



**University of Central Florida  
School of Social Work**

**SOW 6324.0003 - Clinical Practice with Groups**

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Office Hours: Monday, 4-6:30 PM., Tuesday 12:00PM- 1:30PM

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Email: eabel@mail.ucf.edu

Term: Fall 2009

Class Day: Monday

Meeting Time: 6:30-9:20

Class Location: BA 209

Credit Hours: 3

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## **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

Group work theories, interventions and techniques applied to persons with emotional, social and psychological problems.

This course focuses on the theory and practice of community-based social work in groups. Competence in this method of practice is an essential part of the social worker's foundation of professional knowledge, skills and values. Groups are microcosmic reflections of our larger society and offer us opportunities for learning, growth and survival. We are born into a group and live our lives in a variety of groups, within and outside the social work profession. This course is designed to facilitate your ability to critically and effectively apply theory to practice in community based clinical social work with groups.

Current social work practice is influenced by managed care mandates that require rapid assessments; time limited community-based services, clear documentation on service delivery and an emphasis on measuring treatment outcomes.

## **COURSE LEARNING OBJECTIVES**

By the end of the semester, you will be expected to be able to:

1. Articulate community-based clinical practice with groups focusing on the way agency and social policy uniquely influences social work practice with groups.
2. Articulate an understanding of several theoretical models of social work with groups.
3. Analyze common and differentiating characteristics among various types of groups, e.g. those designed for mutual aid, treatment, training and education.
4. Critique and analyze the worker's differential use of group processes throughout the phases of work to termination and evaluation.
5. Describe and analyze the workers differential use of group processes across the phases of the group's development with an awareness of the person-in-environment and strengths perspectives.
6. Apply critical thinking skills in assessing their own group work skills; particularly with regard to the development of resiliency of the group as a whole and of its individual members.
7. Articulate the impact of group structure and diverse membership on group work practice including race, ethnicity, age, gender, social class, sexual orientation.
8. Clearly describe and critique your own growth and development as a group worker and participant in the context of social work groups.
9. Demonstrate competent ability to apply group intervention knowledge and skills in clinical social work with groups. The emphasis will be placed on therapeutic and preventative frameworks of practice

including cognitive-behavioral model, empowerment model, psychodynamic model, task-centered model, and mutual aid model.

10. Apply ethical judgment in addressing dilemmas unique to group work in community-based clinical practice.

## LEARNING METHODS

Course objectives will be achieved through a variety of methods:

1. Lectures & Power Point presentations
2. Class discussions and exercises
3. Role play
4. DVD/Video presentations
5. Student presentations
6. Guest speakers

## REQUIRED TEXTS

1. Northen, H. & Kurland, R. (2001). *Social work with groups* (3rd Ed.). New York: Columbia University Press.
2. Steinberg Steinberg, D. (2007). *The mutual-aid approach to working with groups* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). Binghamton, NY: The Haworth Press.

## RECOMMENDED TEXT

1. Gitterman, A. & Salmon, R. (2009). *Encyclopedia of social work with groups*. New York: Taylor & Francis.

## LIBRARY RESOURCES

**Students will be expected to utilize UCF library resources to search library databases for required readings.** The following web sites which can help students find information, navigate through databases and learn how to use the library:

1. Library Instruction sessions - <http://library.ucf.edu/Reference/Instruction>
2. Library Research Tutorials - <http://library.ucf.edu/Reference/Instruction/LIToursTutorials.asp>
3. Streaming videos - <http://library.ucf.edu/Reference/Videos/Default.asp>
4. Research Guides - <http://library.ucf.edu/Reference/Guides/>
5. Ask a Librarian service - <http://library.ucf.edu/Ask/>
6. Consult with the librarian familiar with Social Work—Mr. Hal Mendolsohn

The UCF Libraries has a full array of paper and electronic resources available for students and their research needs.

In addition to paper copies of books and journals, UCF students have the ability to access a vast selection of journals and books in electronic format while on or off campus. The web address to the library's catalog is <http://library.ucf.edu/>. The Ask A Librarian service provides students the ability to contact a library professional either by phone, on-line chat or email, and ask for assistance on "how to" locate, research, and obtain library materials. The web address for Ask A Librarian is <http://library.ucf.edu/Ask/>. A series of streaming videos, showing students how to search for a book or journal article, has been developed and are available at <http://library.ucf.edu/Reference/Videos/Default.asp>. Research Guides for different majors, that list books, journals, databases, and web sites have been developed and are available in electronic format at <http://library.ucf.edu/Reference/Guides/>. Another service to help students conduct library research is called Research Consultation. After a student has conducted his/her research and is in need of additional information,

s/he can work with a librarian to locate material with the help of his/her expert searching capabilities. To set-up a Research Consultation, students can either come into the library and sign-up at the Reference Desk or call the library Reference Office at 407-823-5880. Finally, students are always encouraged to visit the library and ask a Reference Librarian how best to conduct one's research. If a student has a simple question on how to locate either a book or journal title, the UCF Reference Libraries are happy to provide this type of service too.

## ASSIGNMENTS AND POINTS

**Case analysis:** Students will be given a case illustration of a therapeutic group and will be asked to respond to various areas related to assessment, intervention, and evaluation. The instructor will provide guidelines. **[20 points]**

**Group Presentation:** Topics, reflecting the interests of class members will be selected by the second week of class. Each presentation will cover five areas: 1) a specific clinical problem (i.e. adolescent substance abuse); 2) a discussion of how group interventions address this problem; 3) a description of how at least 2 clinical frameworks (i.e. cognitive, cbt, feminist, solution-focused; psych-educational, etc.) can be used in a group setting to address the identified clinical problem; 4) an identification of evidenced-based outcomes of group practice in this area; and 5) a group role play that illustrates techniques/models discussed in the presentation. The groups will meet in class and outside of class, as needed. Beginning in week nine, each group will give a presentation to the entire class. **Presentations are to be creative and interesting and should include a 10-15 minute group role-play, handouts and bibliography.** **[30 points]** The instructor will model this assignment for the class using domestic violence as an exemplar.

**Group observation (Field-based):** Students will prepare a brief summary about a group meeting that they have attended in their field placement. Presentations are to describe the use of the group and are to include handouts about the group (including meeting times, locations, etc.). **[10 points]**

**Designing Your Own Group:** Students will be required to create and design their own six (6) session group covering the following areas (each with a separate heading): the target population; the structure including an outline; theories and techniques to be used; leadership skills; and a critical incident. In addition you will provide your own theory of group work that discusses elements of group behavior, elements of member behavior and elements of therapist behavior. You must use a minimum of seven (7) references other than the textbooks. The assignment must be in APA format, and typed. The assignment is to be a minimum of 8-10 pages in length (not including title page or reference page). **[40 points]**

## GRADING SCALE

A	95 - 100	B-	80 – 83	D+	67 - 69
A-	90 - 94	C+	77 – 79	D	64 - 66
B+	87 - 89	C	74 – 76	D-	60 - 63
B	84 - 86	C-	70 – 73	F	59 or less

## POLICIES

In addition to the information below, the student should become familiar with School of Work Student Handbook and The Golden Rule Handbook for UCF Students. All policies included in these handbooks apply to this class.

## Modification of Syllabus

This syllabus may be modified at the discretion of the instructor. Changes will be discussed with students in class and/or via email. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that the student's email address is current in

eCommunity.

### **Cell phones, pagers and recorders**

- Students are asked to turn off cell phones and beepers during class sessions.
- Permission to audiotape a class meeting(s) must be obtained from the instructor in advance.
- While the use of laptops is convenient for students to take class notes, it is expected that students WILL NOT engage in other laptop activities during class time that may include: internet activities, reading and responding to email, balancing a checkbook, etc. If this should occur, the instructor reserves the right to request that the student not use a laptop during class.

### **Classroom Decorum**

- Side conversations are discouraged because they distract the class.
- The instructor expects students to respect the culture, values, beliefs and rights of their classmates. During class sessions, alternate points of view are encouraged and should be received by others with respect. Students should feel free to express their opinions and to refer to relevant personal situations without fear of disapproval or disrespect; however, the classroom is not the place where students should indulge in personal venting or support seeking.

### **Attendance and Participation**

Student attendance and participation are integral parts of this course. Students are expected to attend each class, arrive on time, and remain for the duration of the class. Students are also expected to assume responsibility for their own learning and to actively involve themselves in class discussions and exercises. Students must be prepared for class (i.e., complete readings and other assignments *prior* to class). Furthermore, make-up exams will be given **ONLY** in extreme circumstances. These circumstances include exceptional health EMERGENCIES (that require that the student bring in medical documentation), and the make up exam will be an essay exam. Out-of-town vacations, trips, mild colds, and other similar circumstances do not qualify as extreme. Students who have three (3) or more absences may have their final grade lowered by one letter grade.

**Attendance during Finals Week:** It is university policy that all classes **MUST** meet for either a final exam or a class session.

### **Written Assignments**

Effective written communication skills are essential to professional social work practice. Thus, students are expected to present their ideas clearly and properly and to adhere to accepted standards of writing. *Grammar, punctuation, and spelling are to be correct in all written materials submitted and will be considered in grading written assignments.* All written assignments must be typed in a 12-font print, and all margins must be one inch. The cover page of a paper is not considered to be a page of text. Work not conforming to these standards or demonstrating serious deficiencies in common English usage will be returned ungraded. When required, references should be included in the APA documentation style. Students are encouraged to use the University Writing Center (UWC) for assistance in preparing written assignments. The UWC is located in MOD 608 (near the Communications Building). UWC staff may be reached at (407) 823-2197 or <http://www.uwc.ucf.edu/>.

The assignments will emphasize the integration of interviewing, verbal, conceptualization and writing skills in practice. All assignments will be evaluated and graded on the following criteria.

1. Appropriate use of APA writing style.
2. Adequate number of references cited.

3. Organization and clarity of ideas presented.
4. Ability to integrate theory and practice appropriately.
5. Ability to use analytical skills throughout the assignment.
6. Creative ways of responding to the instructions beyond the requirements.

### **Late Assignments**

All assignments must be turned in to the instructor at the beginning of the class period or delivered to the instructor's mailbox *before class starts on the due date*. No assignments will be accepted by fax or email unless the instructor has given explicit prior approval. *Late assignments will lose a full letter grade for each week that they are late unless the student gained prior approval from the instructor*. No assignment will be accepted after the last day of class. It is the student's responsibility to make arrangements with the instructor regarding late assignments.

### **Incomplete Grades**

In exceptional circumstances, an incomplete grade may be given per School and University policies. Individual arrangements must be made with the instructor for the completion of the course requirements, but in no case will the date set extend beyond the end of the following semester. Students who experience chronic medical or personal problems that prevent them from attending class regularly are encouraged to review policies relating to securing a leave of absence from their university studies.

### **Academic Integrity/Plagiarism**

Social workers must demonstrate high standards of integrity. Every student is expected to do his or her own work and all of the work produced will be expected to be completed in its entirety by the student who turns it in. Cheating and plagiarism will not be tolerated. Any acts of plagiarism, *including not acknowledging sources of information appropriately and in accordance with APA guidelines*, may result in a failing grade in the course. School and University policies on academic integrity will be strictly enforced. Students found to have cheated or plagiarized will receive no credit for the exam or assignment, receive a failing grade for the course and may be subject to appropriate referral to the Office of Student Conduct for further action. (See the UCF Golden Rule for further information.). Students who observe others violate this policy are expected to report this to the instructor.

Plagiarism and Cheating of any kind on an examination, quiz, or assignment will result in an "F" for that assignment, the student may also receive an "F" for the entire course and may be subject to appropriate referral to the Office of Student Conduct for further action. (See the UCF Golden Rule for further information.) It is assumed for this course that students will adhere to the academic creed of the University and will maintain the highest standards of academic integrity. In other words, don't cheat by giving answers to others or taking them from anyone else. The instructor also adheres to the highest standards of academic integrity, so please do not ask for your grade to be changed without just cause or to bend or break rules for one person that will not apply to everyone.

### **Turnitin.com**

The instructor reserves the option to use turnitin.com; an online system which can determine if work has been copied from another source. The instructor will provide information on submitting assignments through this system at the beginning of the semester. For a more detailed look at this process, please visit <http://www.turnitin.com>

### **Disability Access Statement**

The University of Central Florida is committed to providing reasonable accommodations for all persons with disabilities. This syllabus is available in alternate formats upon request. Students with disabilities who need accommodations in this course must contact the instructor at the beginning of the semester to discuss needed accommodations. No accommodations will be provided until the student has met with the professor to request

accommodations. Students who need accommodations must be registered with Student Disability Services, Student Resource Center Room 132, phone (407) 823-2371, TTY/TDD only phone (407) 823-2116, before requesting accommodations from the professor.

### **THE UCF CREED**

Integrity, scholarship, community, creativity, and excellence are the core values that guide our conduct, performance, and decisions.

**Integrity:** I will practice and defend academic and personal honesty.

**Scholarship:** I will cherish and honor learning as a fundamental purpose of my membership in the UCF community.

**Community:** I will promote an open and supportive campus environment by respecting the rights and contributions of every individual.

**Creativity:** I will use my talents to enrich the human experience.

**Excellence:** I will strive toward the highest standards of performance in any endeavor I undertake.

### **Course Outline**

**August 24, 2009**

#### **Week 1: Introduction to Social Group Work**

##### **Content:**

1. Orientation to the course
2. History of social work groups
3. Group work and social work practice principles
4. Ethical group practice
5. Ethnic sensitive practice
6. Types of groups
7. Objectives of group work

##### **Readings:**

1. Northen & Kurland: Chapter 1. Groups in Social Work Practice
2. Northen, H. in Garvin, Gutierrez & Galinsky (Eds.): Chapter 5. Ethics and Values in Group Work (optional).
3. Schwartz, William. The Group Work Tradition and Social Work Practice (2005). *Social Work with Groups*, 28(3/4), (optional).

**Group Presentation Assignment:** Select topics and group members (No More than 6 to a Group)

**August 31, 2009**

#### **Week 2: Tools for Assessing Groups**

##### **Content:**

1. Groups as Social Systems
2. Conceptual Framework for Understanding Groups
3. Values and Norms
4. Group Development
5. Group communication
6. Community context

##### **Readings:**

Northen & Kurland:

1. Chapter 2. The Knowledge Base for Practice

2. Chapter 8. The Problem-Solving Process

**Classroom Lab Group:**

3. **Group work vs. casework**
4. **Desirable norms and skills for establishing them**
5. **Sociogram activity**

**September 7, 2009**

**Week 3: Labor Day Holiday – No Class**

**September 14, 2009** **Week 4: Establishing the Group**

**Content:**

1. A Model of Planning
2. Assessment of Need
3. Purpose of Group
4. Size of Group
5. Pre-Group Interviews

**Readings:**

1. Steinberg, Chapter 3. Pregarup planning with mutual aid in mind
2. Steinberg, Chapter 4. Early group goals and norms
3. Northen & Kurland: Chapter 5. Planning
4. Northen & Kurland: Chapter 6. Pre-Group Contact: Selection & Preparation of Members

**Classroom Lab Group: Role-play-The pre-group interview**

**Activity: Developing group purpose**

**September 21, 2009** **Week 5: Practice and Intervention**

**Content:**

1. Relationships in Group Work Practice: Building on the generalist foundation
2. Skill Sets: Structuring
3. Exploration
4. Cultural sensitivity and inclusion
5. Information/ Education
6. Confrontation
7. Feedback
8. Interpretation

**Group Observation Assignment Due**

**Readings:**

1. Northen & Kurland: Chapter 3. Relationships the Heart of Practice
2. Northen & Kurland: Chapter 4. Intervention in Groups

**Classroom Lab Group:**

3. **Role-play: The first meeting**
4. **The second meeting**

**September 28, 2009** **Week 6: Group Work Issues**

**Content:**

1. Conflict and Stages of Group Development
2. Concept of Roles
3. Diversity and discrimination

**Readings:**

1. Steinberg, Chapter 7. Mutual aid and authority
2. Steinberg, Chapter 8. The role of conflict in a mutual aid system
3. Northen & Kurland: Chapter 9. Conflict
4. Northen & Kurland: Chapter 10. Roles of Members

**Classroom Lab Group:**

**Film-“12 Angry Men”**

**October 5, 2009**

**Week 7: Stages of Group Development****Content:**

1. Group Member Orientation
2. Development of Norms
3. Clarifying Expectations
4. Facilitating Group Interaction
5. Role of the worker
6. Group Cohesiveness
7. Intervention in the Beginning and Middle Stages of the Group: Domestic violence as an exemplar

**Readings:**

1. Steinberg, Chapter 4. Early group goals and norms
2. Northen & Kurland: Chapter 12. Stage I: Inclusion-Oriented  
Chapter 13. Stage II: Uncertainty-Exploration  
Chapter 14. Stage III; Mutuality and Goal Achievement  
Chapter 15. Stage IV: Separation-Termination

**Case Assessment Due Week 8**

**October 12, 2009**

**Week 8: Frameworks for Social Work Group Practice: Mutual Aid and Group Work****Content:**

1. The Why of Mutual Aid
2. Challenges to Mutual Aid Practice
3. Identifying Skills

**Readings:**

1. Steinberg: Chapter 1. The mutual-aid approach in social work with groups
2. Steinberg: Chapter 2. The nine dynamics of mutual aid and their implications for practice
3. Steinberg in Gitterman & Salmon (Eds.) Mutual Aid Model pp.50-53

**October 19, 2009**

**Week 9: “Time and Place” and Mutual Aid**

**Content:**

1. Expecting and unfolding relationships
2. Group work versus casework in a group
3. Implications for practice in groups

**Readings:**

1. Steinberg: Chapter 5. Mutual Aid, “Time and Place” and the role of the worker
2. Steinberg: Chapter 6. Individual problem-solving from a mutual aid viewpoint

**Group Presentations**

**October 26, 2009**

**Week 11: Mutual Aid in Short-Term Groups, open-ended groups and very large groups**

**Content:**

1. Mutual Aid in single-session groups
2. Mutual Aid in short-term practice
3. The relationship between purpose and mutual aid in open-ended groups
4. Authority, mutual aid, and open-ended mutual-aid practice
5. Setting the stage for mutual aid in very large groups
6. Catalyzing mutual aid in very large groups

**Readings:**

- Steinberg: Chapter 9. Mutual Aid practice with single session groups  
Chapter 10. Mutual Aid with short-term groups  
Chapter 11. Mutual aid practice with open-ended groups  
Chapter 11. Mutual aid practice with open-ended groups

**Classroom Lab Group 10**

**Group Presentations**

**November 2 & 9, 2009**

**Weeks 12 & 13: Cognitive-Behavioral Model/Psycho-educational Groups**

**Content:**

1. Key concepts
2. Implications for practice with groups
3. Evidenced-based practice

**Readings:**

Magen in Gitterman & Salmon (Eds): Cognitive Behavioral Model pp. 45-47

**Group Presentations**

**November 16 & 23, 2009**

**Weeks 13 & 14 Empowerment Models (Feminist, Solution-focussed)**

**Content:**

1. Key concepts
2. Implications for practice with groups

3. Evidenced-based practice

**Readings:**

Hudson in Gitterman & Salmon (Eds): Empowerment Model pp. 47-50

**Group Presentations**

**November 30, 2009 Week 14: Psychodynamic Model and Task-Centered Model**

**Content:**

1. Key concepts
2. Implications for practice with groups
3. Evidenced-based practice

**Readings:**

1. Tosone in Gitterman & Salmon (Eds.) Psychodynamic Model pp. 53-55
2. Garvin in Gitterman & Salmon (Eds.) Task-Centered Model pp. 55-58

**Group Presentations**

**December 7, 2009**

**Week 15: Evaluating Group Work Practice**

**Content:**

3. Evaluating group work practice
4. Follow-up
5. Review of semester

**Group Presentations**

**Designing Your Own Group FINAL PAPERS DUE**

**Bibliography**

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- Berman-Rossi, T. (1993). The tasks and skills of the social worker across stages of group development. *Social Work with Groups*, 16, 69-81.
- Corey, G. (1995) *Theory and practice of group counseling* (4th ed.). Pacific Grove, Ca: Brooks/Cole.

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- Lee, J. A. B. (2001). *The empowerment approach to practice* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). New York: Columbia University Press.
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- Steinberg Steinberg, D. (2004) *The Mutual-Aid approach to working with groups: Helping people help one another* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.), New York, NY: Columbia University Press.
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- Salmon, R., & Graziano, R. (Eds). (2004). *Group work and aging: Issues in practice, research, and education*. Binghamton, NY: Haworth Press.
- Schiller, L. Y. (1995) Stages of development in women's groups: A relational model. In R. Kurland & R. Salmon, (Eds.), *Group work practice in a troubles society: problems and opportunities* (pp. 117-138). New York: Haworth Press.
- Schopler, J.H. & Galinsky, M.J. (1995). Group practice overview. In R.L. Edwards (Ed.), *Encyclopedia of social work* (19<sup>th</sup> ed., pp. 1129-1142). Washington, D.C.: National Association of Social Workers.
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