Purpose of the Course:
This course will provide students with a foundational understanding of the knowledge and skills required to lead groups.

Course Description/Overview:
Theories, principles and practices in group counselling are designed to help prepare professionals to work with people in various settings, with an emphasis on conducting educational and counselling groups and the effective use of psychotherapy skills and procedures. Group processes are covered through interactive discussions, group activities, role plays, journaling, and other observational and participatory experiences.

Ethics and Confidentiality:
In this course you are entering an experience that involves a fair amount of role-playing and practice. Others in the class will no doubt share things that are personal and confidential. It is your responsibility to maintain confidentiality, just as you would do with clients. Written assignments should also disguise the identity of any individual. In sum, you are expected to abide by the College of Psychologists of Ontario Code of Ethics.

This Course is Intended For: Entry-level graduate students in counselling and others who will be leading groups in a variety of settings. These are students who may be encountering and examining group counselling procedures for the first time. This course may also include students who have been previously exposed to coursework in group counselling theories and counselling techniques.

Course Objectives:
On completion of this course, students will be able to:
1. Identify principles of group dynamics, including components of group process, developmental stages of a group, and individual and group goal-setting.
2. Examine group member’s roles and behaviours, and therapeutic factors of group work.
3. Understand group leadership styles and approaches, including characteristics of various types of group leaders and the relationship between leadership styles and group functioning.
4. Compare and contrast different group counselling methods, including group counsellor orientations and behaviours, appropriate selection criteria and methods, group structuring and facilitation skills, and methods for evaluation of group growth and effectiveness.
5. Determine when and how to use different types of groups, including task groups, psycho-educational groups, support groups, and counselling/therapy groups.
6. Know and be able to apply professional preparation standards for group leaders.
7. Be able to identify and use the ethical and legal principles unique to group work, with an awareness of the ethical responsibility to demonstrate sensitivity to group member diversity with regard to race, ethnicity, gender, spirituality, sexual orientation, and disabilities.
8. Experience being a member of a group, both as a participant and a leader, and receive feedback from peers and supervision from the instructor.

Class Format:
Group work is an interesting, challenging, dynamic, and rewarding part of the counselling and psychology fields. This class will use an experiential and interactive approach to learning and will include lecture and discussion and small group practice exercises. Therefore, active class participation is expected. Students are expected to contribute to class discussions, participate in class activities, ask questions, and contribute their ideas about assignments and the material presented in class.

You are also expected to complete all reading assignments prior to the class date for which they are assigned.

Required Text:

Additional Readings:

Course Requirements:

1. Active Participation in Group Interactions and Activities 20 Points
Preparation and active participation in class discussions and activities are central to the purpose of this class and are therefore expected. Group teaching, learning, and mentoring are major elements of the course, as are the practice and demonstration of group leadership skills in an in-class group process format. Therefore you learn the most by participating in the activities, roleplays, etc. Students are expected to be on time for class each day and present for the entire duration of the class. Anticipated absences should be discussed with the instructor prior to that class period. Students are responsible for any material missed that week.
Students will also be asked to participate in some experiential group exercises and role plays throughout the duration of the course. Each of you will be a member and leader of a small group.

It is important to remember that students will never be forced to talk in group or share more about themselves than they feel comfortable with or feel ready for. This is an education class, and not therapy or confession: hold your boundaries as you need to.

2. Assignment #1: Complete self assessment; Corey page 57 5 points

3. Weekly Journal of Student’s Experiences and Classroom Learning 30 points

Students will be expected to keep an ongoing written journal wherein they reflect upon their observations, experiences, and learning from each class session (i.e., what impacted me the most and in what way, … etc. ) and most importantly with regard to their small process group experiences. Excerpts from this journal will be submitted by email (via an attachment on Microsoft Word) by the Friday of the week (6 in total) to mrovers@rogers.com. It is expected that students will write about one (1) single spaced page per week in their journal; however, they are not limited to this. No credit will be given if these journals are turned in late. Students are reminded to date each reflection and put their name on the top of the front page of their journal (no cover page required). Students are expected to be self-analytical with regard to their process group experiences. They should also feel free to comment on any class activities, experiences, or material which impacted them personally or professionally: honestly is appreciated.


Along with reactions to your weekly learning experiences, your journal should address the following areas:

(1) Your overall impressions of the class that week; the best parts, the worse parts.
(2) Your learning experiences and insights into YOURSELF as a group member and/or leader;
(3) How well you think you were able to link your experiences in this class to your knowledge and especially your readings; Please refer to or quote works you are reading. I expect some reading materials to come with each weekly reflection.
(4) How your thinking about group work has changed as a result of taking this class;
(5) Your perceived strengths and weaknesses as a group leader/therapist (as well as you know yourself presently). Please be open and honest, and yet professional, in your responses.
3. **Group Seminar** 40 Points

Students, in their small groups, will co-lead one in-class group activity during the course, wherein students select a relevant area of group therapy dynamics and then lead a 40 minute group on this topic. Your group will:

1) Select a relevant area of group therapy dynamics for your group (eg. one of the stages of group, dealing with difficult group members, silence in group, creative group activities, leadership styles, etc: see Corey for more) These group experiences are meant to be both practice of group and educational in terms of group process.

2) Prepare a 30 minute group process with each member of your group will contribute to the unfolding of the group process…. Followed by 10 minutes Q & A by the class.

3) Be creative: there are points for trying something new, different, intuitive. Points are not determined by success of the group activity, but on the overall intent, preparation, and process.

4. **Integration Paper** 5 points

This paper will be completed in the last class.
COURSE OUTLINE

Monday, January 9, 2012

*Group: Support group for those becoming a group leader.*
Beginning a group…..
Introduction to the course
Active listening skills; Communication 101
**Reading for next class:** Corey Ch. 1 and 2

January 16

*Group: Support group for those becoming a group leader.*
My learning goals as group leader ……
Principles and conditions in adult learning
**Reading for next class:** Corey Ch 4
**Assignment #1:** Complete self assessment; Corey page 57 and pass in

January 23

*Group: Martin leads small group*
Practicing group leadership skills …… Listening, empathy, facilitating
While other students give feedback on leadership skills
Assignment of students to small groups;
**Reading for next class:** Corey Ch 5

January 30

*Group: Small groups: forming*
Initial stage of group …
Group tasks and group maintenance
Assignment: Learning styles and Myers-Briggs

February 6

*Group: Small groups: norming*
Gropes, Gimme, Gripe, Grasp
Forming, Norming, Storming, Performing
Group fears, resistance, silence,
Self disclosure, Confrontation, and the Johari window
**Reading for next class:** Corey Ch. 6

February 13

*Group: Small groups: storming*
Transition stage …
Working with transference
Care-frontation
Conflicts, hostile behaviour, difficult people
**Reading for next class:** Corey Ch 7
**February 19-25 Study Break**

February 27
**Group: Small groups: performing**
Working stage of group …
Preparing our group seminar
Group skills
**Reading for next class: Corey Ch 8**

March 5
**Group: Martin Leads small group**
Final stage of group and termination

**Group Seminar:**

March 12
**Group Seminar:**
Experiences of and my role in my family of origin group
Family of origin dynamics as group
**Reading for next class: Corey Ch 9, 10, 12**

March 19
**Group Seminar:**
Groups for children, adolescents, adults
**Reading for next class: Corey Ch 3**

March 26
**Group Seminar:**
Group ethics
Right brain learning, relaxation techniques

April 2
**Group: Martin leads small group**
**Group Seminar:**
Who is the group leader exercise?

April 9
Integration
Some Additional Resources and Suggested Readings


J. Weston Walch.


