

**George Mason University**  
**College of Education and Human Development**  
Counseling and Development

EDCD 608.002 - Group Processes and Analyses  
4 Credits, Spring 2017

Tuesdays, 4:30 – 7:10 PM – Innovation Hall room 139

Section 203 Lab for Lecture: Mondays 4:30 – 5:50 PM - Enterprise Hall Room 77

**Faculty**

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**Prerequisites/Corequisites**

Admission to the CNDV program and *completion* of EDCD 603 and EDCD 606 or EDCD 609.

**University Catalog Course Description**

Presents theories appropriate to various types of groups and descriptions of group practices, methods, dynamics, and facilitative skills. Focuses on applying theory to practice. Includes lab.

**Course Overview**

This course is designed to familiarize students with fundamental concepts and theories of group counseling. A mastery of basic interpersonal and facilitation skills will be emphasized inclusive of issues related to racial and ethnic diversity, gender, and social justice. The course includes an intensive laboratory group experience to facilitate interpersonal awareness, sensitivity, and skills that are critical to being an effective group counselor/ group therapist.

**Course Delivery Method**

This course will be delivered using a lecture, discussion and practice format.

**Learner Outcomes or Objectives**

This course is designed to enable students to do the following:

1. Gain personal awareness of one's own interpersonal style.
2. Learn various process and outcome issues that structure group experience.
3. Acquire and demonstrate group counseling skills in class demonstrations and experiences.
4. Learn about culturally diverse populations and effective group interventions with those specific populations.
5. Gain an understanding of different K-12 students and clients that may participate in groups and learn about how to effectively intervene with those groups.
6. Study ways to evaluate the group experience.
7. Experience group process personally and gain insight, awareness and enhanced interpersonal skills.
8. Begin to develop a personal style as a group facilitator.

## **Professional Standards (CACREP)**

Group Counseling is a key issue in counseling and provides a core course in the Counseling and Development Program. It addresses the program goals and mission and provides information about how to more effectively work with systems and facilitate personal, social, and institutional change through group work. This will provide a core foundation in highlighting self-awareness, interpersonal skills and awareness, and system skills as an advocate and change agent including important skills necessary in practicum and internship. CACREP standards that are met through this course include: foundations of counseling, contextual dimensions of counseling, knowledge and skill requirements, and clinical instruction.

**EDCD 608 fulfills the requirements and standards for Group Counseling in the following professional organizations:** Council for the Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) Section II K.f: Theoretical and experiential understanding of group purpose, development, dynamics, counseling theories, group counseling methods and skills, and other group approaches, American Counseling Association (ACA), Virginia Departments of Education and Health Professions.

## **Required Texts**

Trotzer, J. (2006). *The counselor and the group: Integrating theory, training, and practice* (4<sup>th</sup> ed.). NY: Routledge.

Yalom, I. & Leszcz, M. (2005). *The theory and practice of group psychotherapy* (5<sup>th</sup> ed.). NY: Basic Books.

## **Course Performance Evaluation**

Students are expected to submit all assignments on time in the manner outlined by the instructor (e.g., Blackboard, Tk20, hard copy).

- **Assignments and/or Examinations**

- 1. Reaction Papers**

**10%**

The paper should focus on your reactions to the laboratory experiences as you have gained knowledge and insight into yourself as a group member. No references are needed for this paper. Included in the paper should be your understanding and self-insight regarding interpersonal relations, defense mechanisms, leadership abilities, self-perceptions, roles you assume in the group, etc. These are personal reaction papers so they should be direct, honest and forthcoming. The reaction paper is *not* a reaction to your group leadership experience. Each of the two reaction papers should not exceed 3 double spaced pages. Papers will be due on 3/21 and 4/25.

- 2. Final Research Paper**

**30%**

The final research paper should be based on a group counseling topic. Students must bring to class in hard copy, a one-half page topic proposal outline to the instructor for approval on or before 9/13. The research topic must be in an area other than your class presentation. The paper should utilize at least 5 professional **recent referenced journal articles** (no websites, book chapters, or books), include a bibliography, be written in APA 6<sup>th</sup> edition style, and not utilize direct quotations from the references. Papers must focus on one area of research in group counseling, with the research review being 90-95% focused on the group counseling aspect of the area or theme chosen. Papers should not exceed 5 double spaced pages, not

counting the abstract, title page, and references. Research done on topics from other classes may NOT be used for this research paper and will be counted as plagiarism. Timelines must be followed to receive full credit. **All assignments must be submitted electronically to safeassign (via Blackboard) to check for plagiarism due by the beginning of class on 5/9.** Your assignments can be submitted to safeassign under Assessment in Blackboard. In addition, all students must hand in a hard copy of their final paper on 5/9 at the last class. No late papers will be accepted.

**3. Group Leadership Experience**

**5%**

The group leadership experience will involve each student in class facilitating a simulated group experience within the classroom laboratory setting. This will be done under the guidance and instruction of the instructor.

**4. Group Observation**

**5%**

Each student will be required to find a group to observe one session in a school, institution, or community agency setting. Students are strongly encouraged to observe groups in the area of their presentation. If groups are closed students must obtain permission to sit in and observe the group session. A 1-2 page double spaced reflection paper is required addressing the following questions: 1) The type of group; 2) numbers of clients/members including gender, age, and ethnic breakdowns; 3) the effectiveness of process in the group; 4) the role of diversity in the group; 5) the perceived role and effectiveness of the leader; 6) what worked and didn't work in the session; 7) what appeared to be the challenges of the group? Paper due on 4/18. *Observations should NOT take place prior to 2/21.*

**5. Attendance and Participation**

**20%**

Attendance and participation are essential in a group counseling class and therefore is one-fifth of the grade. It is required that all students are on time for all classes, present and actively participate in all classes, including class discussions, exercises, and group experiences. If there is a scheduling conflict that interferes with attendance during any portion of the semester students should see the instructor during the **first class** to discuss continuing class this semester or taking the course during another semester. It should be noted that one unexcused absence during the semester will result in not receiving credit for the course. **Attending the first class is mandatory, without exception.** Missing the first class will result in having to drop the class and retake the class in a future semester. *Lateness to class will be considered an absence from that class.*

**6. Reading Questions and Comments**

**12%**

There will be a weekly class requirement to submit four questions or comments derived from the readings with the first due date after the first class on 1/31. In instances where both texts are required reading, two questions or comments from each text should be submitted. Questions must be computer written. Questions are due at the beginning of class and no handwritten questions or late questions will be accepted. There will be **no** questions due on the last day of class, 5/9.

**7. Presentation**

**6%**

There will be group presentations in class. Presentation topics must be different than and may not overlap with your final paper topics. Groups, dates and topics for presentations will be finalized and approved on 1/31. The presentations will each be for a total of 10 minutes (*absolute maximum*) allowing an additional five minutes for questions. Following the presentation there will be a demonstration of facilitating this type of group by the presenters

for a 20-30-minute period. It is expected that references will be used to supplement the textbooks and presentations will be active, dynamic, and engaging. References and any additional handouts should be distributed to class members. It should be noted that presentations should **emphasize and directly address** group counseling rather than a generalized topic theme. For example, presenting about group counseling with multicultural groups should not emphasize a description of an ethnic group or groups, but rather the process and issues related directly to group counseling with this specific ethnic population. Students should come to class with 2-3 potential topic areas on 1/31.

## 8. Blackboard Assignment

12%

There will be two postings on Blackboard each week. Students must register with GMU to obtain a GMU account in order to fully participate in the Blackboard assignment (this should have been done upon entry to the program). Students will use Blackboard as a primary weblink to access course instruction, documents, and to communicate with the instructor and classmates. To access Blackboard, go through [mymason.gmu.edu](http://mymason.gmu.edu) under courses. Students will be required to regularly participate in Blackboard discussions (See attached page at end of syllabus on what is acceptable participation on Blackboard). Grade for this component of the class will be determined by the quality of discussion on Blackboard, adhering to the attached guidelines, and whether or not the posting is within the required timeframe as stated on the Blackboard discussion group. Postings not meeting the specified timelines will not receive points for that posting. The first Blackboard assignment should be posted directly following the first class period (beginning after class on 1/24 and as assigned thereafter. The lead person for each week must post the day after each class on Wednesday by 6:00pm (if the lead person does not post by Wednesday at 6:00pm other group members may begin to post at that time). The entire group must complete the first weekly postings by 10:00pm on Thursday of that week. The lead person does **not** have to lead discussions for the second weekly posting. Any group member may begin the second weekly posting after 8:00am on Friday morning of that week. All second postings by group discussion members must be completed by that Sunday evening at 10:00pm. Postings can encompass a wide range of topics that focus on **group counseling (NOT other topics outside of the content of the course)** including the readings, reactions to class discussions and class experiences, and personal experiences related to class content (excluding experiences within the lab). Blackboard discussion groups will be assigned on Blackboard.

### **NOTES ON ASSIGNMENTS:**

- The deadlines for papers are strictly observed. Late papers without prior permission from the instructor will not be accepted.
  - Page limits on assignments do not include title page, abstract, references or appendices.
  - All written work submitted *must* conform to APA 6<sup>th</sup> Edition standards. Sample portions of the APA manual appear in the "Style Guides and Manuals" link on the GMU library web guide at: <http://library.gmu.edu/resources/edu>
  - Papers that are not in APA 6<sup>th</sup> edition format and/or are **over** the page limit will result in a grade deduction.
- **Other Requirements**

**First day of class and the Saturday class are mandatory.**

**If there is a scheduling conflict that interferes with attendance during any portion of the class students should see the instructor in the first class to discuss continuing in the class this semester or taking the course during another semester.**

**The final research paper must be submitted to Safeassign on Blackboard to check for plagiarism.**

**All assignments are due at the beginning of the class, i.e., 4:30 p.m. Assignments not submitted at the beginning of class will not be accepted.**

### **C&D Attendance Policy**

Students are allowed one unexcused absence throughout the semester. If there are two unexcused absences this may result in a non-passing grade.

### **Counseling & Development (C&D) Professional Performance Criteria**

As posted on C&D homepage: <http://gse.gmu.edu/programs/counseling/resources/>

The American Counseling Association code of ethics requires counselors and counselor trainees to maintain standards of professional competence and possess good moral character. Therefore, the Counseling and Development Program in the College of Education and Human Development at George Mason University requires its students to exhibit the following:

#### **Communication Skills**

- Clear presentation and demonstration of multicultural competencies in counseling skills
- Clear oral communication
- Clear written communication
- Clear ability to demonstrate effective and supportive helping skills
- Clear ability to demonstrate effective listening skills

#### **Professionalism**

- Commitment to multiculturalism and diversity
- Commitment to social justice as it relates to counseling
- Respect of multiculturalism and diverse cultures
- Demonstration of openness, willingness to learn, and positive attitude about multiculturalism and diverse cultures
- Commitment to the psychological well-being, health, and wellness for all people
- Sound judgment
- Integrity and honesty
- Ability to accept personal responsibility
- Ability to receive and reflect upon constructive criticism
- Positive attitude
- Ability to meet deadlines
- Ability to maintain confidentiality with clients, students, and colleagues
- Appropriate assertiveness
- Ability to manage stress
- Ability to meet requirements as stated in course syllabi
- Adherence to ACA ethical guidelines

- **Grading**

<u>Assignments</u>	<u>Points</u>
Reaction Paper	10
Group Leadership Experience	5
Group Observation	5
Readings/Questions	12
Group Presentation	6
Final Research Paper	30
Blackboard Postings	12
Participation/Attendance:	<u>20</u>
Total:	100

### **Grading Scale \*\*\***

Please note that grading on written work will be based on the quality of the written work, knowledge and review of the content area, accuracy, relatedness, logic and organization of the paper, degree to which the points are effectively supported, following the APA 6<sup>th</sup> edition guidelines, deadlines in submitting the assignment (late assignments will be penalized), maintaining the page limit, and adherence to the requirements of the assignment.

A	=	97-100
A-	=	94- 96
B+	=	91- 93
B	=	87- 90
B-	=	84- 86
C	=	83- 80
F	=	Below 79

\*\*\*Given that some weekly grades are half points there will be no rounding up of grade points.

All CEHD undergraduate and graduate students are held to the university grading policies as described in the Academic Policies section of the current catalog, which can be accessed at <http://catalog.gmu.edu>. Those students enrolled in a CEHD Licensure Graduate Certificate program, however, must earn a B- or better in all licensure coursework. A degree-seeking graduate student will be dismissed after accumulating grades of F in two courses or 9 credits of unsatisfactory grades (C or F) in graduate courses. A 3.0 grade point average is required for completion of the graduate degree.

### **Professional Dispositions**

Students are expected to exhibit professional behaviors and dispositions at all times.

## Class Schedule

<u>Date</u>	<u>Topics and Assignments*</u> *Group Leadership experiences in lab will occur throughout the semester.	<u>Reading Assignments/Due Date</u>
1/24	Introductions Overview of Group Work <i>First Blackboard postings due this week</i>	
1/31	History and Trends, Definitions Therapeutic Factors <i>Presentation topics and dates selected</i>	Trotzer, 1, 2 Yalom, 1
2/7	Rationale for Group Counseling, Group Process, Interpersonal Learning, Group Cohesiveness <i>Final Paper Outlines Due</i>	Trotzer 3 Yalom 2, 3
2/14	Group Process, Therapeutic, Factors, Basic Tasks <i>Lab Begins – Lab I</i>	Trotzer 4 Yalom 4, 5
2/21	Process to Practice, Group Leadership, Group Composition <i>Presentation, Lab II</i> <i>Group Observation Projects Commence</i>	Trotzer, 5, 6 Yalom, 9
2/28	Beginning Groups, Creation of a Group <i>Presentation, Lab III</i>	Yalom 10, 11
3/7	Group Members, Best Practices <i>Presentation, Lab IV</i> <i>Reaction paper I due</i>	Trotzer 7, 8
3/14	No Class – Spring Break	
3/21	Cultural Diversity in Groups, Working In the Here and Now, Transference, Client Selection <i>Presentation, Lab V</i>	Trotzer 9 Yalom 6, 7, 8
3/28	Differentiating Groups, Kinds of Groups <i>Presentation, Lab VI</i>	Trotzer 10 Yalom 16

4/4	Organizing Group Work, Advanced Groups <i>Presentation, Lab VII</i>	Trotzer 11 Yalom 12
4/11	No Class – Alternate assignment	
4/18	Evaluating Groups, Research, Problem Group Members <i>Presentation, Lab VIII</i> <i>Group Observation papers due</i>	Trotzer, 12, 16 Yalom, 13
4/25	Communication Activities, Special Issues <i>Reaction paper 2 due</i> <i>Presentation, Final Lab IX</i>	Trotzer 13 Yalom 14
5/2	Crisis Work, Specialized Groups Summarization <i>Presentation</i>	Trotzer 15 Yalom 15
5/9	Special Issues, Discussion of Final Papers <i>Final Research paper due</i>	
5/16	Final Examination Week	

Note: Faculty reserves the right to alter the schedule as necessary, with notification to students.

### **Core Values Commitment**

The College of Education and Human Development is committed to collaboration, ethical leadership, innovation, research-based practice, and social justice. Students are expected to adhere to these principles: <http://cehd.gmu.edu/values/>.

### **GMU Policies and Resources for Students**

#### *Policies*

- Students must adhere to the guidelines of the Mason Honor Code (see <http://oai.gmu.edu/the-mason-honor-code/>).
- Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing (see <http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/policies/responsible-use-of-computing/>).
- Students are responsible for the content of university communications sent to their Mason email account and are required to activate their account and check it regularly. All communication from the university, college, school, and program will be sent to students **solely** through their Mason email account.



- Students with disabilities who seek accommodations in a course must be registered with George Mason University Disability Services. Approved accommodations will begin at the time the written letter from Disability Services is received by the instructor (see <http://ods.gmu.edu/>).
- Students must follow the university policy stating that all sound emitting devices shall be silenced during class unless otherwise authorized by the instructor.

### *Campus Resources*

- Support for submission of assignments to Tk20 should be directed to [tk20help@gmu.edu](mailto:tk20help@gmu.edu) or <https://cehd.gmu.edu/aero/tk20>. Questions or concerns regarding use of Blackboard should be directed to <http://coursessupport.gmu.edu/>.
- The Writing Center provides a variety of resources and services (e.g., tutoring, workshops, writing guides, handbooks) intended to support students as they work to construct and share knowledge through writing (see <http://writingcenter.gmu.edu/>).
- The Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) staff consists of professional counseling and clinical psychologists, social workers, and counselors who offer a wide range of services (e.g., individual and group counseling, workshops and outreach programs) to enhance students' personal experience and academic performance (see <http://caps.gmu.edu/>).
- The Student Support & Advocacy Center staff helps students develop and maintain healthy lifestyles through confidential one-on-one support as well as through interactive programs and resources. Some of the topics they address are healthy relationships, stress management, nutrition, sexual assault, drug and alcohol use, and sexual health (see <http://ssac.gmu.edu/>). Students in need of these services may contact the office by phone at 703-993-3686. Concerned students, faculty and staff may also make a referral to express concern for the safety or well-being of a Mason student or the community by going to <http://ssac.gmu.edu/make-a-referral/>.

**For additional information on the College of Education and Human Development, please visit our website <https://cehd.gmu.edu/>.**

## Assessment Rubric(s)

Weekly On-line Discussions Rubric				
Criteria	Excellent	Good	Average	Poor
Responsiveness to discussion and demonstration of knowledge and understanding gained from each class session and readings	Very clear that the class session, readings and topics were understood and incorporated well into responses	Class session, readings and topics were understood and incorporated into responses	Postings have questionable relationship to session topics and readings	Not evident that session topics and readings were understood and/or not incorporated into the discussion
Adherence to on-line protocols	All on-line protocols followed	1 on-line protocol not adhered to	2-3 on-line protocols not adhered to	4 or more on-line protocols not adhered to

### BLACKBOARD EXPECTATIONS AND ON-LINE PROTOCOL

1. Protocol for posting threads and contributing to an online discussion are as follows:
  - a. **It is expected that every student will make a posting following each class in accordance with the schedule outlined in the assignment section above. The first postings will start directly after the first class.** Two postings are expected each week (see syllabus for the timeframe of postings). Postings that do not meet the timelines and specifications will not be counted for that day.
  - b. Postings should be a minimum of 1 short paragraph and a maximum of 2 short paragraphs.
  - c. Avoid postings that are limited to “I agree” or “great idea”, etc. (These comments will be viewed as non-postings). Support your statements with concepts from research, readings or by sharing related examples or experiences.
  - d. Stay on target with the discussion – don’t go on extreme tangents.
  - e. Build on others’ responses to create threads.
  - f. Bring in related prior knowledge (experiences, prior coursework, research, readings, etc.)
  - g. Use proper etiquette (e.g., APA language style.)
2. Tips for posting to discussion forums:
  - a. How do I post successfully? How do I get my classmates to read my postings?
    - i. Think of assignment in terms of a dialogue and not a writing exercise. You should engage yourself in a discussion about the issues raised in class, textbook and readings and/or other related issues to the course.
    - ii. Before you post – think about the assignment first and take notes before you read other responses.
    - iii. Think of a thesis and how you can support it.
    - iv. Read other postings after you’ve written yours.
    - v. Respond to one that contradicts or supports your own thoughts; one that is lacking evidence or seems to fall short on an aspect important to you.
    - vi. In your response, you can also turn your own thoughts into questions; offer your argument; play the devil’s advocate; ask challenging questions.

- vii. If you are the first to post: post with a careful analysis and strong (bold) argument (thesis) and open-ended questions to invite dialogue.
- viii. It helps readers of your posting if you include a specific quotation from the message to which you're responding.
- ix. Choose your entry title carefully. Make it compelling.

Once you have posted, check back regularly to see if anybody has replied to you and ensure to get the dialogue going.

Evaluation criteria for facilitating an on-line class discussion:

- a. The discussants will demonstrate an ability to engage the audience in a discussion that is relevant to the topics of the class sessions and related concepts. This can be done in a variety of ways including but not limited to:
    - x. Posing engaging questions
    - xi. Eliciting responses
    - xii. Engaging the learners in an activity or task
  - b. The discussants will demonstrate the ability to effectively organize the discussion. This includes:
    - i. Keeping the discussion focused on the topic
    - ii. Providing structure (beginning arguments, closing arguments, wrap-up or synthesis)
    - iii. Staying within the timeframe allotted for discussion
    - iv. Using effective media
  - c. The discussants will demonstrate the ability to respond to questions effectively.
- The discussants will demonstrate the ability to relate the concepts discussed in class sessions to personal and professional experience by using examples from every day practices.