ADVANCED GROUP WORK PRACTICE I **FALL 2025**
SWK 6023 **Dr. Jay Sweifach**
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I. COURSE DESCRIPTION

This second-year clinical practice course is designed to prepare students for social work practice with a focus on the social group work method. It builds upon the knowledge and skills acquired in the first-year Generalist Practice and Human Behavior in the Social Environment (HBSE) courses.

The Advanced Practice with Social Work and Groups specialization equips students with the knowledge base to create change through group interventions. Emphasis is placed on using the group work method to enhance individual growth and promote both small-group and community change. A major focus of the sequence is the development of the professional self, ensuring disciplined practice grounded in purpose, knowledge, values, and skills.

Specific clinical practice theories and skills are examined for their applicability to assessment and intervention with diverse clients in multiple practice settings. Students will formulate therapeutic interventions based on assessments that consider multiple factors, including agency context, cultural issues, and evidence-based practice research.

II. SOCIAL WORK COMPETENCIES (click the link for a list of all nine competencies)

The Council of Social Work Education requires all accredited schools of social work to assess nine competencies. No specific competencies are measured in this course, but the course will help students continue to work toward achieving the following competencies:

COMPETENCY 1: Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior
Social workers with groups understand the humanistic value base of practice in the small group and its ethical standards based on democratic processes. These standards include norms about respecting and supporting the rights and differences of members; their freedom of speech; the right to belong and be included; and the right to present opinions that differ from those of other members (knowledge, values). Social workers are familiar with relevant policies, laws, and regulations that may affect practice with groups for support, therapy, rehabilitation, and socialization, as well as groups in organizations and communities. They understand democratic processes for decision-making in groups and utilize critical thinking to apply those frameworks in practice, research, and policy arenas (cognitive & affective processes). They recognize and manage personal values and the distinction between personal and professional values (values, cognitive & affective processes). They are self-aware, utilize understanding of members' roles through the lens of transference, and consider their own countertransference reactions (cognitive & affective processes). Social workers with groups use a rights-based, anti-racist, and anti-oppressive lens to understand historical and current contexts of oppression in shaping group practice (knowledge). They engage in interprofessional practice (skills) and recognize the importance of lifelong learning, committing to continually updating their skills to ensure relevant and effective practice (values). They understand digital technology and the ethical use of technology in social work practice.

In addition to the generalist level of competency, social workers with groups:
a. Utilize knowledge of and skill in assessing group dynamics, including stages of group development, as a guide for facilitating and managing an open and accepting group process.
b. Understand the role and power that the social worker carries as an authority.

c. Facilitate groups toward developing open communication systems in which members respect and value the worth of each member and their contributions.
d. Demonstrate the ability to guide the group's process as well as individual members.
e. Reflect upon clients' transference and their own countertransference, and utilize self-reflection to review these reactions through the lens of personal bias.
f. Follow current guidelines for confidentiality and privacy.
g. Utilize supervision and consultation in professional and clinical practice.
h. Demonstrate awareness of the distinction between personal and professional values and act within the guidelines of professional ethics as guided by the NASW Code of Ethics.

COMPETENCY 2: Advance Human Rights and Social, Racial, Economic, and Environmental Justice

Social workers with groups understand that every person—regardless of societal position—has fundamental rights to belong without feeling marginalized, to freedom of speech and expression, and to express different feelings and opinions (cognitive & affective processes; values). They are knowledgeable about the global, intersecting, and ongoing injustices throughout history that result in oppression and racism, including social work's role and response, and how members bring aspects of history to their membership (knowledge). Social workers with groups critically evaluate how power and privilege are played out in the group's leadership structure and consider approaches for reducing inequities and ensuring dignity and respect for all (skills). They advocate for and engage in strategies to eliminate oppressive structural barriers, ensuring that social resources, rights, and responsibilities are distributed equitably, and that civil, political, economic, social, and cultural human rights are protected (skills, values, cognitive & affective processes).

In addition to the generalist level of competency, social workers with groups:
a. Support the group in self-advocacy if their human rights have been disregarded or violated (e.g., family separations, inadequate public education, inadequate healthcare). They advocate on behalf of group members' rights if they have been violated.
b. Engage in advocacy practices at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels that advance human rights for social, racial, economic, and environmental justice, recognizing unfair practices in under-resourced communities and within institutions that fail to meet the needs of vulnerable families and individuals.
c. Promote inclusivity and ensure that every individual is recognized and valued, addressing power imbalances and other inequities, particularly as these relate to vulnerable and marginalized communities, assuring equal rights, resources, and supports.

COMPETENCY 3: Engage Anti-Racism, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (ADEI) in Practice

Social workers with groups understand how racism and oppression shape human experiences and how these influence practice with and membership in various group types (knowledge). They have knowledge of how diversity and intersectionality, which may include White privilege and supremacy, contribute to identity development and use this awareness to employ anti-racist practice with a focus on maximizing everyone's membership in the group (knowledge, skills, values, cognitive & affective processes). They apply knowledge of relevant theories to understand that a group member's intersectionality may include oppression, poverty, marginalization, and alienation as well as privilege and power (skills, values). Social workers recognize and adapt to the unique needs of special populations, including LGBTQ+ individuals, individuals with disabilities, refugees, immigrants, and other vulnerable populations (knowledge, values, skills). They create an environment in which inclusion is felt by all.

In addition to the generalist level of competency, social workers with groups:
a. Demonstrate anti-racist and anti-oppressive social work practice by supporting inclusion of all members in the group and addressing marginalization and exclusion.
b. Demonstrate cultural humility by applying critical reflection, self-awareness, and self-regulation to manage bias, power, and privilege in group work, acknowledging members as experts of their own experiences.

COMPETENCY 4: Practice Informed Research and Research Informed Practice

Social workers with groups use ethical, culturally informed, anti-racist, and anti-oppressive

approaches in conducting research and building knowledge (values).
They critically evaluate empirical research to inform group practice, policy, and program decisions (cognitive & affective processes). They understand inherent bias in research and apply anti-racist and anti-oppressive perspectives when reviewing studies focused on group relationships.
They demonstrate knowledge of qualitative and quantitative research methods and communicate findings in usable ways for clients and stakeholders.

In addition to the generalist level of competency, social workers with groups:
a. Apply research findings on group dynamics, power structures, and leadership to improve group work practice.
b. Utilize research findings to develop policies and programs that enhance connection, belonging, and mental well-being.
c. Identify ethical and culturally informed research strategies to address inherent biases and support equitable group interventions.

COMPETENCY 5: Engage in Policy Practice
Social workers with groups identify social policy about the use of groups to enhance human rights and justice at all levels—local, state, federal, and global (knowledge, values). They understand the types of group work programs that strengthen community life and the range of effective programs for social and emotional well-being. They influence policy formulation, implementation, and evaluation in practice settings and advocate for anti-racist and anti-oppressive policy changes.

In addition to the generalist level of competency, social workers with groups:
a. Use social justice, anti-racist, and anti-oppressive lenses to assess how policies affect group services across the lifespan and contexts.
b. Apply critical thinking to advocate for policies that fund group services fostering belonging, mental health, and well-being.

COMPETENCY 6: Engage with Groups
Social workers with groups understand that engagement in the formation stage reflects the value placed on human relationships and mutual aid (knowledge, values).
They facilitate safe environments in which members feel free to participate openly and are self-reflective about the impact of bias, power, and privilege. They emphasize empowerment, build self-efficacy, and promote resilience.

In addition to the generalist level of competency, social workers with groups:
a. Apply group development theory to engage members during formation, promoting inclusion and mutual aid.
b. Use empathy, reflection, and culturally responsive practice to ensure participation and inclusion of all members.

COMPETENCY 7: Assess Groups
Social workers with groups understand that assessment is an ongoing part of group work.
They apply theories of group dynamics, cultural factors, and trauma-informed practice to identify strengths and challenges.They are self-reflective about how bias and privilege influence assessments.

In addition to the generalist level of competency, social workers with groups:
a. Utilize theories of group and individual behavior to assess development and guide goal setting.
b. Formulate and share assessments with the group, supporting self-determination.

COMPETENCY 8: Intervene with Groups
Social workers with groups understand that intervention is ongoing in group practice.
They apply clinical theories and culturally responsive methods to support growth, address conflict, and build mutual aid. They recognize and respond appropriately to transference and countertransference.

In addition to the generalist level of competency, social workers with groups:

a. Intervene in the middle phase to strengthen feedback, resolve conflict, and support goal attainment.
b. Use culturally informed practice to address cultural supports and obstacles to growth.
c. Be aware of biases and manage authority roles thoughtfully.
d. Negotiate, mediate, and advocate for the group with cultural responsiveness.

COMPETENCY 9: Evaluate Practice with Groups
Social workers with groups understand that evaluation is continuous in group work.
They assess group processes and outcomes to improve practice, applying anti-racist and anti-oppressive perspectives. They use qualitative and quantitative methods to evaluate effectiveness.

In addition to the generalist level of competency, social workers with groups:
a. Select culturally responsible evaluation methods that include all client categories.
b. Analyze outcomes and apply findings to address gaps in group services for vulnerable populations.

The CSWE rubrics scores will NOT apply to your class grade. Individual scores are NOT made public; however, you can view your individual score at the following address:
https://yeshiva.tk20.com/campustoolshighered/start.do

In addition, the aggregated results of the assessments are listed on the Wurzweiler website at the address below: https://www.yu.edu/wurzweiler/msw/assessment

Advanced Social Group Work will be measured using the Capstone assignment at the end of the second semester.

III. LEARNING OBJECTIVES

At the conclusion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Develop an understanding of the obligation to follow ethical standards when working with groups.
2. Demonstrate the requisite engagement skills for beginning work with individuals and groups.
3. Demonstrate cultural inclusivity across race, gender, gender identity, class, sexual orientation, religion, age, and physical abilities.
4. Demonstrate strong psychosocial assessment skills with clients & groups.
5. Apply social group work theory and practice skills to diverse practice settings and a range of client populations.
6. Understand group process and be able to work with different group structures.
7. Harness mutual aid to support individuals in a group setting and in meeting their collective aspirations and goals.
8. Identify and work with challenges related to both individual and group growth and change.
9. Understand the impact that policy has on the lives of client populations.
10. Evaluate their own practice.
11. Understand all stages of group development in terms of:

- Variations with different group types and populations
- Tasks to be accomplished
- The role of the worker

Rubric for Participation, Attendance and Comportment

Class Participation	Contributes to class discussions by raising thoughtful questions, analyzing relevant issues, building on others' ideas, synthesizing across readings and discussions, expanding the class perspective, and appropriately challenging assumptions and perspectives 8 points	Attends class regularly and *sometimes contributes* to the discussion in the aforementioned ways. 6 points	Attends class regularly but *rarely contributes* to the discussion in the aforementioned ways. 4 points	Attends class regularly but *never contributes* to the discussion in the aforementioned ways. 2 points
Attendance	Always arrives on time and stays for entire class; regularly attends class; all absences are excused; always takes responsibility for work missed; no deadlines missed. 7 points	Minimal lateness; almost never misses a class; no unexcused absences. No deadlines missed. 5 points	Late to class semi-frequently; misses deadlines. 3 points	Late to class frequently misses deadlines 1 point
Comportment	Demonstrates excellence in communication, interpersonal skill, respect for the ideas of others and the learning environment, engages in reflective thinking, exemplifies empathy, honesty and integrity, shows respect for diversity, demonstrates ethical conduct, and conducts oneself with a professional demeanor. 5 points	Occasionally exhibits excellence in comportment; is almost always respectful towards peers, and the learning environment 4 points	Recurring concerning comportment issues behaves in ways that are not always respectful of peers, and the learning environment 2 points	Consistent comportment concerns; is often disrespectful to peers and the learning environment 0 points

IV.   INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS

Learning will take place through a variety of methods and experiences, including lectures, class discussions, discussion boards, presentations, class exercises, and video materials, with primary emphasis on the dialogical exchange of ideas, questions, and answers. Students are encouraged to engage with concepts that challenge them and their belief systems; to interact with and learn from their peers; and to actively ask questions and seek answers to the course's challenging material.

This course includes 37.5 contact hours. Students will meet live online with the professor for 2 hours each week over 14 weeks, and will complete an additional 9.5 hours throughout the semester via four interactive written discussion board assignments with the professor and peers.

V.   COURSE EXPECTATIONS AND GRADING

A passing grade in Fieldwork is required to pass *Clinical Practice with Individuals & Families I*. Students are expected to be punctual and to attend all classes. Class participation will be considered in the final grade; however, the primary basis for grading will be the demonstration of knowledge acquisition through written assignments.

Assignment	Grade %	Due Date
Assignment 1: Developing a Group	35%	7 Session
Assignment 2: Assessment of Work with Client or Group	40%	13 Session
Class Participation plus Case Presentation	25%	TBD

A letter grade (A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C or F) will be given based on: Quality, scholarship and timeliness of papers & quality of class participation. Grading: A= 94-100; A- = 90-93; B+ = 87-89; B= 83-86; B-=80-82; C+ = 75-79; C=70-74 F<74

COURSE GRADING RUBRIC

Class Participation	Contributes to class discussions by raising thoughtful questions, analyzing relevant issues, building on others' ideas, synthesizing across readings and discussions, expanding the class' perspective, and appropriately challenging assumptions and perspectives **33 points**	Attends class regularly and *sometimes contributes* to the discussion in the aforementioned ways. **30 points**	Attends class regularly but *rarely contributes* to the discussion in the aforementioned ways. **27 points**	Attends class regularly but *never contributes* to the discussion in the aforementioned ways. **23 points**
Attendance	Always arrives on time and stays for entire class; regularly attends class; all absences are excused; always takes responsibility for work missed; no deadlines missed. **33 points**	Minimal lateness; almost never misses a class; no unexcused absences. No deadlines missed. **30 points**	Late to class semi-frequently; misses deadlines. **27 points**	Late to class frequently misses deadlines **23 points**
Comportment	Demonstrates excellence in communication, interpersonal skill, respect for the ideas of others and the learning environment, engages in reflective thinking, exemplifies empathy, honesty and integrity, shows respect for diversity, demonstrates ethical conduct, and conducts oneself with a professional demeanor. **33 points**	Occasionally exhibits excellence in comportment; is almost always respectful towards peers, and the learning environment **30 points**	Recurring concerning comportment issues behaves in ways that are not always respectful of peers, and the learning environment **27 points**	Consistent comportment concerns; is often disrespectful to peers and the learning environment **23 points**

Required Text

- Northen H., & Kurland, R. (2001). *Social work with groups* (3rd ed.). New York: Columbia University Press. **PDF on Canvas**

Suggested Texts:

- Glassman, U. (2008). Group Work: A humanistic and skills building approach (2nd ed.) Los Angeles, CA: Sage Publications.

- Malekoff, A. (2014). *Group work with adolescents: Principles and practice.* 3rd Edition. Gilford Press.

Note: All required readings are on-line through electronic reserve (ERES). Your instructor will distribute the password and directions to access these readings.

VI. <u>EVALUATION</u>

Students are provided opportunity to evaluate master courses. An evaluation form pertaining to the course and instructor will be conducted on-line. Evaluation is ongoing and students are encouraged to participate in the evaluation process.

VII. <u>OFFICE OF DISABILITIES SERVICES (ODS)</u> collaborates with students, faculty and staff to provide

reasonable accommodations and services to students with disabilities. The purpose of reasonable academic accommodations is to assure that there is equal access to and the opportunity to benefit from your education at Wurzweiler. It is the student's responsibility to identify himself/herself to the Office of Disabilities Services (ODS) and to provide documentation of a disability. <u>http://www.yu.edu/Student-Life/Resources-and-Services/Disability-Services/</u>

Students with disabilities who are enrolled in this course and who will be requesting documented disability-related accommodations should make an appointment with the Office of Disability Services, <u>Wilfods@yu.edu</u>, during the first week of class. All procedures, responsibilities and expectations will be reviewed during your appointment. The office is located in the Belz Building, suite 412. Once you have been approved for accommodations, please submit your accommodation letter and discuss any specifics with me to ensure the successful implementation of your accommodations.

VIII. <u>E-RESERVES</u>

Access full text copies of most of the "on reserve" articles for a course from your home computer. You will need Adobe Acrobat to use this service. The password is <mark>wurzweiler</mark> The link for e-reserves is <u>https://library.yu.edu/er.php?b=c</u> Most of the articles mentioned in the curriculum are available on electronic reserve (E-reserves). You can access the full text articles from your home or from a university computer at no charge.
ACCESSING E-RESERVES
FROM CANVAS
1. Go to your class Canvas page.
2. Click the link "Library Resources & E-Reserves" (no password required)\
   FROM CAMPUS
1. If you wish to access e-reserves from the library home page (<u>library.yu.edu</u>),
2. Use "wurzweiler" all lower case, as the password.
3. If you have problems accessing e-reserves, email: Stephanie Gross, Electronic Reserves Librarian: <u>gross@yu.edu</u> or ereserves@yu.edu.
   FROM OFF-CAMPUS
1. Go to the library's online resources page:
2. Click on E-RES; you will be prompted for your <u>Off Campus Access Service login</u> and password.
3. Use "wurzweiler" all lower case, as the password for all courses in all social work programs.
4. If you have problems accessing e-reserves, email: Stephanie Gross, Electronic Reserves Librarian: <u>gross@yu.edu</u> or ereserves@yu.edu.

USING E-RESERVES
1. Click on "Search E-RES" or on "Course Index," and search by instructor's name, department, course name, course number, document title, or document author.
2. Click on the link to your course.
3. When the article text or book record appears on the screen, you can print, email, or save it to disk. To view documents that are in PDF format, the computer you are using must have Adobe Acrobat Reader software. You can download it FREE at <u>www.adobe.com/products/acrobat/readstep2.html</u>

IX. <u>PLAGIARISM</u>

All written work submitted by students is to be their own. Ideas and concepts that are the work of others must be cited with proper attribution. The use of the written works of others that is submitted as one's own constitutes *plagiarism* and is a violation of academic standards. The School will not condone *plagiarism* in any form and will impose sanctions to acts of *plagiarism*. A student who presents someone else's work as his or her own work is stealing from the authors or persons who did the original thinking and writing. *Plagiarism* occurs when a student directly copies another's work without citation; when a student paraphrases major aspects of another's work without citation; and when a student combines the work of different authors into a new statement without reference to those authors. It is also *plagiarism* to use the ideas and/or work of another student and present them as your own. It is <u>NOT</u> *plagiarism* to formulate your own presentation of an idea or concept as a reaction to someone else's work; however, the work to which you are reacting should be discussed and appropriately cited. If it is determined that a student has plagiarized any part of any assignment in a course, the student automatically <u>FAIL</u> the course. The student also will be placed on Academic Probation and will be referred to the Associate Dean for any additional disciplinary action which may include expulsion. A student may not submit the same paper or an assignment from another class for credit. If students or faculty are concerned that written work is indeed plagiarized, they can use the following "plagiarism checker" websites, easily accessible, and generally free on Google:

www.grammarly.com/plagiarism_checker www.dustball.com/cs/plagiarism.checker www.plagtracker.com
www.plagium.com/
www.plagscan.com/seesources/
www.duplichecker.com/

As a Wurzweiler student, maintaining good standing in the program is dependent on developing and maintaining high standards of ethical and professional behavior. Students are required to adhere to the Code of Ethics promulgated by the National Association of Social Workers (NASW).

X. <u>INCOMPLETE POLICY</u>

It is expected that all work must be submitted no later than the final day of this class, unless otherwise specified by the instructor. Incomplete grades are only given in exceptional circumstances at the discretion of the instructor. In order for an instructor to issue a grade of "incomplete," the student must be passing this course.

If an incomplete grade is given for this course, an Incomplete Contract will be completed, which will specify a due date for the completion of any outstanding work. It is the student's responsibility to complete all outstanding work before this due date. Students will be unable to enroll in any advanced courses for which this course is a prerequisite.

Failure to complete all outstanding work before the due date will result in a grade change from an "I" to an "F" for this course. Please consult the Student Handbook for the complete incomplete policy which will guide the receipt of an incomplete grade in this course.

XI. <u>HIPAA</u>

In line with HIPAA regulations concerning protected health information, it is important that you understand that any case information you present in class or coursework will need to be de-identified. What this means is that any information that would allow another to identify the person must be changed or eliminated. This includes obvious identifiers such as names and birth dates but may also contain other information that is so unique to the person that it will allow for identification, including diagnosis, race/ethnicity or gender. If diagnosis, race/ethnicity or gender is directly related to the case presentation, it can be included if it will not allow for identification.

XII.   <u>FERPA & OTHER UNIVERSITY POLICIES</u>

• Wurzweiler's policies and procedures are in compliance with FERPA regulations. Information about   FERPA regulations can be found **here**.
• Drug-Free University Policy can be found **here**.
• Policy Statement on Non-Discrimination, Anti-Harassment, and Complaint procedures can be found **here**.
• The University's Computer Guidelines can be found **here**.

XIII. <u>AI POLICY</u>

The objective of this protocol is to define clear guidelines for the appropriate use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools and platforms, such as ChatGPT at WSSW. These guidelines aim to preserve academic integrity, prevent plagiarism, and promote independent scholarly work while acknowledging the potential benefits of AI tools in enhancing research and learning. Though AI tools do offer some potential for enhancing the learning experience, these tools also present significant risks related to academic dishonesty, particularly plagiarism, and the undermining of critical thinking and originality in scholarly work. Students may use AI tools for the following purposes, provided these uses are in addition to their own creative efforts and they are not relying exclusively on AI.

(1) **Research Assistance:** ChatGPT and other similar tools should not replace primary research and initial literature searches. Tools such as ProQuest, PubMed, and Google Scholar should first be consulted. Students may use other AI tools to supplement an initial search into a topic, but only after academic databases, libraries, or other reputable scholarly sources are used and referenced. All sources derived from AI should be carefully checked as they are frequently incorrect.

(2) **Language Support:** AI can assist with language translation, grammar checks, and vocabulary. WSSW's Writing Consultants should be sought for any writing beyond these areas. Tools such as Grammarly may be used to assist in proofreading, but they should not be used in any way to generate ideas, arguments, or content for assignments.

The use of AI language models, such as ChatGPT, for the purposes listed above, are subject to strict adherence to certain conditions. The intent of this policy is to reinforce the importance that students develop and use critical thinking, writing skills, and originality. AI may be seen as a useful tool, but it should not replace the intellectual work that is central to academic growth.

The following actions are <u>prohibited</u>, and will be considered academic misconduct.

(1) **Content Generation:** Students are prohibited from using AI platforms, including ChatGPT, to generate any content submitted as original work.

(2) **Conceptualization and Analysis:** Students may not use AI tools to develop original arguments, ideas, analysis, hypotheses, conclusions, or to structure, summarize, paraphrase, or contextualize content for assignments. The cognitive work of creating ideas, forming arguments, and critically engaging with course material must be entirely the student's own effort.

If you are in need of assistance in these areas, we advise using the Writing Consultants. The use of AI language models, such as ChatGPT will be checked by your professor to ensure that your work is your own. Turnitin and other plagiarism detection tools will be used to verify the originality of your work. Any submission that includes this content presented as the student's own work constitutes plagiarism (see WSSW Policy Manual). More specifically, any content created that is not your own qualifies as academic misconduct and will be referred to the Student Review Committee for further action. The intent of this policy is to reinforce the importance that students develop and use critical thinking, writing skills, and originality. AI may be seen as a useful tool, but it should not replace the intellectual work that is central to academic and professional growth. If there are questions regarding the authenticity of your work, your professor will contact you.

Assignment I – Group Work Log

Due: Sessions 4, 9, & 14

Create a log in which you record your ongoing reactions to class discussions, required course readings, and field work experiences.

Instructions:

- Write entries **at least weekly** throughout the semester and date each entry.
- Type entries on **one side of the page**.
- Logs will be submitted **three times** during the semester (Sessions 4, 9, and 14).

Guidelines for the log:

1. Discuss **key concepts** from at least one required reading in each log.
2. Make **connections** between theories, concepts, and ideas from the course and your practice experiences.
3. When describing your own experiences, **test them against required readings** or references from the course bibliography.
4. Formulate your own **questions and ideas** about classroom or field work content — even if tentative or speculative.
5. Allow yourself to **make and acknowledge mistakes** in your writing.
6. Logs will be read **only by the instructor**, who will respond with comments and questions. The log serves as a way for the instructor to better understand each student.

Source: Adapted from Kurland, R., & Salmon, R. (1998). *Teaching a methods course in social work with groups.* Alexandria, VA: Council on Social Work Education.

Assignment II – Group Assessment

Due: Last Session

Complete a group assessment of one group you are currently leading.

The assessment should include an analysis of:

- Group purpose
- Social interaction
- Socio-emotional ties between members
- Functional and dysfunctional roles of group members
- Norms that help or hinder group progress
- Decision-making processes
- Conflict resolution methods
- Level of group cohesion
- Stage of group development

Additional requirements:

- Provide **examples** to illustrate group processes.
- Refer to **individual group members anonymously** when describing roles and interactions.
- Reference relevant **group work literature**.
- Conclude with **recommendations for changes** in group process to better achieve the group's purpose and goals (CSWE Competency 2.1.10d).
- Literary documentation is expected, and should be based on your discretion. **There is no magical number of citations required for a good paper**. Citations are meant to support arguments and augment your narrative. Paper length should be around 8-10 pages. Use APA style, and be sure to proofread your paper and use spell check and grammar check to correct misspelled words and grammatical errors.

A detailed outline to guide this assessment is attached to the syllabus.

Module 1: Sessions 1-2 Course Introduction, The Evolution of Group Work in Social Work Practice

Learning Themes:

This unit covers: Course objectives, content, assignments and grading. As well as expectations for student learning, student interests and expectations, and Identification of 7 the positive and negative effects of groups throughout life on the psychological and social development of the individual and upon society.

Also covered is the historical development of group work within the social work profession. We will examine humanistic values and democratic norms, focus on working with diverse populations, discuss major elements that characterize the group work method, and review the role of the social group worker.

Required Reading

Text: Northen & Kurland, Chapters 1 & 2

Andrews, J. (2001). Group work's place in social work: A historical analysis. *J. Soc. & Soc. Welfare*, *28*, 45

Drumm, K. (2006). The essential power of group work. *Social Work with Groups*, *29*(2-3), 17-31.

Giacomucci, S., & Giacomucci, S. (2021). History of Social Work with Groups in Practice and Education. *Social Work, Sociometry, and Psychodrama: Experiential Approaches for Group Therapists, Community Leaders, and Social Workers*, 17-30.

Papell, C. P. (1998). Thinking about thinking about group work: Thirty years later. *Social work with Groups*, *20*(4), 5-17.

Videos and other resources on Canvas

MODULE 2: Sessions 3-4 The Group as a Mutual-Aid System & Diversity/Difference in Clinical Practice with Individuals and Groups
Required Reading

Text: Northen & Kurland, Chapters 3 & 4

Feize, L., & Gonzalez, J. (2018). A model of cultural competency in social work as seen through the lens of self-awareness. Social Work Education, 37(4), 472–489.

Gitterman, A. (2004). The mutual aid models. In C. D. Garvin, L. M. Gutierrez, & M. J. Galinsky (Eds.), Handbook of social work with groups (pp. 93–110). Guilford Press.

Gitterman, A., & Knight, C. (2016). Promoting resilience through social work practice with groups: Implications for the practice and field curricula. Journal of Social Work Education, 52(4), 448–461.

Knight, C. (2006). Groups for individuals with traumatic histories: Practice considerations for social workers. Social Work, 51(1), 20–30.

Knight, C., & Gitterman, A. (2014). Group work with bereaved individuals: The power of mutual aid. Social Work, 59(1), 5–12.

Knight, C. (2025). Promoting mutual aid in group work with adult survivors of trauma: Integrating Alex Gitterman's life model with trauma-informed principles. Social Work with Groups, 48(3), 261–275.

Kurland, R. (2012). Racial difference and human commonality: The worker-client relationship. In Stories celebrating group work (pp. 113–118). Routledge.

Collins, S., Arthur, N., & Wong-Wylie, G. (2010). Enhancing reflective practice in multicultural counseling through cultural auditing. Journal of Counseling & Development, 88(3), 340–347.

Muskat, B., Greenblatt, A., Garvin, C., Pelech, W., Cohen, C., Macgowan, M., & Roy, V. (2020). Group workers' experiences of mutual aid: Stories from the field. Social Work with Groups, 43(3), 241–256.

Pender Greene, M., & Blitz, L. V. (2012). The elephant is not pink: Talking about White, Black, and Brown to achieve excellence in clinical practice. Clinical Social Work Journal, 40(2), 203–212.
Saulnier, C. F. (2000). Incorporating feminist theory into social work practice: Group work examples. Social Work with Groups, 23(1), 5–29.

Steinberg, D. M. (2010). Mutual aid: A contribution to best-practice social work. Social Work with Groups, 33(1), 53–68.

Steinberg, D. M. (2012). The magic of mutual aid. In Stories celebrating group work (pp. 31–38). Routledge.

Wampole, D., Allen, K., Bassett, N., Benoit, L., Kirchner, K., Packard, J., Polyakova, D., Poore, L., Rogers, D., & Spanger, M. (2023). The nine dynamics of mutual aid in social work group education: Reflections and lessons from a low residency cohort model project. Social Work with Groups, 47(1), 1–13.

MODULE 3: Sessions 5-6 Pre-Planning a Group

Required Reading

Text: Northen & Kurland, Chapters 5, 6, & 7

Bitel, M. C. (2024). The collaboration of social group work and the arts: Skills for pre-group planning, group purpose, problem-solving, conflict, and mutual aid. Social Work with Groups, 48(2), 179–202.

Kurland, R., & Salmon, R. (1993). Group work vs. casework in a group: Principles and implications for teaching and practice. Social Work with Groups, 15(4), 3-14.

Kurland, R. (2005). Planning: The neglected component of group development. Social Work with Groups, 28(3-4), 9-16.

Kurland, R., & Salmon, R. (2006). Purpose: A misunderstood and misused keystone of group work practice. Social Work with Groups, 29(2-3), 105-120.

Videos and other resources on Canvas

MODULE 4: Sessions 7 The Two Client Paradigm: The individual and the Group: Dynamics in Group Formation

Required Readings

Brown, M. (2024). Overcoming fear of conflict in group work: Five stages of group formation to

focus on potential sources of conflict. *Social Work with Groups, 41*(2–3), 239–255.

Martin, P. Y., & Shanahan, K. A. (2013). Transcending the effects of sex composition in small groups. *Groupwork with women/Groupwork with men*, 19-32.

Moreland, R. L., Levine, J. M., & Wingert, M. L. (2018). Creating the ideal group: Composition effects at work. In *Understanding group behavior* (pp. 11-35).
Psychology Press.

Paletz, S. B., Peng, K., Erez, M., & Maslach, C. (2004). Ethnic composition and its differential impact on group processes in diverse teams. *Small Group Research*, *35*(2), 128-157.

MODULE 5: Sessions 8-10 The Beginning Stage of Group Development

Text: Chapter 11 & 12

Bennis, W. G., & Shepard, H. A. (1956). A theory of group development. *Human relations*, *9*(4), 415-437.

Garland, J., Jones, H., & Kolodny, R. (1965). A model for stages of development in social work groups. *Explorations in group work*, 17-71.

Schiller, L. Y. (1997). Rethinking stages of development in women's groups: Implicationsfor practice. *Social Work with Groups*, *20*(3), 3-19.

Tuckman, B. W. (2001). Developmental sequence in small groups. *Group Facilitation*, (3),66.

MODULE 6: Sessions 11-12 The Problem-Solving Model

Required Readings

Text: Chapter 8

Somers, M. L. (1976). Problem-solving in small groups. *Theories of social work with groups*, 331-367.

MODULE 7: Sessions 13-14 Ethical Issues & Integration of Course material

Required Readings

Dolgoff, R., & Skolnik, L. (1993). Ethical decision making, the NASW Code of Ethics in group. work practice: Beginning explorations. *Social Work with Groups*, *15*(4), 99-112

Grady, M.D., Strom-Gottfried, K. (2011). No Easy Answers: Ethical Challenges Working with Sex Offenders. Clinical Social Work Journal, 39, 1, 18-27.

Gumpert, J., & Black, P. N. (2006). Ethical issues in group work: What are they? How are they managed? *Social Work with Groups*, *29*(4), 61-74.

McAuliffe, D., & Sudbery, J. (2005). 'Who Do I Tell?' Support and Consultation in Cases of Ethical Conflict Journal of Social Work 5 (1), 21-43.

McAuliffe, D., & Chenoweth, L. (2007). Leave no stone unturned: The inclusive model of ethical decision-making Ethics and social welfare 2 (1), 38-49

Northen, H. (1999). Ethical dilemmas in social work with groups. *Social Work with Groups*, *21*(1-2), 5-17.

Assignment II Group Assessment – Detailed Outline

The following concepts are useful in understanding how the group as a whole is functioning. The guiding questions help to focus the assessment.

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1. Group Purpose

Purpose expresses the common need, problem, or interest that brings the members together and how the group will be of help. It is a process of clarification that continues throughout group development.

Questions:

1. Is the group purpose clear to the worker, agency, and members?
2. Is there congruence between the worker's and members' perceptions of group purpose?
3. Have the members shared their goals and expectations as part of shaping group purpose?
4. Does the group continue to refer to its purpose, or has the purpose stated at the beginning been forgotten?

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2. Social Interaction

Through interaction, members influence each other's attitudes and behavior and accomplish group goals.

Questions:

1. Is there active participation by members, or is the discussion dominated by certain individuals?
2. Are members communicating with one another, or does interaction tend to occur primarily between members and the worker?
3. Do members openly share their conscious thoughts and feelings about the group, or do they avoid honest communication?
4. Do members listen attentively to one another, or are interruptions common? If interruptions occur, who interrupts whom?

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3. Relationship

The positive and negative feelings members have for one another affect group process and the achievement of individual goals.

Questions:

1. Are members regarded favorably by the group, or are some individuals rejected?
2. What factors influence attraction and repulsion among members?
3. Do members recognize their interdependence and reach out to help each other?
4. Do members view one another objectively, or do stereotypes exist based on race, religion, sexual orientation, gender, social class, or appearance?

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4. Roles

Members perform various informal and formal roles in their interactions with each other. Informal roles express individual and dual needs, as well as the expectations of others, while formal roles are designated positions related to the group's purpose and structure.

Questions:

1. What informal roles are performed by individual members?
2. Are these roles constructive for the individual and the group, or are some destructive?
3. Are any individuals stereotyped in their roles, making it difficult for them to alter role behavior?
4. Are there formal or informal roles needed by the group to achieve its goals that are not currently being performed?

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5. Norms

Norms are standards of behavior to which members expect each other to adhere. They differ from rules (externally imposed) and develop from social interaction, providing stability and control. Norms may help or hinder the group.

Questions:

1. Does the group value the contributions of all members regardless of race, sexual orientation, class, ethnicity, age, or gender?
2. Is there a norm for inclusion of socially and culturally diverse individuals rather than exclusion?
3. Does the group allow expression and experimentation with new ideas and behaviors?
4. Are member interactions based on caring and helping?
5. Do all members—rather than only a few—take responsibility for the group through collective decision-making?

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6. Conflict

Differences among members are a natural part of group process and are essential for development and change. How members recognize and manage conflict is crucial to group functioning and survival.

Questions:

1. Does the group accept conflict as a beneficial process for resolving differences?
2. Does the group allow full and open discussion of differences rather than prematurely seeking resolution?
3. Are all members' ideas and opinions solicited in resolving conflict?
4. Is there sufficient closure to ensure the conflict is satisfactorily resolved by members?

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7. Group Cohesion

Cohesion refers to the attraction members have for one another, the worker, and the group as an entity. The more cohesive the group, the greater its influence on members.

Indicators of Cohesion:

1. Regular attendance and punctuality, especially in voluntary groups.
2. Members feel a sense of belonging and can clearly identify who is part of the group.
3. Increased expressions of "we" feelings, indicating identification with the group.
4. Relationships among members become accepting, interdependent, and intimate.
5. Members are highly invested in participating in group content and activities.
6. Members verbally express satisfaction with being part of the group and with how it operates.
7. The group's social climate is characterized by spontaneity, informality, and appropriate self-disclosure.