



**Mississippi
College**

TECHNIQUES OF GROUP COUNSELING

SYLLABUS

COU 6662 Y

3 CREDIT HOURS

MISSISSIPPI COLLEGE
SCHOOL OF EDUCATION
DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY/COUNSELING

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I. COURSE TITLE:

COU 6662 – Techniques of Group Counseling.

II. PREREQUISITES:

Completion of Qualifying Courses (18 semester hours) or instructor's consent.

III. COURSE DESCRIPTION:

COU 6662 – This course will provide the student with a foundational understanding of the knowledge and skills required to facilitate group therapy utilizing various theoretical orientations, techniques, and strategies. The course utilizes a combination of lecture and student participation and leadership in an experiential group process.

IV. RATIONALE:

This course is designed to assist the student to gain a better background and understanding regarding the objectives, procedures, & experimental climate of group counseling.

V. LEARNING OBJECTIVES

On completion of this course, students will be able to:

- a. identify theoretical approaches as they relate to group leadership, group processes, and group counseling;
- b. be able to demonstrate effective leadership skills and intervention strategies in simulated and actual group settings;
- c. understand ethical and professional issues encountered by group leaders;
- d. develop increased objectivity in the analysis of individual and group behavior;
- e. be able to demonstrate group facilitation skills with group members to increase participation and to deal with therapeutic forces within a group;
- f. identify group stages, appraisal strategies, and process issues and apply knowledge to foster group development;
- g. describe goals of group counseling and the implication of theory and research on group dynamics;

- h. identify skills necessary to work effectively with clients from diverse backgrounds.

VI. **ACADEMIC STANDARDS**

CACREP STANDARDS

CACREP Standard II. E. Over the course of one academic term, students meet for a minimum of 10 clock hours in a small-group activity approved by the program. This planned group requirement is intended to provide direct experiences as a participant in a small group.

CACREP Standard II.K.2.c. Individual, couple, family, group, and community strategies for working with diverse populations and ethnic groups.

CACREP Standard II.K.6.a. Principles of group dynamics, including group process components, developmental stage theories, group members' roles and behaviors, and therapeutic factors of group work.

CACREP Standard II.K.6.b. Group leadership styles and approaches, including characteristics of various types of group leaders and leadership styles.

CACREP Standard II.K.6.c. Theories of group counseling, including commonalities, distinguishing characteristics, and pertinent research and literature.

CACREP Standard II.K.6.d. Group counseling methods, including group counselor orientations and behaviors, appropriate selection criteria and methods, and methods of evaluation of effectiveness.

CACREP Standard II.K.6.e. Approaches used for other types of group work, including task groups, psychoeducational groups, and therapy groups.

CACREP Standard II.K.6.f. Professional preparation standards for group leaders.

CACREP Standard II.K.6.g. Ethical and legal considerations in group counseling

STANDARDS OF ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Mississippi College students are expected to be scrupulously honest. Dishonesty, such as cheating or plagiarism, will be regarded as a serious offense subject to severe penalty, including, but not limited to, loss of credit and possible dismissal. University Policy 2.19, the most recent copy of the graduate catalog, and the current student handbook provide specific information regarding penalties associated with dishonest behavior at Mississippi College.

PLAGIARISM

No student shall submit as his or her own work any term paper, research paper, thesis or other academic assignment of original work in that in any part is not in fact his/her own work. Knowingly using the ideas of another person and offering them as one's own original ideas is prohibited by this policy to the same extent as knowingly using the words of another writer and offering them as one's own original writing (University Policy 2.19, Mississippi College: Policies and Procedures).

ETHICAL STANDARDS

All of the graduate courses offered by the Department of Psychology and Counseling at Mississippi College adhere to the current standards of the American Counseling Association (ACA). The 2005 ACA Code of Ethics is available for downloading at

<http://www.counseling.org/Resources/CodeOfEthics/TP/Home/CT2.aspx>

Papers and presentations in the course will be guided by the current edition of the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association. At this time, the fifth edition of the manual is available.

American Psychological Association. (2001). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (5th ed.). Washington, DC: Author.

The ethics of scientific publication are presented in the manual (American Psychological Association, 2001, pp. 348-355). Additional information on professional writing may be obtained from <http://apastyle.apa.org/>

While the fifth edition of the APA Publication Manual was based on the 1992 APA Code of Ethics, the 2002 Code of Ethics is the most current version. Both codes, as well as updates and other resources, are available for review or downloading at

<http://www.apa.org/ethics/code.html#Teaching>

VII. CLASS FORMAT

Group work is an interesting, challenging, dynamic, and rewarding part of the counseling and psychology fields. This class will use an interactive approach to learning and will include lecture and discussion, role playing, and group practice exercises. There will be regular assignments with specific due dates. 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. *They are also expected to complete all reading assignments prior to the class date for which they are assigned.*

In the first half of the semester we will discuss the components of creating and conducting a therapeutic group. As we get to the middle of the semester, we will begin a six-week group of our own. Each week we will spend the first 60 to 75 minutes of class in lecture/group discussion format. In this setting we will continue our discussion of the theories and concepts associated with group process. Then we will spend the remaining 75 to 90 minutes participating in our own group process. Toward the end of the semester, we will begin working on developing our own proposals for a group both in and outside the class. The semester will end with class members presenting their proposals to the rest of the class

VIII. **INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS:**

Discussions, brief lectures, demonstrations, video tapes, role plays, cooperative learning.

IX. **REQUIRED PRACTICES**

Required practices in this course include reading, researching, writing, in-class and out-of-class assignments, oral presentations, and role-plays. The student will use the computer to address learning objectives, complete assignments, and demonstrate competency or mastery.

X. **INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS**

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

XI. **EVALUATION PROCEDURES**

1. **Attendance, Class Participation, and Group Membership:** There can be no substitute for attendance in this class. Much of your learning will take place as a result of your membership and participation in the group. Before beginning this class, you should make a commitment to be present and actively involved at each session. (You owe an explanation to the group members for any absence—not just the instructor.) Part of your grade will be class attendance. You will also be graded on your participation in the lecture discussions, therefore you should come having prepared by completing the assigned reading and projects. For the group process segment of the class, come prepared to self-disclose as much as you can, and offer feedback to others in your group. Neither your behavior nor the content of your disclosure in the group will be evaluated, but the level of your participation in the group process will directly impact the other participants in the group. See “Desired Behaviors” below for an explanation.

2. **Personal Journal:** You will be asked to submit by email to the instructor a journal entry by Tuesday, 5:00 p.m., each week. In this journal entry, you will identify one issue in the text or journal article that you would like to have discussed further in class. Please elaborate your level of understanding and any context relating to you. Additionally, you will write your personal reflections on your experience. Use these three questions to frame this part of the journal entry, "What I am learning about myself?" "What I am learning about others?" and "What I am learning about groups?" Failure to submit these journal entries as described above and on time will result in deductions in the weekly Journal grade.
3. **Here-&-Now Practice:** Respond to several scripted situations in a hypothetical group therapy session by providing possible responses that move the focus of the group into the here-and-now.
4. **Leading In-Class Process Group Session:** Students will lead at least one in-class small group during the semester. Student-leader selected topics will be discussed (processed as a group) as well as personally examined in light of a specific group counseling theory that will be identified by the student-leader prior to preparing for the group. Students may also be asked to participate in some experiential group exercises and role plays throughout the duration of the course. 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. Students will be evaluated on the basis of their leading/facilitating a group in class; however, their involvement as a group participant will not be evaluated.
5. **Development Paper:** Write a 5-page paper addressing how each stage of group development is illustrated in a movie. A list of appropriate movies will be provided in class. Specifications and a grading rubric for the paper will be provided.
6. **Proposal for a Small Group:** Students will develop a proposal for a small group. In this proposal, the student will describe the type of small group, the format of the group, the population for the group, and the method of marketing the group. This paper will include information that explains and/or justifies these features based upon the literature and the particular theoretical theory or theories that will be used for this group. The student will present this proposal to the class near the end of the semester.
7. **Final Exam** – A final exam will be given toward the end of the semester covering material discussed in class.

*Attendance/Lecture Participation	50
Personal Journal	50
Stages of Development Paper	200
Here and Now Practice	100
Group Leadership	200
Proposal Paper	200
Final Exam	200
 Total Points	 1000 points

Your percentage is equal to your total points divided by 10.

100-94%	=	A
93-87%	=	B+
86-80%	=	B
79-73%	=	C+
72-66%	=	C
65-59%	=	D
58% and below	=	F

*** Missing more than 3 classes throughout the semester will result in failure in the course. This is Mississippi College Policy, and attendance is profoundly important for learning the concepts and nature of group process.**

DESIRED BEHAVIORS:

The expectation for your class participation will be that you are fully involved and contributing to the group process during the time that your body is present. Some hints as to how this can be done will follow:

1. At the start of the group session, take three deep breaths and focus on being in the room. This means that you should try to either leave your preoccupations at the door, or talk about them in the group if they continue to distract your focus during the group session.
2. Self-disclose as much as you can. This does not mean that you are expected to bring all your concerns to the group. It does mean, however, that you should attempt to say what's on your mind during the group.
3. Give useful feedback to other group members and invite feedback for yourself. It is rare that you have the opportunity to have relationships with others that are not masked by a superficial social ritual and decorum. Giving and receiving honest feedback can be a very liberating experience, so long as it is done with the intent to be helpful.
4. "Metatalk" the group process. Say what you think may be going on when the dynamics of the group become stagnant or confusing. Recap the interactions

- you have witnessed and ask for explanations from the group members. This is most effective when it is immediate.
5. Behaviors to be avoided include: Bombarding others with questions, Gossiping, Storytelling, Invasion of Privacy, Monopolizing, Diagnosing, Refraining from Contributing, and any other behaviors that demean group members or thwart the process of the group.

ETHICS AND CONFIDENTIALITY:

In this course you are entering an experience that involves a fair amount of role-playing and practice interviewing. 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 whom you may have interviewed or counseled. In sum, you are expected to abide by the American Psychological Association Code of Ethics (available on APA website).

XII. OTHER COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Mississippi College and the School of Education have policies that apply to the conduct of all courses.

LATE PAPERS

Assigned papers will be due at the beginning of class. LATE WORK will not be accepted in this class.

TALKING IN CLASS

Excessive talking in class will result in a lowered daily grade average or loss of attendance/participation points for the student.

CELL PHONES

Cell phones should be turned off during class. Disregard for this request may affect your grade.

EATING IN CLASS

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION POLICY: No food or drink is allowed in the classroom.

FLEXIBILITY CLAUSE

The aforementioned requirements, assignments, policies, evaluation procedures, etc. are subject to change. Student and instructor experiences and needs, as well as emerging knowledge, will be considered in modifying this course syllabus

POLICIES RELATED TO STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

In order for a student to receive disability accommodations under Section 504 of the Americans with Disabilities Act, he or she must schedule an individual meeting with the Director of Student Counseling Services **immediately upon recognition of their disability**(if their disability is known they must come in before the semester begins or make an appointment **immediately** upon receipt of their syllabi for the new semester). The student must bring with them written documentation from a medical physician and/or licensed clinician that verifies their disability. If the student has received prior accommodations, they must bring written documentation of those accommodations (example Individualized Education Plan from the school system). Documentation must be current (**within 3 years**).The student must meet with SCS **face-to face** and also attend two (2) additional follow up meetings (one mid semester before or after midterm examinations and the last one at the end of the semester). Please note that the student may also schedule additional meetings as needed for support through SCS as they work with their professor throughout the semester.

Note: Students must come in **each semester** to complete their Individualized Accommodation Plan (example: MC student completes fall semester IAP plan and even if student is a continuing student for the spring semester they must come in again to complete their spring semester IAP plan).

The Director of the Student Counseling Services is Dr. Morgan Bryant. She is located in Alumni Hall Room #4, and she may be contacted via email at bryant@mc.edu. You may also reach her by phone at **601-925-7790**.

XIII. ORIENTATION INFORMATION FOR GRADUATE STUDENTS

Graduate students should read the Graduate Orientation Manual in its entirety. This is an important part of the orientation for graduate students. Please get your hard copy from your department or from the Graduate Office in Nelson 202. You may also view the manual on the web at this address:
<http://www/mc.edu/publications/graduate/orientation.html>

XIV. BIBLIOGRAPHY

References and sources are cited in the textbook. Journal articles may be provided for review. A bibliography is available upon request.