

STMC 554 Group Counseling Theory and Practice

Master of Arts in Pastoral Counseling (MAPC)
School of Theology & Ministry, Seattle University
901 12th Ave, PO Box 222000
Seattle, WA 98122-1090
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TEXT & MATERIALS:

Required Text:

Yalom, I., and Leszcz, M (2005). *The Theory and Practice of Group Psychotherapy 5th Ed.* New York: Basic Books.

Recommended:

Rutan, S., Stone, W., & Shay, J. (2007). *Psychodynamic Group Psychotherapy 4th Ed.* New York: The Guilford Press.

Other optional and required readings may be assigned.

The organizing theme of Seattle University's graduate programs in Pastoral Counseling can be summarized by the following mission statement: "Preparing students for high quality work in multiple settings by providing solid theological, psychological, and clinical education/training." To this end, this course is designed to meet the core content, coursework equivalency requirement in the area of "counseling groups" in the mental health counselor education and licensing guidelines for Washington State. (WAC 246-809-221, last updated 7/8/09)

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course will examine the grounding theories and basic therapeutic principles and techniques associated with effective group counseling. The class sessions are divided into two parts: 1) the theory and clinical practice of group counseling and 2) an experiential training group experience. Topics included in this course are the most common types of therapeutic groups, client selection and screening for groups, the structure of groups, developmental aspects of therapeutic group formation, styles/techniques of group facilitation, and dealing with resistance/relapse in group counseling.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

Successful students will learn the basic theories behind the effectiveness of group therapy and how the different theories inform different group structure and function. They will learn practicalities of group formation and structure, typical group process, therapist and patient roles in effective groups.

MAPC Students will:

- Demonstrate intention to approach group therapy with openness to the presence of diversity

- Demonstrate ability to assist and facilitate growth toward mental and/or spiritual, emotional, interpersonal, behavioral health and wholeness and/or maturity. Students will understand and reflect with group clients' spiritual/faith assumptions and practices.
- Demonstrate ability to produce written documentation and oral presentation for purpose of clinical practice. Students will develop group curriculum and orally present their work to others for guidance and professional development. Students will adhere to APA written guidelines.
- Students will consult the professional literature regarding best-practice of group therapy.
 - Through readings, class discussions, and class exercises, the Pastoral Counselor in training (PCT) will learn the psychosocial theories supporting the different styles/methods of group counseling.
 - The PCT will learn the basic dynamics of group processes and be able to analyze/name the basic elements of all therapeutic groups.
- Students will develop an intervention plan using group therapy.
 - The PCT will gain practical skills in group counseling techniques by being given the opportunity to function as the co-facilitator of the experiential training group.
 - By choosing a contemporary mental health issue and designing a therapeutic group model to address the problem, the PCT will gain practical skills in planning and structuring therapeutic groups.
- Students will reflect on self-as-a-group-therapist, committing to ongoing growth, implementing self-awareness, and use of self in clinical practice.
 - By observing an active therapeutic group and interviewing the group's facilitator, the PCT will experience examples of working counseling groups in the community.
 - By active participation in the experiential training group (50 minutes of each class period), the PCT will experience multiple dynamics associated with membership in a therapeutic group.
- Demonstrate in clinical group practice the capacity to draw on spiritual/theological and psychological/behavioral insights and principles.
- Make good use of lecture, supervision, and consultation regarding group therapy.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1.	Class interaction	45 points
2.	Group Experience	15 points
3.	Focal Group Project	<u>40 points</u>
	Total	100 points

Notice: A 5% deduction per day is assessed to late work. No work will be accepted after the last due date on the agenda. An incomplete grade will be assigned only in the case of a health emergency.

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS:

1. Attendance & Class Interaction (45 points)

Attendance and class interaction count for a substantial portion of the grade; I value your presence and your participation in the class activities! Students are expected to be on time for class and not to leave early.

Each person is expected to contribute to the class individually, and in large and small groupings. Contributions should show that the student has carefully prepared for the class by reading and thinking about relevant materials. You may be asked to present on your thoughts about reading or the group process. Please be prepared to share your intellect and spiritual self in class. Work shared in class does not

have to be “perfect”; rather you are graded on your willingness to share your thoughts and ideas. You will also be graded on your effort to offer others in the class constructive feedback regarding what they share.

For class sessions where there is assigned reading, students are expected to bring one question or discussion comment to class written on an index card for contemplation in-group discussion. Comments/questions should be based on the readings or issues relevant to the issues being discussed.

Participation points will be awarded using the following rubric:

A/A-

Consistent and willing participation in class discussions and group work.
Clear evidence of reading *both* the text readings and other professional literature.
Bringing thought-provoking discussion question to class.

B+/B/B-

Willing participation in class discussions and group work.
Clear evidence of having engaged the professional literature through the text readings.
Bringing a question to class.
Missing one class or arriving late or leaving early to class.

C+/C/C-

Inconsistent participation in class and group projects.
Limited evidence of having read the required readings for class.
Missing more than one class and/or arriving late or leaving early to classes.

2. Group Experience (15 Points; Credit/No Credit)

Many persons who have taken a group therapy class state that the class group training experience was the most beneficial learning experience of the class. Each student will participate in a mock group, taking turns being the leader. Our group topic will be “adjusting to life as a graduate student”. For some sessions we will have one group leader and other classes we will break the group time into two segments, having two group leaders (depending on enrollment). Your role for this assignment is to implement what you are learning into a mock group therapy situation. You will use group techniques along with some structured activities from the group project described below.

The goal of this mock experiential group is for learning rather than for healing, although emotional growth often occurs. This is NOT a therapy group. Students are expected to express thoughts and feelings stimulated by your current experience as a Pastoral Counselor-in-Training, and to give and to accept feedback alongside other class/group members regarding their expressions and behaviors. Students are to be honest, risk, be congruent with self, show respect and be compassionate to others and to self, including mindful of one’s own boundaries of privacy and self care. All students are expected to keep confidentiality.

As this is an experiential activity, points will not be assigned. However, this is not something that you can “just show up for”. You will need to prepare a written guide for your group time as a leader. This handout should include: What are your goals for the group? Do you have an icebreaker and/or activity? What is your catalyst for discussion? How are you assessing/intervening? You may be creative and assign roles for other group members to play. For example, we will talk about blocking a dominant group member. You may want to assign one or two students the role of a “talker” and then show how you may try to intervene. I will be looking for how you are APPLYING what we are reading about and discussing as you lead the group. You should address how you are applying text and discussion in your handout. Please provide one copy of this handout for each class member; we will debrief with your handout after each session.

3. Focal Group Project (40 Points)

Each student will identify a mental health issue or risk issue/problem of interest and design an approx 10-page proposal for a counseling group focused on therapeutic interventions specific to the identified issue or problem. The project plan will be organized and efficiently/effectively written in a style that will clearly communicate to the instructor (and possible future administrators) the beneficial elements of the proposed group:

In your written proposal you will include (you can use narrative and bulleted points):

- The mental health issue or problem that will be addressed by the group (approx two-three pages);
 - The pastoral, spiritual, or theological elements of the issue/problem and how these dynamics will be included in or addressed by the group;
 - Current research on the issue/problem as found in professional journals (minimum 2 peer-reviewed journal/articles cited), academic texts, or personal interviews with experts;
- The rationale for the selection and screening of clients for the group;
- The optimal size, session time, duration, and cost/fee of the proposed group;
- Collaboration: The participation of medical professionals and/or the necessity of psychotropic drugs for membership in the group;
- The structure of the group (e.g., closed/open, co-therapist or not, stated agenda, starting and ending the group, group process of the meeting, attendance expectations, homework or not, activities requiring special rooms or equipment, etc.);
- The ground rules of the group;
- In general, the interventions that will be most helpful for meeting the goals of this type of group (literature support is helpful here);
- Brief outline for each session. Include goals, activities, discussion points, etc. for each session;
- The method for measuring/assessing when and if the group goals/skills are reached;
- Hard copies (added in an appendix) of any homework handouts, posters, assessment instruments, or other printed materials needed for the successful facilitation of the group;
- Post-group referral or follow-up procedures if warranted;
- A reference list (APA) of sources that were used in researching and designing the group.

The following rubric will be used to grade the assignment (see next page):

Final Paper Rubric—Please attach to your paper

	A-range	B-range	C-range
Introduction to Problem <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Spiritual Dimensions Research Dimensions 	Integrates academic literature regarding mental health/risk issue.	Summarizes distinct articles regarding issue	Vague understanding of issue. Not well supported with academic literature
The rationale for the selection and screening of clients for the group;	Cogent outline of selection. Details of pregroup interview questions	Some idea of who may benefit from group. Imprecise pregroup screening tools	Vague selection and screening criteria
The optimal size, session time, duration, and cost/fee of the proposed group;	Precise rationale and details given for size, time, duration, and cost	Details given for size, time, duration, and cost	List of size, time, duration, and cost; few details or rationale given
Collaboration: The participation of medical professionals and/or the necessity of psychotropic drugs for membership in the group;	Precise rationale and details given for collaboration	Imprecise rationale for collaboration	Vague understanding of collaboration
The structure of the group (e.g., closed/open, co-therapist or not, stated agenda, starting and ending the group, group process of the meeting, attendance expectations, homework or not, activities requiring special rooms or equipment, etc.);	Precise rationale and details given for structure	Imprecise rationale and details given for structure	Vague structure given for group
The ground rules of the group;	Clear description of group ground rules and how this will be discussed in group	Clear but limited description of group rules	List of ground rules
In general, the interventions that will be most helpful for meeting the goals of this type of group;	Precise rationale and description of interventions (academic support helpful)	Clear but limited rationale and description of interventions	Vague reporting of interventions without reason or how to implement
Brief outline for each session. Include goals, activities, discussion points, etc. for each session	Clear agenda with enough detail that another therapist could implement plan	Clear outline	Vague outline of sessions
The method for measuring/assessing when and if the group goals/skills are reached;	Qualitative and/or quantitative measure(s) to assess group. Aligns with group goals. Created and pre-published measurements with citations	Offers a clear plan to measure group feedback	Vague plan for measuring outcomes
Hard copies (added in an appendix) of any homework handouts, posters, assessment instruments, or other printed materials needed for the successful facilitation of the group;	Interesting, relevant, and appropriate appendix	Hard copies given	Limited resources offered
Post-group referral/follow-up	Precise rationale and	List of resources for	Vague understanding

	description of referral/follow-up with list of resources included	follow-up; few details given	of what happens after the group ends
Within page guidelines	Within 7-10 page limit	Outside of limit	Points deducted for more than +/1 page limit
APA style, grammar, spelling, etc	Adhere to APA, free of grammar and spelling errors	Some APA and grammar/spelling error	Does not adhere to APA and has some grammar/spelling errors

Comments:

Course Outline

Date	Topic	Reading/DUE	Group Co-Leader
9/22	Syllabus review Introduction to group counseling Ethics and professional issues related to group counseling		
9/29	Setting up a group: The formation process	Yalom, 1-4 (bring comment for all readings written on note card)	
10/6	Group leadership skills: basic skills	Yalom, 5-7	
10/13	STAGE 1: Initial Process	Yalom, 8-10 Be working on Focal Group Project	
10/20	STAGE 2: Transition	Yalom, 11 Be working on Focal Group Project	
10/27	STAGE 3: Working Group leadership skills: Advanced techniques	Yalom, 12	
11/3	STAGE 3: Working (Part II)	Yalom, 13	
11/10	STAGE 4: Ending a Group	Yalom, 14-17	
11/17	Group leadership skills: Advanced (practice)	Focal Group Project DUE-please attach rubric and hand in hard copy to Christie	
12/1	Group leadership skills: Advanced (practice) Reflection and Wrap-Up		

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.

DISABILITY SUPPORT SERVICES:

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.

RESPECT FOR DIVERSITY:

In order to thrive and excel, a culture must honor the rights, safety, dignity, and well being of all members no matter their race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, national origin, religious beliefs, or physical and cognitive ability. The concept of diversity encompasses acceptance and respect in understanding that each individual is unique. To the extent possible and appropriate, this course will explore these differences in a safe, positive, and supportive environment.

Recommended Readings:

Astramovich, R. L., & Coker, J. K. (2007). Program evaluation: The Accountability Bridge Model for counselors.

Journal of Counseling & Development, 85, 162–172.

Astramovich, R. L., Forkner, C. W., & Bodenhorn, N. (2004). In L. E. Tyson, R. Pérusse, & J. Whitley (Eds.),

Critical incidents in group counseling (pp. 229–240). Alexandria, VA: American Counseling Association.

Berg, R. C., Landreth, G. L., & Fall, K. A. (2006). *Group counseling: Concepts and procedures*. New York:

Routledge.

Conyne, R. K., Crowell, J. L., & Newmeyer, M. D. (2008). *Group techniques: How to use them more purposefully*.

New York: Pearson Merrill/Prentice Hall.

Corey, G. (2008). *Theory and Practice of Group Counseling* (7th ed.). Belmont, CA: Brooks/Cole.

Corey, M.S., & Corey, G. (2006). *Groups: Process and practice* (7th ed.). Belmont, CA: Brooks/Cole.

Crain, W. (2005). *Theories of development: Concepts and applications* (5th ed.). Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice

Hall.

Day, S. X. (1998). *Groups in practice*. Boston: Lahaska Press, a Houghton Mifflin Company.

DeLucia-Waack, J., & Donigian, J. (2006). *The practice of multicultural group work*. Belmont, CA: Thompson

Brooks/Cole.

- Dykeman, C., & Appleton, V. E. (2002). Group counseling: The efficacy of group work. In D. Capuzzi & D. R. Gross (Eds.), *Introduction to group counseling* (3rd ed.; pp. 119–153). Denver, CO: Love.
- Elliot, S. (1994). *Group activities for counselors*. Torrance, CA: Innerchoice Publishing.
- Egan, G. (2007). *Exercises in Helping Skills* (7th ed.). Belmont, CA: Thomson Higher Education.
- Fehr, S. S. (2010). *101 interventions in group therapy* (rev. ed.). New York: Routledge.
- Foster, E. S. (1989). *Energizers and icebreakers for all ages and stages*. Minneapolis, MN: Educational Media.
- Forester-Miller, H., & Kottler, J. A. (1997). *Issues and challenges for group practitioners*. Denver, CO: Love.
- Gladding, S. T. (1994). *Effective group counseling*. ERIC/CASS Digest. Retrieved from <http://www.ericdigests.org/1994/group.htm>
- Hines, P., & Fields, T. (2002). Pregroup screening issues for school counselors. *Journal for Specialists in Group Work*, 27, 358–376.
- Hoag, M. J., & Burlingame, G. M. (1997). Evaluating the effectiveness of child and adolescent group treatment: A meta-analytic review. *Journal of Clinical Child Psychology*, 26, 234–246.
- Jacobs, E. (1992). *Creative counseling techniques: An illustrated guide*. Odessa, FL: Psychological Assessment Resources.
- Jacobs, E., Harvill, R., & Masson, R. (2002). *Group counseling: Strategies and skills* (4th ed.). Pacific Grove, CA: Wadsworth.
- Pyle, K. R. (2007). *Group career counseling: Practices and principles*. Broken Arrow, OK: National Career Development Association
- Reeves, D. (2008). *What is a psychotherapy process oriented group?* Retrieved from <http://www.goodtherapy.org/blog/therapy-group/>
- Remley, T. P. Jr., & Herlihy, B. (2009). *Ethical, legal, and professional issues in counseling* (3rd ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education.
- Ritter, K.Y. (1978). The use of growth-groups as a critical ingredient in counselor training. *International Journal for the Advancement of Counselling*, 1, 295–302. doi: 10.1007/BF00120551
- Tuckman, B., & Jensen, T. (1977). Stages of small group development. *Group and Organizational Studies*, 2, 19–27.
- West, E. (1996). *201 icebreakers*. New York: McGraw-Hill.