

"Reflective Professionals Building Learning Communities"

COURSE TITLE

COUN 406 Group Counseling

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

name
office
phone number
e-mail

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course introduces students to groups and group leadership. Knowledge base includes theory, group processes, group dynamics, interventions, roles of members and leaders, facilitative and debilitating behaviors, characteristics of developmental stages, ethics, and therapeutic ingredients of group work. Experimental group activities provide opportunity to develop self-awareness, interpersonal skills, and leadership ability. Confidentiality and ethical behavior are stressed. This course contributes to the Group Work component of the program and is required of all students.

PREREQUISITE

COUN 405 Individual Counseling Skills

RECOMMENDED TEXT

Chen, M. & Rybak, C. (2004). *Group leadership skills: Interpersonal process in group counseling and therapy*. Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole.

Corey, M. & Corey, G. (2005). *Groups: Process and practice* (7th ed.) Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole.

Yalom, I.D. (2005). *The theory and practice of group psychotherapy* (5th ed.). New York: Basic Books.

MODE OF INSTRUCTION

Experiential with some lecture/discussion, demonstrations, and modeling, role playing, supervision.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

This course supports the College of Education Performance Standards #4 Learning Styles, #5 Instruction, and #6 Motivation. (see Appendix A for table of standards.) In addition, the objectives of the course are designed to help students to

1. become aware of the four major group work specializations, the distinguishing characteristics of each, the commonalities shared by all, and the appropriate instances in which each is to be used;
2. acquire basic knowledge of effective group membership and leadership
3. develop awareness of issues related to the ethical behavior of group counselors and ethical issues that are unique to group work;
4. provide students with a conceptual and experiential understanding of a stage-based group development process model focusing on personal and professional growth;
5. become familiar with the major group counseling theories;
6. differentiate between approaches to groups in terms of goals, techniques, role of participants, and role of leaders;
7. become aware of the basic therapeutic ingredients of groups;
8. identify the personal characteristics of group workers that have an impact on members' knowledge of personal strengths, weaknesses, biases, values, and their effect on others;
9. identify principles and strategies for recruiting and screening prospective group members;
10. identify the importance of group and member evaluation;
11. understand the principles of group dynamics, including group process components, developmental stage theories and roles and behaviors of group members;
12. provide opportunities for students to lead groups under supervision and critique their own leadership skills;
13. understand how group experiences help people change their own behavior;
14. assist students in identifying and coping with problematic behaviors of group members;
15. provide students with the experience of preparing a detailed design of a complete group counseling experience, including ethical and legal issues in group work.

REQUIRED PROJECTS

1. Reading assignments
Students are expected to come to class having read the assigned reading for the day. Participation in class discussion is expected. In each class, each student will be expected to share his or her reactions to the readings assigned.
2. Progress notes for Group: Leaders only
When students are in the role of group leaders, their in-session leadership skills will not be graded. At the end of each group session, students are required to write their **narrative progress notes** which will be graded according to the following criteria and the degree to which the criteria are applied:
 - Description of group dynamics
 - Recognition of members' interpersonal style

- Observation of members' responses to leaders' intervention
- Observation of co-leaders interaction
- Utilization of healing and constructive language
- Reflection of leaders' own reactions to group dynamics
- Post session reflections
- Narrative process notes are due a week after the session in which the student was a co-leader.

3. Critical reflection of group process: Members only

The participation of members in the group is not graded. Students are required to write critical self-reflections as a group member after the experiential sessions. After the sessions, students need to:

- Articulate their observations of all dynamics in the group, their own reactions, and other issues triggered by the group dynamics.
- Comment on critical events in weekly critical reflection papers to demonstrate their learning and understanding of the group process. There are usually several critical events in a group session wherein group members' interpersonal styles surface.
- Monitor their reactions. Students are encouraged to delve into learning about themselves and others members to maximize the possibilities of self-awareness and self-knowledge this experience offers. Mere factual reports about group events and about self-learning are not enough.
- The practice of critical reflection sharpens leadership skills for future clinical practice (See chapter 12) Examples of members clinical reflections can be found throughout the textbook.

Each critical reflection must be typed, single spaced with some open space between paragraphs and one page long. The following criteria will be used to evaluate critical reflections:

- The degree to which students reflect on how the key group dynamics influence him or her personally
- The degree to which the students reflect on how his or her own personal reactivity patterns and issues are triggered in the session
- The degree to which the student is able to become aware of the role he or she plays in the group dynamics and apply the new awareness to the following session.
- Timeliness of the submissions. Critical reflections are due each week. Each student will turn in _____ critical reflections.

4. Brief term paper

Students are required to write a paper on any topic related to group counseling. Topics that are not applied to group settings will not be accepted. Topics can involve any change process or any group counseling approaches related to a particular theme or related to a particular population. Examples of group change processes: feedback, conflict resolution, here-and-now, process illumination, self-disclosure, therapeutic letter, leadership styles, etc. Any concept related to group processes can be considered. Examples of theme or population related group counseling approaches: Groups for eating disorders, adolescents, men, anger management, children of divorced families, life transitions, children of alcoholics, etc.

Students are encouraged to start a library search (PsychInfo in the Neiu's library website) shortly after they get a feel of the group dynamics. Some articles and books through inter-library loan services may take a long time to arrive. The paper is to be 5-6 pages long, double-spaced. APA style is required (including but not limited to: cover page, appropriate writing style, headers, and accurate citations).

REQUIRED ACTIVITIES

COUN 406 is designed as an experiential class, allowing students the opportunity to experience group dynamics as both members and leaders. Each week, the lecture portion of the course lasts for approx. one hour. The experiential portion of the class lasts 1 1/2 hours. Each week, students will participate in the group experience as a group member or a group leader in a real group setting. Students will take turns becoming leaders. A total of twelve sessions will take place during the semester. As group members, students work on the personal goals they want to achieve during the course of the group experience. Each student will co-lead the group at least twice during the semester. Students' performance as group members or group leaders is not graded. On average, each student spends a minimum of 12 hours in a group experience.

STUDENT EVALUATION

Students must pass the course with a grade of A or B to enroll in subsequent clinical courses.

GRADING POLICY

Member notes 1/3 of the grade
 Leader notes 1/3 of the grade
 Final Paper 1/3 of the grade

A = 90-99 D = 60-69 B = 80-89 F = below 60 C = 70-79

INFORMED CONSENT

In compliance with the American Counseling Association's Code of Ethics regarding counselor training, and because the Department of Counselor Education at Northeastern Illinois University is a clinical training program as well as a graduate degree program, admission to this department indicates that an admitted student agrees to self-disclosure of personal information in papers, journals, discussions and other assignments for the purposes of self-reflection and awareness and improvement of interpersonal skills.

ASSESSMENT OF LEARNING (FEEDBACK LOOP)

Assessment of learning begins in the initial class session and is on-going throughout the course. Data from the specific assessment tools (proposals and self-critique) will be analyzed and the results used to improve instruction and facilitate increased student learning. This feedback may be used to make adjustments in the course as it progresses and to implement future changes.

STUDENT ACCOMMODATIONS

In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, Northeastern Illinois University does not discriminate against employees or students on the basis of disability. In addition, the University provides reasonable accommodations for both employees and students with disabilities. Students seeking reasonable accommodations in the classroom should contact the Accessibility Center/HELP Office, A-118 (phone 773/442-5495, 5496, or 5497; TDD 773/442-5499). The University policy on services for students with disabilities may be found at <http://www.neiu.edu/%7EDeanSt/survival/disabilities.pdf>. Students should feel free to meet with the instructor at any time to discuss any reasonable accommodations or removal of barriers that may hinder full inclusion and participation in the course.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

Students are expected to

1. attend all class sessions;
2. read all assigned materials;
3. participate in group activities;
4. maintain confidentiality;
5. contribute to the creation of a learning environment in which insight-generating feedback is offered in a supportive manner; and
7. engage in self-disclosure appropriately during group sessions.

COURSE TOPICS AND SCHEDULE

Week	Topic	Readings	Standard
1	Introduction and overview to group dynamics		CACREP II.K.6.a
2	The four group specialities; ethics in groups	Chen & Rybak, Chaps. 1-2	CACREP II.K.6.e,g
3	Formation of groups; pre-group intake Pre-group screening	C&R, Chap. 3	CACREP II.K.6.d
4	Learning how to open and close sessions Session # 1	C&R, Chaps. 4-5	CACREP II.K.6.d
5	Working on agendas Session # 2	C&R, Chap. 6	CACREP II.K.6.d
6	Therapeutic factors in groups Session # 3	Yalom, Chap. 1	CACREP II.K.6.c
7	Working with tension and conflict Session # 4	C&R, Chap. 7	CACREP II.K.6.d
8	Interpersonal learning in groups Session # 5	Yalom, Chap. 2	CACREP II.K.6.c
9	Increasing risk-taking behaviors Session # 6	C&R, Chap. 8	CACREP II.K.6.d
10	Advanced leadership skills : The hot seat method Start non structured groups Session # 7	Yalom, Chap. 6; C&R, Chap. 9	CACREP II.K.6.b
11	Advanced Leadership: Method of stirring the pot Session # 8	C & R Chap 10	CACREP II K 6. b
12	Further growth of the leader Session # 9	C & R Chap 14	
13	Sessions # 10 and Session # 11	Handout	
14	Termination Session # 12		
15	Preparation of group leaders; future trends and issues		CACREP II.K.6.f

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- Yalom, I. D. (2005). *Theory and practice of group psychotherapy* (5th ed.). New York: Basic Books.

Appendix A: Table of Standards

The course objectives for Group Counseling are linked to the following standards. (COE = College of Education; CACREP = Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs; CORE = Council on Rehabilitation Education.)

COE Performance Standards #4 Learning Styles, #5 Instruction, and #6 Motivation

CACREP II.K.6 = Group Work

CORE C.6 = Group work

1. become aware of the four major group work specializations, the distinguishing characteristics of each, the commonalities shared by all, and the appropriate instances in which each is to be used;
 - COE Performance Standard #5
 - CACREP II.K.6.e
 - CORE C.6.4
2. acquire basic knowledge of effective group membership and leadership;
 - COE Performance Standard #5
 - CACREP II.K.6.b
 - CORE C.6.2
3. develop awareness of issues related to the ethical behavior of group counselors and ethical issues that are unique to group work;
 - COE Performance Standard #4
 - CACREP II.K.g
 - CORE C.6.6
4. provide students with a conceptual and experiential understanding of a stage-based group development process model focusing on personal and professional growth;
 - COE Performance Standard #5
 - CACREP II.K.6.a
 - CORE C.6.1
5. become familiar with the major group counseling theories;
 - COE Performance Standard #5 and #6
 - CACREP II.K.6.c
 - CORE C.6.8
6. differentiate between approaches to groups in terms of goals, techniques, role of participants, and role of leaders;
 - COE Performance Standards #4 and #5
 - CACREP II.K.6.d
 - CORE C.6.9
7. become aware of the basic therapeutic ingredients of groups;
 - COE Performance Standard #5
 - CACREP II.K.6.a
 - CORE C.6.1

8. identify the personal characteristics of group workers that have an impact on members' knowledge of personal strengths, weaknesses, biases, values, and their effect on others;
COE Performance Standard #4
CACREP II.K.b
CORE C.6.2
9. identify principles and strategies for recruiting and screening prospective group members;
COE Performance Standard #4
CACREP II.K.6.d
CORE C.6.9
10. identify the importance of group and member evaluation;
COE Performance Standard #4
CACREP II.K.6.d
CORE C.6.9
11. understand the principles of group dynamics, including group process components, developmental stage theories and roles and behaviors of group members;
COE Performance Standard #5
CACREP II.K.6.a
CORE C.6.1
12. provide opportunities for students to lead groups under supervision and critique their own leadership skills;
COE Performance Standard #6
CACREP II.K.6.b
CORE C.6.2
13. understand the impact of group work on not only individuals, but families and other systems;
COE Performance Standard #4
CACREP II.K.6.a
CORE C.6.3
14. provide a framework for using group counseling strategies with minorities, persons with disabilities, and other special populations;
COE Performance Standard #13
CACREP II.K.6.a
CORE C.6.7
15. provide students with the experience of preparing a detailed design of a complete group counseling experience including ethical and legal issues in group work.
COE Performance Standard #5
CACREP II.K.6.f , g
CORE C.6.5