

UNIVERSITY of 
West Georgia
Department of Psychology
Groups and Group Process
Course Syllabus

Course Number: PSYC 5090
Semester: Spring 2020
Mondays and Wednesdays, 11:00-12:15
Melson Hall, Rm. 104
Instructor: Larry Schor Ph.D.
Office Hours: Monday and Wednesday 8:00-11:00, Tuesday and Thursday 1:00-3:00, and by appointment.
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Course Description: The purpose of this course is to provide a general introduction to group process, dynamics, strategies, and methods. Through lecture, group discussion and exercises, research activities, and journaling, we will explore the vicissitudes of group encounters across a variety of settings. There will be a focus on humanistic, existential, and experiential approaches to group work. Practical considerations such as professional orientation, licensure and credentialing, and myriad other ways to apply course concepts to your personal and professional lives.

Recognizing that each student has unique educational goals and experiential needs, specific approaches to required assignments will be determined both collaboratively and individually. That is, some decisions will be made by the class through group process, while others will be negotiated individually with the instructor.

Course Content: The lecture, discussion, assigned readings, and other requirements are aimed at increasing student understanding of the following major content areas:

1. *Theoretical foundations of groups and group work including;*
 - a. underlying assumptions
 - b. commonalities and differences between various approaches
 - c. relevant research and literature
2. *Principles of group process and dynamics such as;*
 - a. developmental stage theories
 - b. group roles and common behaviors
 - c. critical incidents in group dynamics
3. *Group leadership styles, approaches, and characteristics*
4. *Ethical methods of practice including;*
 - a. ethical standards and decision making
 - b. group formation and member selection
 - c. evaluation and research
5. *Divergent types of groups and implications for practice*
 - a. How groups facilitate personal growth
 - b. How groups can be a microcosm for social justice
 - c. Ways in which groupwork inevitably reveal both who and how we are in the world.

Texts: Yalom, I. D. (2005). Theory and practice of group psychotherapy (5th ed.). Basic Books.
Yalom, I. D. (2005). The Schopenhauer cure. Harper Collins.
Corey, G. (2012). Theory & practice of group counseling (8th ed.). Brooks Cole.

Course Requirements:

1. Portfolio: The portfolio is intended to reflect students' ability to develop, conduct, and evaluate a counseling or psychotherapy group. Students are expected to adopt a "soup to nuts" (proposal thru follow up) approach. Students should imagine the type of group they would like to facilitate or be a participant. Based on the type of group and the student's developing theoretical orientation, written statements will include such topics as; purpose of the group, composition, screening process, approach and role of leader, potential ethical problems, resources and relevant literature, and methods of evaluation. The portfolio will also contain examples of such documentation as outline of group, consent forms, case notes, etc.

2. Journal: The purpose of the journal is to provide students with a forum for creative and spontaneous exploration of course topics. Journal entries may include reflection on reading assignments, class discussions, group experiences, or any other ideas, insights, or questions that emerge. Students are expected to write journal entries approximately four times per week. Journals will be treated with utmost confidentiality. Students will not be graded on the "right-ness" or "wrong-ness" of their entries, but rather application of ideas, hunches, and experience as they relate to group practice.

3. Attendance and Participation: *Spirited* participation and attendance are essential for this course. Students are expected to attend all scheduled class meetings. In the event of absence contact a peer to learn what was missed. Physician notes or other excuses are not necessary.

4. Out of class group experience: Depending on previous course work, experience, and interests, students will choose to either conduct, participate in, or observe at least six sessions of some type of group. Students who lead a group may receive supervision. This will be discussed further in class and individually as necessary.

In-class group participation: A substantial portion of our meeting time will be devoted to an experiential process group. The potential benefits and risks will be discussed during the first class session. There is no requirement or expectation for students to disclose any content of a personal nature. We will, however, explore ways in which our experience together may provide opportunities for experiential learning about ourselves and others.

Grading Policy:

- A** Consistently excellent effort in *all* aspects of the course.
- B** Good or very good effort in all aspects, perhaps excellent in one area, or fair in another.
- C** Satisfactory completion of all requirements, minimal effort in one area.

ACADEMIC SUPPORT

Accessibility Services: Students with a documented disability may work with UWG Accessibility Services to receive essential services specific to their disability. All entitlements to accommodations are based on documentation and USG Board of Regents standards. If a student needs course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability or chronic illness, or if he/she needs to make special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, the student should notify his/her instructor in writing and provide a copy of his/her Student Accommodations Report (SAR), which is available only from Accessibility Services. Faculty cannot offer accommodations without timely receipt of the SAR; further, no retroactive accommodations will be given. For more information, please contact [Accessibility Services](#).

Center for Academic Success: The [Center for Academic Success](#) provides services, programs, and opportunities to help all undergraduate students succeed academically. For more information, contact them: 678-839-6280 or cas@westga.edu

University Writing Center: The [University Writing Center](#) assists students with all areas of the writing process. For more information, contact them: 678-839-6513 or writing@westga.edu

HONOR CODE

At the University of West Georgia, we believe that academic and personal integrity are based upon honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility. Students at West Georgia assume responsibility for upholding the honor code. West Georgia students pledge to refrain from engaging in acts that do not maintain academic and personal integrity. These include, but are not limited to, plagiarism, cheating, fabrication, aid of academic dishonesty, lying, bribery or threats, and stealing.

The University of West Georgia maintains and monitors a confidential Academic Dishonesty Tracking System. This database collects and reports patterns of repeated student violations across all the Colleges, the Ingram Library, and the School of Nursing. Each incidence of academic dishonesty is subject to review and consideration by the instructor, and is subject to a range of academic penalties including, but not limited to, failing the assignment and/or failing the course. Student conduct sanctions range from verbal warning to suspension or expulsion depending on the magnitude of the offense and/or number of offenses. The incident becomes part of the student's conduct record at UWG.

Additionally, the student is responsible for safeguarding his/her computer account. The student's account and network connection are for his/her individual use. A computer account is to be used only by the person to whom it has been issued. The student is responsible for all actions originating through his/her account or network connection. Students must not impersonate others or misrepresent or conceal their identities in electronic messages and actions. For more information on the University of West Georgia Honor Code, please see the [Student Handbook](#).

UWG EMAIL POLICY

University of West Georgia students are provided a MyUWG e-mail account. The University considers this account to be an official means of communication between the University and the student. The purpose of the official use of the student e-mail account is to provide an effective means of communicating important university related information to UWG students in a timely manner. It is the student's responsibility to check his or her email.

CREDIT HOUR POLICY

The University of West Georgia grants one semester hour of credit for work equivalent to a minimum of one hour (50 minutes) of in-class or other direct faculty instruction AND two hours of student work outside of class per week for approximately fifteen weeks. For each course, the course syllabus will document the amount of in-class (or other direct faculty instruction) and out-of-class work required to earn the credit hour(s) assigned to the course. Out-of-class work will include all forms of credit-bearing activity, including but not limited to assignments, readings, observations, and musical practice. Where available, the university grants academic credit for students who verify via competency-based testing, that they have accomplished the learning outcomes associated with a course that would normally meet the requirements outlined above (e.g. AP credit, CLEP, and departmental exams).

HB 280 (Campus Carry)

UWG follows University System of Georgia (USG) guidance:

http://www.usg.edu/hb280/additional_information

You may also visit our website for help with USG Guidance: <https://www.westga.edu/police/campus-carry.php>

Mental Health Support:

If you or another student find that you are experiencing a mental health issue, free confidential services are available on campus in the [Counseling Center](#). Students who have experienced sexual or domestic violence may receive confidential medical and advocacy services with the Patient Advocates in [Health Services](#). To report a concern anonymously, please go to [UWGcares](#).