STMM 554 GROUP EFFECTIVENESS SKILLS

Summer, 2009
July 13-17, 2009
9am-4pm

FACULTY:
Sharon Callahan, Ed.D.
(scal@seattleu.edu)
HH 212
Office Hours: By appointment only

COURSE DESCRIPTION: This course considers group theory and offers time to practice and reflect on the skills required for group participation, group leadership and team building. It includes attention to conceptual frameworks, intentional experience within a stable group, and reflection on the person and the process.

Goal 1: To foster a sense of community in the classroom in both large and small groups.

1. Through holding the intention of mutual respect toward all.
2. By creating a classroom environment that is safe, prayerful, hospitable, open to honest communication, and inclusive.

Goal 2: To provide opportunities to hone skills in group dynamics and leadership and thus continue developing the following competencies for ministry:

- Awareness of one's personality and its impact on leadership style.
- Awareness of the need to become healthy, balanced persons in honest and
- honoring leadership relationships.
- Increased ability to be truly present, attentive and honestly participative within
- group settings.
- Ability to form, nurture, and support diverse teams for ministry within diverse
- communities of faith.
- Knowledge of group theories regarding the purpose, developmental stages, and
- healthy functioning of groups.
- Understanding of the need for and ability to integrate the skills of planning
- meetings, building agendas, creating climate, designing helpful beginnings,
- breaks, endings; leading prayer; listening actively, communicating honestly and
- directly; giving and receiving feedback; managing conflict; building in
- evaluation and closure processes, and working with diverse populations.
- Awareness of prayer and personal integration as foundation for effective group
- leadership.
- Increased ability to reflect on one's role as group leader and member.

Goal 3: To determine personal goals and objectives to focus students' learning during the course.

Multiple levels of evaluation throughout the course will indicate whether course and individual goals and objectives are being achieved. Please attend specifically to the grading/ feedback rubrics provided for written assignments and posted on the Angel website.

THIS COURSE WILL CONSIST OF ONE WEEK INTENSIVELY WORKING ON CAMPUS IN CLASS SESSIONS AND OFF CAMPUS WRITING EVERY EVENING. PLEASE PLAN YOUR SCHEDULE TO ALLOW FOR FULL PARTICIPATION DURING THIS INTENSE WEEK. IF YOU CANNOT MAKE ALL THE DEADLINES AS SPECIFIED IN THE SYLLABUS, YOU MAY WANT TO WAIT UNTIL ANOTHER

TIME TO TAKE THIS COURSE.

REQUIREMENTS:

1. ***Completion of assigned reading:***
   Arrien, Angeles. The Four Fold Way. **OR** Parry, Danaan. Warrior of the Heart;
   Bass, Diana Butler. *Christianity for the Rest of Us*. HarperSanFrancisco, 2006.
   Doherty, Jerry C. *A Celtic Model of Ministry*. Collegeville, Liturgical Press, 2003.
   Law, Eric. Inclusion.
   Sofield, Loughlan, Hammett, & Juliano. *Building Community*, Notre Dame: Ave Maria, 1998.
   Turner, Nathan. *Leading Small Groups*. Valley Forge: Judson Press, 1996.
   Yancey, George. *One Body, One Spirit*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2003.
   Scripture: *Acts of the Apostles, 1 Corinthians and Philippians.*

   Group Effectiveness Course Packet. (Available at Seattle University Reprographics)

2. ANGEL WEB BASED threaded discussion. (30% of grade) We will use a "threaded discussion" to experience the kind of contribution that "virtual community" can make to our class community and potentially to the communities we serve. This computer-based community sharing will allow us to write reflections and share them with the entire class. Each person will read all the others and choose to respond in a formal way to one, and may respond informally to others. The formal postings and responses will be graded using the "writing rubrics" attached to this syllabus and found on the Angel website in "lessons/ rubrics". Increasingly church communities rely on all technologies to build communities of faith. Your contributions will be interpreted as essential to building community in this class. For the dialogue you will submit two separate contributions.
   Writing Requirements for the web postings: The *first contribution* for the dialogue topic will consist of no more than five paragraphs of your reflection on the topic. The *best contributions* combine personal experience, reference to the required readings, class lectures and discussions, and your own reading on the topic. You might find that writing your contributions before reading the others' keeps you focused and fresh as you construct your ideas for others to review. The *second contribution* on the topic will be no more than three paragraphs. The second contribution on each topic should pick up on an idea put forward by another student's first contribution. This second contribution should build on the other student's ideas and relate to your own experience and reading. Dr. Callahan will read the threaded discussion frequently, noting the quality of the postings, and attempting to integrate some of the ideas into the class sessions. She will complete a writing rubric for each contribution and assign a grade for it. Here are the assignments:

   A.)Log on and indicate you are "here". **Try to log on by July 8, so you can address issues that may arise due to Internet compatibility, your user name and password. These issues are to be addressed with the Helpdesk on SU campus.**

   How to Access Angel

   1. go to http://angel.seattleu.edu/
   2. Go to "favorites" on your internet bar and add this page to your "favorites."
   3. To log on to angel, use your Seattle University email address without the @seattleu.edu For example, I am scal@seattleu.edu. I log in as user: scal
   4. Enter your password as you do to access the Seattle University accounts you have.

If you have trouble remembering your password, or if it has expired since you last used it, you need to call the Seattle University helpdesk to get assistance. 206-296-5571 or email them at helpdesk@seattleu.edu .
Once you are logged in, you will be given a choice of classes to which you are enrolled and also using angel. I am assuming that you will only see Fostering Communities of Faith" at this time.

5. Click on the course, and you will find a "map" on the left column. Go ahead and play around with the site a bit. I'll be showing everyone how to use this during our first weekend.
6. If you find the discussion forums, and see the title "Sign-In" go ahead and post a greeting for everyone.

B.) You are to address the question of **community**. What does "community" mean to you? In your student packet, you will find a reflection on "ubuntu"- and the African concept/ experience of being human. You will also find a reflection from Ron Rolheiser suggesting the Church is by its essence communal. Bellah, et alii., suggest that Church is community and it necessarily contribute to the "common good." Yet a North American, dominant culture emphasis on individualism, challenges community in many churches. Sofield, Hammett and Juliano develop small group theory within the context of community (pp. 43-46) and Eric Law and Yancey consider multicultural communities. Expand your insights using: the *Acts of the Apostles* (which depicts the ideal Christian community), chapters 1-4 in Doherty's *A Celtic Model of Ministry*, and chapters 1-9, 13, and 14 in *Christianity for the Rest of Us*. Include insights from your own experience: what do you think? What attitudes, skills, etc., contribute to nurturing, forming, and developing community in your church or ministerial setting? What have you seen or done that has been "good experience" and what is a trying, limited or "failed experience"? Write your own reflections and post them as your ***first contribution due by* 4am *July 14, 2009.*** Pick another person's contribution and post your ***second contribution due by July 16, 2009.***

3. ***Submit your goals and objectives for the course on July 13, 2009***. (5%) These must be typed and should be no more than one page. Two goals with one or two objectives each are sufficient. Remember you want to help yourself focus your learning for the duration of the course. To help draft your goals, look at the competencies on the first page of this syllabus, and *the material on framing goals and objectives included in the* Student Study Packet. I will return the goals to you June 26. Please revise and mail or email to me ***your final edition of those goals by July 15.*** I will keep the final copy of your goals. Include an analysis of your progress in achieving your goals in your final paper.

4. **Consistent, Active and Reflective participation** in your small group during class sessions. This will include preparation for small group sharing based on the small group handouts included in this syllabus package. It also includes giving the group members careful feedback, as well as ownership for your participation as a member. Conflict negotiation, progression to deeper levels, and participation in discussion topics are some of the contributions you make to any group. Your journaling will assist you in reflecting on your contribution both to your small group and to the large group that is the class. Your participation in the threaded discussion using Angel will offer both you and your peers the opportunity to explore the material in the readings and in the class presentations. (50%)

5. **Journal throughout** the quarter using the process outlined on page 4 of this syllabus packet. You will not hand in the journal. The discipline of the process is designed to assist you in meeting Competencies 9 & 10 as listed on the first page of the syllabus. In addition, your ongoing reflection recorded throughout the course will impact your participation in your small group, increase your skill level in other groups and provide you with material you will be able to use to complete your final

reflection paper. Some areas for consideration in this reflection practice include: your participation in your small group process or in the class process; your new or deepened insights and connections especially as they relate to the readings; previous and/or current experience in other groups; and unfolding understandings about your own ability to contribute to the health of a group.

6. **Written feedback to student participants** in your small group: (5%)

1. All group members will give written and specific feedback to the facilitator of the small group session. Questions to guide the feedback are included in each small group exercise sheet. After the small group session on the morning of **July17**, give each person in your small group written feedback concerning your experience of their participation in the group. The feedback needs to be specific and concerned with observable behavior. Please address both your assessment of each person's contribution to the group and identify an area of growth. Refer to the Giving and Receiving Feedback guidelines in your student packet and the course competencies listed on the first page of the syllabus for help in framing your feedback to your peers.
2. During the last class, **(July 17)** there is a more light-hearted process of giving feedback related to closing the group, where you offer each member a symbol or verbal image of their contribution, see coursepak instructions for group session during last class.

9. **Final Paper**:

a. **A 4-7 page paper** due in the STM office by 4:30 pm on **July 24, 2009**. The paper needs to demonstrate a growth of understanding of your ability to both lead and participate in a group. It will also address the specific ways in which small groups and your expertise in them will impact your ministry. This paper will include insights from: your journal, feedback from your peers, your goals and objectives, your ANGEL contributions and those of your peers, your experience in your small group, class lectures and discussions, and your experience and reading. I expect you to refer to specific texts and resources. I look both for your integration of skills and learning in practical application (your small group, other groups) and understanding of the literature that is available in the area of groups. Please use a consistent methodology for citations. (10%)

b. **Your suggested self-grade with a rationale** for assigning the grade due with the final paper on **July 24, 2009**. Direct your rationale toward the listed competencies of the course, your energy and commitment to the processes outlined in the syllabus, your reading, and your assessment of your skill level and your attaining your goals as submitted in writing on the first weekend. Include your learning from self and peer evaluation throughout the course. Remember that completion of all the requirements earns a "B". To earn an "A" one needs to demonstrate *superior* use of skills and processes, read beyond the requirements, and demonstrate in the final paper and other assignments a level of excellence beyond the norm. (2%)

JOURNALING QUESTIONS:

The same four questions are intended to guide your reflection for the entire quarter. These are intended to help develop a habit of reflection on your skills, your body, your gifts and your growth areas in a group. These questions are not intended to limit, rather they are proposed as "pump primer". You may wish to use both your class group experience and other group experience. Please feel free to do so. It is hoped that over the course you will be able to read your disciplined responses to discover the growth, the continuing themes, the insights.

Each time you write, take time to breathe and to center yourself. Image the group process you are considering. Image yourself in that group. Try to create the scene through your senses, identifying sights, sounds, and smells (what were people wearing? what did you see in your space? how did the room smell? what noises did you notice? how did people's voices sound?, etc.) As you replay the group, tune

into your own body responses to the discussion. When did you feel relaxed? tense? anxious? confident? angry? hopeful? excited? etc. Try to listen to your remembered body responses as your replay the group time in your imagination. If you are experiencing some resistance to the group, the course, a particular person, let yourself enter into dialogue with that resistance, resistance can often be a signal of a growth area.

Begin to write on these questions:

1. What did I experience as energizing/life-giving in my small group?
2. What did I experience as de-energizing/ life-draining in my small group?
3. What specifically made the experience life-giving. . . life-draining?
4. In what specific way did each experience affirm me? invite me to grow?

Academic Honesty:

The School of Theology and Ministry strictly adheres to the Academic Policy concerning Academic Honesty as published in the Seattle University Student Handbook. (see the Seattle University website).

Students with disabilities:

If you have, or think you may have, a disability (including an "invisible disability' such as a learning disability, a chronic health problem, or a mental health condition) that interferes with your performance as a student in this class, you are encouraged to discuss your needs and arrange support services and/ or accommodations through Disabilities Services staff in the Learning Center, Loyola 100, (206) 296-5740.

STUDENT SURVEY FOR THE FOSTERING COMMUNITIES OF FAITH COURSE

Please complete and hand in at the first class session

Name:_____ Program _____

1. What is your most effective communication skill? _____

2. How do you know this is true? _____

3. What I hope to get out of this class is _____

_____

4. One specific skill I want to learn/hone is: _____

_____

5. One thing I am anxious about or afraid of (regarding this class) is _____

_____

6. The specific group(s) I have facilitated include: _____

_____

7. Some groups I might facilitate or participate in the future are: _____

_____

8. One of my best experiences of a small group was _____

_____

9. What made it especially good was _____

_____

10. One of my worst group experiences was _____

_____

[Remember to change names and locations to protect confidentiality in story-telling.]

12. Looking back at your worst experience, what suggestions could you offer the facilitator/leader that could have improved the experience? _____

_____

_____

13.What values do you bring to fostering communities of faith? Please mention why these values are important to you_____

_____

_____

14. What is your experience with diverse people in faith communities?_____

_____

_____

16. What do you most want me to know about you as we begin this course?_____

_____

_____

CLASS ONE: INTRODUCTIONS AND BEGINNINGS

Goal: To begin to form small groups through personal introductions and sharing stories. (Stage One Group Development)

Readings Required:

Coursepak:

Goals and objectives guidelines included in syllabus
Small group guidelines;
Michael Battle's chapter "the Delicate Networks of Interdependence;"
Ron Rolheiser's "A Spirituality of Ecclesiology;"
Robert Bellah's "Conclusion: Competing Visions of the role of Religion in American Society;"
Robert Bellah's "Religion and the Shape of National Culture;"
Desmond Tutu's definition of *ubuntu*.

Building Community, p. 43-46
Acts of the Apostles, which depicts the ideal Christian community,
A Celtic Model of Ministry, chapters 1-4
Christianity for the Rest of Us, chapters 1-5

Assignments:

Bring your completed Student Survey to first class (attached to syllabus and posted on STM webpage.)
Your personal Goals and Objectives for the course turned in during the first class session.(Guidelines for developing these are included in the syllabus and posted on the STM webpage)

CLASS TWO: GROUP DEVELOPMENT

Goal: To initiate the process of becoming a group/community.
To define group goals and identify group norms. (Stage One Group Development)

Readings Required:

PowerPoint on community posted on Angel
All the readings listed for class one.

BY 4am JULY 14, post your FIRST CONTRIBUTION ON ANGEL (See syllabus.)
By 4am JULY 16 post your SECOND CONTRIBUTION ON ANGEL (See Syllabus.)

CLASS THREE: INDIVIDUAL STYLES

Goal: To become more aware of how one's personality and values impact every group experience.

Readings Required:

Coursepak:

Rag Tag Band a Community? How did it happen?;
Theories of Group Development chart
Which Way Are You Bent?
Simplified Approach

One Body, One Spirit, all
A Celtic Model of Ministry, chapter 6
Turner, chapters 1-3
Sofield, Hammett and Juliano, chapters 1-6
Christianity for the Rest of Us, chapters 6-9

Assignments:
Complete "Which Way Are you Bent?" tool

CLASS FOUR: PERCEPTIONS AND STEREOTYPES

Goal: To embrace diversity in fostering communities of faith

Readings Required:
One Body, One Spirit, all
Christianity for the Rest of Us, chapters 10-14. 16
Inclusion, all

CLASS FIVE: PLANNING AND DECISION MAKING

Goal: To understand the value and dynamics of a group's planning, decision making and agenda setting processes.

Readings Required:
Coursepak:
Consensus Model,
Sample Agenda
Sofield, Hammett, Juliano, chapters 9, 10, 14 & 15.
Turner, chapters 5 & 6;
Christianity for the Rest of Us, chapter 6, 15, 17

Assignments:
Turn in final copy of goals and objectives for course.

CLASS SIX: PLANNING AND DECISION MAKING

Goal: To understand the value and dynamics of a group's planning, decision making and agenda setting processes.

Readings Required: Same as previous session

Assignments: Turn in assessment of power in your small group found in coursepak.

CLASS SEVEN: COMMUNICATION AND CONFLICT

Goal: To identify styles of conflict, and specifically what works and what obstructs conflict resolution or management.

Readings Required:

Sofield, chapters, 7-8, 16, 17
Turner, chapter 4
Read *1 Corinthians*
Arriens OR Parry, all

Assignments:
Ponder your own conflict style; think of a conflict you recently had and describe it- the data, facts, interactions, etc. Try to recreate the actual physical scene, and then move to what "triggered" your reaction to conflict and what it takes for you to reconcile, ameliorate, or solve the conflict. Be prepared to share parts of this in the small group in class.

CLASS EIGHT: COMMUNICATION AND CONFLICT

Goal: To identify styles of conflict, and specifically what works and what obstructs conflict resolution or management.

Readings Required:
Philippians
Same as Class Seven

CLASS NINE: COMMUNICATION, CONFLICT, AND CHANGE

Goal: To identify styles of conflict, and specifically in relation to COMMUNITIES of faith.

Readings Required:
All as in Class sessions seven and eight.
All reading for the course should be completed.

Assignments: Assignments:
Written feedback to give to each of your small group members. See syllabus. You will hand the feedback to each member of your small group during or immediately after this session.

CLASS TEN: CLOSING AND EVALUATING

Goal: To provide feedback to group members about their contributions to the group;
To close the group.
To examine importance of closing groups

Readings Required:
Coursepak: Session 10.

Assignments: Assignments:
Look at the group process for this class session and come prepared to participate fully.

FINAL PAPER AND GRADE RATIONALE DUE IN DR. CALLAHAN'S BOX BY JULY 24.

STRATEGIES FOR DEVELOPING GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Assignment: Please write one or two goals with appropriate objectives for your intentional growth as an effective group leader/participant during the

Why Goals and Objectives?
Organizations, teams, families, students, and groups set goals to guide their time together. ***Goals*** help individuals move intentionally toward a vision. That vision can be as simple as a family vacation or as complex as creating a new world order. Goals are broad statements about what the vision is—what someone wants to accomplish. In other words, goals answer the question "WHAT are we (am I) going to do?" While they may be long-tem in nature, please develop your personal goals for the duration of the quarter.

Objectives are measured steps toward achieving a goal. These are smaller, incremental advances. Objective statements usually answer the question, "HOW will we (I) make the goal a reality?" One way to remember the components of an objective is by using the acronym SMART. Effective objectives are **S**pecific, **M**easurable, **A**chievable, **R**esponsibilities-identified, and **T**ime-bound. (SMART!)

As a student in a course, you receive a vision about what the faculty and the university hope you will learn. I have provided you with an extensive syllabus based on competencies. The document presents my *vision* of the course. Notice the weekly topics or *goal* that will help us reach the vision for the course.

As an effective leader, you set and will continue to set goals. Peter F. Drucker sums up the essence of effective leadership in terms of the leader's ability to name an organization's mission and then set the goals and the priorities to accomplish it (*Managing the Future*, p. 21). As you anticipate this course, design goals and objectives that will assist you in organizing your own learning. As you look at the stated competencies of the *Fostering Communities of Faith* course, identify one or two areas in which you perceive a need to grow, deepen, or develop your understanding or skill levels. Use these needs to help you define what you hope to gain from your reading, reflection, class time, and interaction with others in the course. Many of us participate in groups daily. Our families, friends, and co-workers supply unlimited group experiences for us. The following explanation and examples are intended to help you write specific goals and objectives to assist your becoming an intentional learner in those groups this quarter.

GOAL – WHAT (THE VISION)

Goals are broad-based but clear. A person is best served by choosing only one or two goals to work on at a time. This allows individuals to be intentional and focused about their learning. Remember, a goal is an attainable, intended outcome that is simply written. It must be manageable. For this course, it must be manageable in the time allotted for the course.

OBJECTIVES –HOW (THE STEPS YOU WILL TAKE TO ACHIEVE THE VISION)

An objective is specific, measurable, tangible, and under the effective control or influence of the one setting the goals. Objectives allow us to measure our progress by establishing limits and boundaries. To help you remember all of these items, the acronym SMART is useful. Objectives are **S**pecific, **M**easurable, **A**chievable, **R**esponsibilities-identified, and **T**ime-bound. (SMART!)

EXAMPLES

Goal 1: "To *increase my skill in reflecting on group process* so that I can be a better participant and facilitator."

Objectives:

1. Each week I will use the suggested journaling questions to write about the processes that I observed. I will chart my own feelings and responses to the processes.
2. During our small group sessions each week, I will be particularly attentive to body language, noting what I respond to as it happens, and reflecting upon my response. I will include these reflections in my journal.
3. During our small group sessions each week, I will check with the group about how each feels the process is going. I will use paraphrasing and summarizing skills.
4. Twice during the quarter I will check out my perceptions by asking [name the individual] for feedback. I will adjust my process if my perceptions and his/hers differ greatly.

Goal 2: To *deepen my skill and comfort level* in participating in and leading more highly diversified small groups.

Objectives:

1. By the fourth week, I will have read at least one article and one book that consider personality and diversity issues. As a result of such reading, I will, by the end of this course, identify challenges andgrowth areas to continue to address in my process.
2. I will add the concept of *co-culture* to my journal questions. Thus, each week I will ask myself "What co-cultural lenses are contributing to the feelings, assessments, or evaluations I just recorded?"
3. I will practice my skills of attending to individuals, checking out assumptions, being present, and developing acceptance and trust in all the group sessions. I will ask[name] to give me feedback each week about his/her observations of my skill level in these areas.

These samples suggest the variety of strategies a person could use to accomplish a goal within the context of our course. Two goals with two objectives or one goal with three or four objectives will be adequate. ***Please notice that each set of objectives includes a feedback person to assist in achieving the goals. This strategy is to be included in your goals and objectives as well.***