greater understanding and advanced skill application in group dynamics, group process, and group leadership.

Required Reading:

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 crucial learning experience and an opportunity to further develop key counseling skills. It addresses the doctoral 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 and facilitative skills, and to help students become a more effective advocate and agent of systemic change. Specific knowledge and skills to be acquired through participation in this class include: theoretical and experiential understanding of group purpose, group development, group dynamics, counseling theories applied to group work, group counseling methods and skills, development and facilitation of task groups, multicultural relevant group work, and use of group work to promote social justice.

Student Outcomes and Learning Objectives:

The following Student Outcomes and Learning Objectives will guide this course:

1. Students will review basics of group work, including common definitions, theories of group development, group dynamics, member roles, leadership styles, and process and content
2. Students will develop advanced group leadership skills, including managing conflict, focusing on “here and now”, highlighting process, building awareness, and utilizing deep empathy.
3. Students will identify group strategies for working with and advocating for diverse populations, including multicultural competencies (II.G.2.d)
4. Students will learn theories of group counseling, including commonalities, distinguishing characteristics, and pertinent research and literature (II.G.6.c)
5. Students will learn structure of task groups and will develop strategies for facilitation of task groups.
6. Students will learn strategies for promoting multicultural awareness and promoting social justice and advocacy through group work practices.
7. Develop a program to promote multicultural awareness and social justice and advocacy through the use of group work.

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 - 15 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. Student Presentations – 5 points

Students will each present on one counseling theory/approach/strategy and its application to social justice group work. Student presenters are expected to supply a reading for the rest of the class, then lead a discussion that included both didactic and experiential/discussion components regarding the use of the approach within a group format to promote social awareness and action.

3. Large Group Semester Project - 50 points total

Students will work together as a group to research and develop a proposal to develop and implement a group-based project designed to increase awareness of multicultural and social justice issues on George Mason University campus.

Time in class will be available for the group to work on this project, but individual students will likely need to work on this project outside of class as well.

The assignment will be broken down into the following components:

a) Annotated Bibliography (Individual) - 10 points

Each student will turn in an annotated bibliography that is relevant to the particular part of the program she/he is researching. The bibliography should include 8-10 references, although that may be flexible depending on subject, and these references should be either classic articles or recent additions to the literature, and may be theoretical or research-based. The bibliography should include the citation in APA style, followed by a brief (2-4 sentences) overview of how the resource will contribute to the knowledge needed to develop the program proposal.

b) Rationale (Group) – 10 points

The Rationale should be a brief (2-4 page) narrative describing the need for the program that is proposed, and citing relevant theoretical bases for and evidence supporting the specific plan proposed. Proposal should be written in APA style, and citations to relevant research and other scholarly writing is expected.

c) Program Proposal and Evaluation Plan (Group) – 15 points

The program proposal and evaluation plan will consist of a comprehensive outline of the program, including logistics, an explanation of program goals and objectives, an outline of the program process, and a plan for evaluation. The proposal should be complete enough that the reader obtains a clear vision for the goals, objectives, procedures, processes, and expected outcomes for the program.

d) Final Project (Group) - 15 points

The final project will be one document that incorporates the Rationale and the Program Proposal and Evaluation Plan, and includes addressing any feedback given during the semester, and packaged nicely in a way that is easily understood by potential consultation partners. As part of the final project, a one-page “executive summary”, which will briefly describe the purpose, goals and objectives, strategies, and evaluation plan, will be included.

4. Group Facilitation Skill Reflection Paper (15 points)

Students will write a short but thoughtful paper in which they will reflect upon and synthesize feedback they received from peers and the instructor throughout the class, and in particular their participation in the two small groups (task group and discussion group), and provide a self-assessment of the student’s current group leadership and facilitation skills across a few key variables- a) setting norms and creating a common vision, b) building group cohesion. c) facilitating effective communication, d) demonstrating and promoting deep empathy among members, e) conflict management, and f) encouraging action.

5. Group Membership Reflection paper (15 points)

Students will write a short but thoughtful paper regarding their experience working within the small groups (both the task group and the discussion group) as a group member. The final product should demonstrate the student's ability to be self-reflective, and should include their understanding of group development, process, and dynamics through describing factors such as the role they played in the group, their particular contributions to the group, an analysis of their membership styles, and any cultural, age, or gender, or other variables they noted that may have affected the group process and their participation in group. This paper is about *your* experience, not your perception of others in the group—meaning I'm not interested in how you experienced other members, just how you reflect on yourself as a member. No identifying information about anyone else should be given in the paper.

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	Reading/Assignments Due
Class 1 T 6/5	Building a Learning Community Expectations, syllabi, class process	
Class 2 Th 6/7	SJ and Group Work – history and overview	<i>Singh & Salazar</i> <i>Benak & Chung</i>
Class 3 T 6/12	Task Groups <i>Task Group #1</i>	<i>Hulse-Kilacky, Kilacky, & Donigian</i>
Class 4 Th 6/14	SJ and Group Work – Conceptualizing <i>Discussion Group #1</i>	<i>Ratts, Anthony, & Santos</i>
Class 5 T 6/19	SJ and Group Work – Process <i>Task Group #2</i>	<i>Burnes & Ross</i>
Class 6 Th 6/21	Program Design and Evaluation <i>Discussion Group #2</i>	<i>Erford</i> Annotated Bibliography
Class 7 T 6/26	No Class meeting – ASCA Conference	
Class 8 Th 6/28	Counseling Theories & Strategies – application to social justice group work <i>Discussion Group #3</i>	<i>Student presentations</i> <i>Readings TBA</i>
T 7/3	Counseling Theories & Strategies – application to social justice group work <i>Task Group #3</i>	<i>Student Presentations</i> <i>Readings TBA</i>
Class 9 Th 7/5	Adv. Skills – Highlighting Process and Building Awareness <i>Discussion Group #4</i>	<i>Ward & Litchy</i>
Class 10 T 7/10	Adv. Skills – Taking Risks in Communication <i>Task Group #4</i>	<i>Chen & Rybak</i> Program Rational Due
Class 11 Th 7/12	Adv. Skills – Working in the Here & Now <i>Discussion Group #5</i>	<i>Yalom</i>
Class 12 T 7/17	Adv. Skills – Focal Conflict Theory <i>Task Group #5</i>	<i>Kline</i> Program Proposal & Evaluation Plan Due
Class 13 Th 7/19	Adv. Skills – Controversy and Creativity <i>Discussion Group #6</i>	<i>Johnson & Johnson</i>
Class 14 T 7/24	Termination, Wrap up	<i>Hays, Milken, & Chang</i> -Group Membership Reflection Papers Due -Group Leadership Reflection Papers Due
Exam Th 7/26	Final Exam	Final Project Due

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