

Houston Graduate School of Theology
 COU674 Group Counseling and Psychotherapy
 Spring 2014 – Wednesdays 9:00 – 11:30 am
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The mission of Houston Graduate School of Theology is empowering spiritual leadership through the intellectual, spiritual, and vocational development of men and women in order to advance the gospel of Jesus Christ throughout the world

I. Course Description: This course examines the theoretical components and developmental aspects of group counseling. Topics include types of groups, group dynamics and processes, group leadership and membership roles, ethical awareness in relation to groups, and crisis management within groups. COU 530 and COU 611 are recommended courses to be taken prior to COU 674.

II. Student Learning Outcomes:

Upon completion of this course, the student will be able to:

1. Identify the major characteristics of each of the stages of group;
2. Develop understanding of group process, group dynamics, and group member roles including outcome issues that inform group experience;
3. Describe major group counseling theories and their implications for the design and conduct of counseling groups;
4. Identify ethical and legal issues of particular relevance for group counseling;
5. Identify approaches and professional preparation standards for different types of group work;
6. Describe issues related to setting up a group such as appropriate selection criteria and evaluation methods;
7. Experience group process personally and identify one's personal style, strengths, and theoretical preferences both as a group facilitator and group member.

III. Text: Corey, M. S., Corey, G., & Corey, C. (2010). *Groups: Process and practice* (9th ed.) Belmont, CA: Brooks/Cole. ISBN: 978-1-133-94546-8

IV. Course requirements

1. **Final Exam:** This will be a comprehensive exam, based on the materials discussed in the course and the CPCE study guide.
2. **Midterm Exam:** This exam will cover the first nine chapters of the textbook.
3. **Personal Reflection Paper:** This assignment is an opportunity to reflect upon your own group experience. Write a 2- page paper about what you learned about yourself through participating in the groups as a member and as a facilitator. Be sure to write in specific and concrete terms (substantiate your points with concrete examples). This is a personal reflection so writing in first person is appropriate. Names of other group members or identifying information should be avoided. Address not only what you learned, but how you learned it, and how the insight you gained about yourself will impact your life personally and professionally.

4. **Group Observation Report:** Students are encouraged to find a local counseling/therapy group and attend one meeting (at least one hour long). Students will turn in a two-page report about the experience and will have the group facilitator verify student's attendance by signing student's attendance log. Students are encouraged to attend open groups (groups that allow for an attendee to join after it has already been in progress), such as Alcoholics Anonymous groups (AA), Narcotics Anonymous groups (NA), Substance Abuse groups, Grief groups, Anger Management groups, and the like. Discuss your choice of group with the instructor before attendance.
5. **Group Presentations:** As a group (2 - 3 students) you will develop an outline for a proposal for an alternative group (review chapters 10 and 11 for suggestions). The outline (submitted to instructor for approval before presentation) will become the preparation for a group presentation utilizing handouts and power point slides. In your outline and presentation you should include: rationale for the group, nature of the group, objectives practical considerations, procedures, evaluation, and references.
6. **In-class participation:** Students will participate in an in-class group activity that will be used to apply knowledge gained from the lectures and readings. Students must be present to participate and to receive credit for their participation.

Evaluation: Students will be evaluated on class attendance, class participation in discussions and presentations, and performance on examinations, and assignments. All evaluative assignments must be submitted for a passing grade.

V. Grading Scale

1. Final Exam	35 points	April 30
2. Midterm Exam	25 points	March 19
3. Personal Reflection Paper	10 points	Feb. 26
4. Group Observation Report	10 points	April 23
5. Group presentation	20 points	see class schedule

Grading scale:

A	96-100	C+	84-85
A-	94-95	C	80-83
B+	92-93	C-	78-79
B	88-91	D	70-77
B-	86-87	F	69 or below

Course Reading and Assignments Schedule:

Students must read assigned chapters and/or articles before attending class.

Jan. 22: Introductions and review of syllabus.

Read Chapter 1 – Introduction to Group Work.

Jan. 29: **Read Chapter 1 and 2** – Group Work and the Group Counselor

Feb. 5: **Read Chapter 3** – Ethical and legal issues in group counseling. **Chapter 5** – Forming a

Group.

Feb. 12: **Chapter 4** – Theories and Techniques of Group Counseling.

Feb. 19: **Chapter 6** – Initial Stages of a Group.

Feb. 26: **Chapter 7** – Transition Stage of a Group. **Chapter 8** – Working Stage of a Group.

March 5: **Chapter 9**- Final Stage of a Group.

March 12 – Spring Break – No Class

March 19: **Midterm Exam**

March 26: **Chapter 10** – Groups in School Settings. **Group presentations**

April 2: **Chapter 11** – Groups in Community Settings. **Group presentations**

April 9: **Read** Crisis Intervention Stress Debriefing article. **Group presentations**

April 16: Review CPCE Study Guide - Group Section. **Personal Reflection Paper due.**

April 23: **Group Observation Report due.**

April 30: Final Exam Review

May 7: **Final Exam**

Disclaimer: The course content is dependent on individual and collective student needs and variability. This syllabus should be considered amendable. Changes in content or due dates will be discussed in class in advance.

Instructions for group observation paper:

The purpose of viewing videos is to give you an opportunity to observe group processes other than your own. There are certain questions that I want you to address in the observation report. Reflect on the group, then organize and share your thoughts. You are welcome to add more commentary than what is required. Your reflections should include but are not limited to:

- Briefly summarize the content of the group meeting (what was discussed).
- Give your opinion of the group process (what stage of development is the group in and why do you think it is in this stage).
- Your personal feelings or reaction to the group leader. Imagine yourself as a group member and describe how you might have reacted to the group leader.
- Are there strong reactions to particular members of the group and why?
- What is the group leader's theoretical orientation and why do you think that?
- How would you have led the group differently, if you were the group leader?
- How would your personality and theoretical orientation have affected this group session, if you had led it?

VI. Policies

A. **Regular attendance and submission of assignments on due dates** in syllabus is expected. Each student must talk to the instructor about circumstances affecting his or her ability to attend class and complete assignments. Attendance is required at scheduled classes and at the scheduled start time. The student could lose as much as a letter grade for excessive tardiness. **Class attendance is required. A large part of the course is experiential and therefore cannot be made up.** *You are allowed to have three absences without any type of penalty. However, if you are absent more than three times this semester, the highest grade you can get in this class is a "B" (85%); Four times is a C (75%). More than 5 classes will result in a mark of "F." If you are more than 20 minutes late or you are habitually late (even if it less than 20 minutes), it will count as an absence. Please take this attendance policy into account if you have upcoming events such as weddings and so on. Formal attendance will be monitored beginning the second class meeting. Numerous absences will have a negative impact on your participation grade.*

B. Work is expected on the due date. Students should expect a grade reduction of up to one letter grade on late papers. Five points will be deducted off of late work.

C. Turnitin.com

1. All written assignments are subject to required submission to www.turnitin.com to check for originality and style. The assignments that are required for submission will be described in the syllabus.

2. Students will create an account at www.turnitin.com. After doing so, the student will join the course page with the code and password supplied by the instructor. A list of assignments and due dates will be available on the course page.

3. Students will submit assignments by the due date and time, but they will still submit the assignments in a hard copy format.

D. *Electronic Equipment Usage in Classrooms*

It is expected that students will use technology (cell phones, laptop computers, iPads, etc.) during classes only for the purposes of class work. Therefore, students should turn off cell phones and refrain from texting and using laptop computers during classes except for the purposes of taking notes or doing research specifically authorized by the course instructor. Students who have emergency needs not covered by this policy must ask for an exception from the course instructor.

E. *Incompletes*

In cases of extenuating circumstances, and at the discretion of the instructor, a student may request and apply for an extension on all required assignments, which are not completed by the end of the semester or term, subject to a 5-point grade reduction on the final grade of each assignment. If an extension is granted, the instructor will record a grade of "I" (Incomplete) and set an extension of time, not to exceed thirty calendar days from the end of the class, within which to complete the work. Additional extensions may be granted only by the Academic Dean or Associate Dean and only after a student has petitioned the Dean in writing. If the course work is not completed within the extended time allotment, the grade of "I" will be converted to the grade earned by the student up to

that point. The student is responsible to ensure that all necessary paperwork is submitted to the registrar's office by the deadline published in the school calendar.

F. *Plagiarism*

Plagiarism is presenting the work of another person as one's own without giving proper credit for the use of the information. Students must not quote books, articles, essays, or Internet sites without giving proper credit to the author(s). Students should guard against plagiarism by crediting the original author through use of proper citations. Internet plagiarism is a particularly easy and tempting form of intellectual theft. Cutting and pasting sentences and paragraphs from the Internet without citations is plagiarism. Failure to cite Internet sources is plagiarism. Any student who is found guilty of plagiarism is subject to a range of consequences as outlined below.

1. If a faculty member suspects plagiarism, the instructor will investigate. If suspicions are confirmed, the faculty member will present the evidence to the appropriate Associate Dean as a record of the offense. If the Associate Dean concurs with the allegations, the following procedures should be implemented as applicable:
 - The faculty member may discuss the offense with the student following consultation with the Associate Dean, but the student will meet with the Associate Dean.
 - For a first offense, the faculty member, in consultation with the Associate Dean, may give opportunity for a rewrite of the assignment or may assign a grade of zero for the plagiarized assignment.
 - For a particularly egregious case of plagiarism on a major assignment, the consequences could result in automatic failure of the course.
2. The student may appeal the above-mentioned decisions of the faculty member in writing to the Academic Dean.
3. The second confirmed offense will result in expulsion from school. The student will be notified by a letter from the Academic Dean. His or her only opportunity for appeal will be to the President in writing. The President's decision will be final.

G. *Library Usage*

A student's ability to get the most out of library resources will enhance the possibility of earning a high grade in this class. Therefore, students should consider using, in addition to the HGST library, one or more of the following libraries.

1. *Houston Public Library*— Any resident of Texas can obtain a free Houston Public Library card. Library cardholders have access to all of the books in the library system as well as the use of free interlibrary loans, meaning that HPL cardholders can borrow almost any book available. Cardholders can use the library's website, www.houstonlibrary.org, to search the catalog and manage interlibrary loans. The website also contains links to WorldCat and other online databases that will enhance your research. The HPL location that is closest to HGST, the Collier Regional Branch (832-393-1740), is located at 6200 Pinemont, which is less than three miles from campus. A better option would be the newly expanded and renovated Central Library (832-393-1313), which is located downtown at 500 McKinney. In addition, HPL has many other locations. The HGST library can give you an application for an HPL library card, or you can print the application form from their website.

2. *Fondren Library at Rice University*— The Fondren Library (713-348-5113) is located at 6100 Main. Please visit www.rice.edu/fondren for more information. The procedure for borrowing books at the Fondren Library is, first, go to the online catalog [www.rice.edu/fondren] to search for available books; second, go to the HGST library and fill out a form, signed by HGST library personnel, to take with you to the Fondren Library for each book; third, retrieve the book(s) yourself; fourth, take the book(s) and the signed form to the circulation desk to complete checkout (return the yellow copy to the HGST library; when the book(s) are returned to the Fondren Library, they will indicate so on the pink and gold copies; return the pink copy to the HGST Library and keep the gold copy for your records).
3. Lanier Theological Library is a new resource for scholarly theological research in the Houston area. The library is open to the public, Monday, Wednesday-Friday, 9:00 AM - 5:00 PM, and Tuesday, 9:00 AM - 9:00 PM. The library is a research library with no circulation privileges. Nonetheless, students should consider Lanier Library to be a valuable research option. The catalog of Lanier Library is available online: <http://alexandria.lanierlibrary.net/#>.
4. *Cardinal Beran Library at St Mary's Seminary*—the home of an extensive theological library, St Mary's Seminary (713-686-4345) is located at 9845 Memorial Drive, only 4.6 miles from HGST. For more information, please visit <http://beran.stthom.edu>. The Doherty Library on the main campus of University of St Thomas is also an option.
5. *Library of the Presbytery of the New Covenant* – as an HGST student you have borrowing privileges at this library located at 1110 Lovett Blvd, Houston. To search their online catalog, go to <http://www.pbyofnewcovenant.org/cgi-bin/rqm/rqm.cgi>.
6. Other options include Harris County Public Library (www.hcpl.net) and the libraries at the University of Houston and Houston Baptist University.

VII. Notes for Writing Assignments

- A. Writing assignments should conform to Kate Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*, 7th Edition. This includes matters of style and format. Counseling students should pay particular attention to the *APA Manual* guidelines on submission of academic papers.
- B. The instructor requires the use of footnotes for documentation. The student should number pages. According to Turabian, page numbers should be in the upper right hand corner, except for the first page of the paper (not counting the title page). Margins should be one inch on all four sides, except where major headings require a two-inch top margin.
- C. The student should utilize 12-point Times New Roman font throughout. The instructor prefers that the student **not** use presentation or report binders or folders. She prefers submission of papers with staples or binder clips.
- D. Critical or formal writing differs from colloquial writing or spoken English at several points. The student should note the following guidelines for critical writing. The instructor expects students to follow these guidelines strictly. Failure to do so will be penalized.

1. Avoid 1st or 2nd person references (“I,” “we,” or “you”). Keep the written projects objective and professional. The student must remember that imperative forms are second person.
2. Never use contractions.
3. Avoid passive voice construction (i.e. The student should write “God chose Joshua” rather than “Joshua was chosen by God.”). Some exceptions are necessary, but limiting the use of passive voice is a good policy.
4. Be sure that number and tense always agree (i.e., Do not write in one place that “Brueggemann argues . . .” and at another place “Brueggemann argued . . .”). Subject-verb agreement is imperative.
5. Spellcheck! Spellcheck! Spellcheck! Dr. Baker does not tolerate misspelled words. Failure to spellcheck will result in a substantive reduction on the grade for written assignments.
6. Grammar check works as well!
7. All pronouns should have clear antecedents. Avoiding “it is” and “there is” in the paper removes much of the ambiguity of pronoun usage.
8. Sentence fragments are unacceptable. Every sentence must have a subject and a predicate.