

Psychology and Research in Education

PRE 844 – Theory of Group Counseling

Line # 47027

Fall 2007

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**Office Hours: JRP 638** – By appointment on Wednesdays 4:30 to 5:30 pm and as needed

**Schedule:** Fridays 9:00 to 11:50 am

**Location:** Edwards Campus – 256 Regnier

**Text:** Capuzzi, D. & Gross, D. (2006). *Introduction to Group Counseling* (4th ed.). Denver:Love.

**Suggested Resource:** American Psychological Association. (2001). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (5<sup>th</sup> ed.). Washington, D.C. Author.

Welcome to PRE 844! I'm pleased to have you in class and look forward to a rewarding learning experience for all of us.

*The primary mission of the School of Education is to prepare leaders in education and human services fields. As stated in the School Code*

*Within the University, the School of Education serves Kansas, the nation, and the world by (1) preparing individuals to be leaders and practitioners in education and related human service fields, (2) expanding and deepening understanding of education as a fundamental human endeavor, and (3) helping society define and respond to its educational responsibilities and challenges.*

*The components that frame this mission for our initial and advanced programs are Research and Best Practice, Content Knowledge, and Professionalism. These interlocking themes build our Conceptual Framework.*

Course Overview:

The purpose of this course is to facilitate your understanding of group processes and dynamics and to help you develop the skills to facilitate group counseling.

Course Objectives:

*It is hoped that throughout this course, you will.....*

- Obtain a working knowledge of group dynamics, process, and stages of group development
- Learn to select and screen group participants, and how individual group members can be strategically selected to maximize therapeutic benefits for the entire group
- Learn group techniques

Become sensitive to special ethical considerations in group therapy  
Learn how to address specific challenges in therapy groups  
Learn more about specialized therapy groups and the needs of specific populations  
Become sensitive to multicultural issues related to group work  
Be able to design a complete theoretically based group  
Become familiar with important research findings about group therapy  
Be able to offer a critical analysis of a group  
Become aware of how you function in group settings and become more sensitive to your own part in group process

### Course Requirements:

#### **Class Participation and Attendance**

Class participation is expected and vital to the success of this course. I will be asking you to participate in role playing group activities and interventions to help you learn group leadership skills. Although there will be no instructor led group therapy experience in this course (see APA ethics code), we will be learning group skills through activities selected to enhance your skills and understanding of group theory and group work. Therefore, it is important that together we create a positive, respectful classroom environment. This can best be done when you attend class regularly with the reading completed and ready to interact with your colleagues.

#### **Field Experience and 3-5 page Reaction Paper**

Select one of the following three options. You are strongly urged to select one of the first two options; however, if you do not have transportation or encounter another barrier, you are welcome to select the third.

1. Interview a practitioner who regularly uses groups as a primary mode of practice. This will be most useful to you if you find someone in a setting to which you aspire working. Find out what type(s) of groups they lead. What theoretical orientation do they use? What are the joys and challenges of group leadership? What ethical considerations have they encountered? (see chapter 7 in your textbook) What advice would they give to you as a future group leader? For more ideas on this information interview see Bolles – *What Color is your Parachute?*
2. Attend at least one session of a group. Contact the organizer and request permission to attend. Select a group in a particular interest area for you. I will provide you with a list of possibilities but the options are many especially if you are interested in groups like AA. Observe the entire group experience and compare it to what you have learned in class. What seems to be the objective of the group? Do you observe participants in common group roles? How does the group leader conduct him/herself? Can you identify any particular interventions and why they were used?
3. Review a Research Article. Select an empirical research article that investigates the efficacy of group therapy (psychotherapy group, a support group, psychoeducational group, etc.). Provide a brief synopsis of the article and discuss relevant group considerations. Use APA style in your write-up and turn in a copy of the article with your review.

#### **Design a Group – Presentation, Paper, and Log**

You will be assigned to a group and will be asked to design a six to eight week group and present your group to the class. Be creative and make this assignment useful to you! I've known students who have built upon this project and made it their master's project or dissertation. Groups can be structured or semi-

structured. They can be thematically based on a specific diagnosis or concern (e.g. Substance Abuse, HIV, Cancer, Career, Eating Disorders, Gay and/or Lesbian Support Group, Bereavement, etc.).

**There are three components to this assignment: a 15-20 page paper, a 45 minute presentation with outline, and an informal log about the work group experience.**

- A. Paper and Presentation – During the August 31st class period, students will be divided into groups and will choose a topic and population for a group intervention. Note: This must be approved by the instructor. Each group of students will collectively write a 15-20 page paper (APA style) about their group. There will be a 45-minute presentation in class and 15 minutes for questions concerning the topic.

Papers and presentations should include:

- Purpose of Group
- Group Goals
- Marketing the group (advertising, getting members)
- Screening and orientation
- Sessions (Number and major activities of the session – approximately one page on each session)
  - Purpose
  - Theme
  - Activity
- Strategies to evaluate the group
- Ethical considerations
- Referral procedures for follow-up
- A **Brief** review of what the literature says about your type of group
- References
- Appendices (if any)
- (Demonstrate one session of your group during the presentation)

You will be expected to **provide each class member an outline of your group design on the day of your presentation.** You will turn your completed paper in to the instructor. Papers are to be between 15-20 pages long with references. You are asked to use APA style. I encourage you to work toward a professional caliber presentation. You may want to use visual aids and to dress up to simulate a conference type atmosphere!

- B. Log with entries after each work group meeting – even on-line meetings.  
I would like for you to keep an informal log of your experience as a work group member. Include your general observations about how you think the group is going in light of your growing knowledge about group dynamics. Please do not include group members' names. Just comment on general observations, trends and roles.

### **Two Exams**

There will be one in-class exam lasting 90 minutes and one take home exam. On the October 5<sup>th</sup> exam day the remainder of the time will be available for your group project team meeting. I'll be available for consultation during that time as well as during my office hours. The project and its accompanying activities will take the place of a final exam.

### **Evaluation**

Participation – 15%

Exams – (15% each) – 30% total

Field Experience – 15%

Project/Paper/Log/Presentation – 30%

Workbook – 10%

*You are encouraged to take advantage of the KU Writer's Roost for assistance. Visit [www.writing.ku.edu](http://www.writing.ku.edu)*

*If you have special needs or a disability for which you may need accommodations, you are encouraged to speaking with me privately and/or I am happy to refer you to appropriate campus resources. See [www.disability.ku.edu](http://www.disability.ku.edu).*

*Grading for the course is A-F. In certain exceptional circumstances, a grade of I (incomplete) may be assigned. If you determine that you do not wish to complete PRE 844 and need to withdraw from the course, it is imperative that you let me know as soon as possible and go through the formal withdrawal procedures for the university. See [www.registrar.ku.edu](http://www.registrar.ku.edu) for details.*

*This course adheres to the University's Policy on Academic Misconduct. It is YOUR responsibility to know that policy and adhere it as well. See [www.studenthandbook.ku.edu](http://www.studenthandbook.ku.edu).*