San José State University  
College of Social Sciences  
Advanced Group Dynamics, Spring 2015  
Psychology 225 (01)

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Office Hours: M/W 10:45-11:45 in CL 203
Class Days/Time: Mon. 1:30-4:15
Classroom: DMH 308
Course Website: http://www.sjsu.edu/people/elena.klaw/courses/

Course Description

This course is designed to provide students with theoretical understanding and training in the use of groups for therapy and education in clinical and other settings. Students will learn fundamental core theories about group selection, structure, process, and problem solving. Students will be exposed to a variety of group approaches with an emphasis on the delivery of interventions in the context of evidence-based practice.

Learning Objectives

Specifically, our course objectives are as follows:

- CLO1. Identify principles of group dynamics, including components of group process, developmental stages of a group, and individual and group goal setting.
- CLO2. Demonstrate knowledge of the major theories of group dynamics.
- CLO3. Differentiate theories of group counseling, including commonalities, distinguishing characteristics, and pertinent research and literature.
- CLO4. Understand the therapeutic nature of group work.
- CLO5. Examine group member’s roles and behaviors, and therapeutic factors of group work.
- CLO6. Understand group leadership styles and approaches, including characteristics of various types of group leaders and the relationship between leadership styles and group functioning.
- CLO7. Compare and contrast different group work methods, including group
work orientations and behaviors, appropriate selection criteria and methods, group structuring and facilitation skills, and methods for evaluation of group growth and effectiveness.

- CLO8. Determine when and how to use different types of groups, including task groups, psycho-educational groups, support groups, and counseling/therapy groups.
- CLO9. Know and be able to apply professional preparation standards for group leaders.
- CLO10. Be able to identify and use the ethical and legal principles unique to group work, with an awareness of ethical responsibility to demonstrate sensitivity to group member diversity with regard to race, ethnicity, gender, spirituality, sexual orientation, and disabilities.
- CLO11. Experience being a member of a group, both as a participant and a leader, and receive feedback from peers and supervision from the instructor.
- CLO12. Demonstrate an understanding of the influence of culture and gender.
- CLO13. Explain the source of disputes and the resolution of conflict within and between groups.
- CLO14. Examine the contextual impact on groups and their potential outcomes.
- CLO15. Integrate both theoretical and experiential learning in order to develop critical thinking and analysis.

Program Learning Outcomes (PLO)

Upon completion of the MS in Clinical Psychology…

- Students will demonstrate breadth of knowledge of a variety of psychotherapy theories and in-depth knowledge of one chosen theory of intervention
- Students will demonstrate knowledge of empirically supported clinical interventions and evidence ability to select treatments for individual clients given this literature
- 2.1 Students will demonstrate effective integration and communication of clinical case material
- 2.2 Students will demonstrate the ability to synthesize contextual and cultural variables into presentations of client materials
- 2.3 Students will effectively respond to queries about clinical material and engage in discussions about their clients with supervisors and peers
- 2.4 Students will be able to think and discuss cases other than their own, applying theories, principles, and relevant empirical findings to those cases
- 3.1 Students will demonstrate understanding of different assessment devices and strategies for assessing client outcome over the course of treatment including standardized nomothetic and idiographic approaches
- 4.1 Students will demonstrate depth and breadth of understanding in areas including, but not limited to, psychotherapy theory, service delivery, ethics, assessment, research methods, family therapy, cultural diversity, psychopharmacology, and issues relevant to adult and child clinical populations. Students will be able to apply this knowledge to clinical cases.
5.1 Students will demonstrate fulfillment of coursework and other pre-degree licensing requirements outlined by the Board of Behavioral Sciences.

Readings

Required Textbooks


Supplemental Readings

A list of supplemental readings is included at the end of the syllabus to assist you in writing your Group Proposal. You are encouraged to seek out other theoretical and empirical readings to inform your understanding of group dynamics and approaches and to guide your proposal.

Class Format

Each class meeting will have a didactic and an experiential segment. The didactic portion will include discussions of the readings related to group dynamics and approaches and film demonstrations. The experiential section will involve practice in running and participating in groups. Starting during the third class session, approximately 50 minutes of class time will be spent participating in an 11-session graduate student process group that you will take turns co-facilitating with a partner. This section of the course draws directly from the work of the textbook author, Marianne Schneider Corey (2014) and her explanation of this methodology is provided here: *The purpose of this course is to teach you about the functioning of groups. The bias of the instructor is that YOU are the most important component in the group process, and not merely you as a technician. Thus, the focus of the course is on how you bring yourself as a person into your small groups. The purpose of these ... groups is not to provide group therapy. However, your interactions in [the] group will hopefully be real, based upon real concerns, and the group will hopefully be therapeutic. Thus, you are expected to participate in a personal way, with a focus on sharing your thoughts and feelings as it pertains to what it is like for you to be a part of your experiential group. You are expected to give feedback to others and also to listen to and consider feedback you receive from others. The focus is not so much on resolving your personal problems. Rather, the focus will be more on here-and-now issues as they emerge within the context of the small groups and exploration of any of the personal topics you bring into your group. Hopefully, this class will be therapeutic, a catalyst for your growth and a path for increasing your awareness of yourself in a group situation. You are not expected to disclose your deepest personal concerns, yet you are expected to deal with your personal reactions to what is taking place in the here-and-now context of the unfolding of the group. It is our expectation that members will engage in*
risk-taking as a way of expanding personal boundaries and that each participant will take active steps to create a safe climate of support. It is, of course your responsibility to maintain confidentiality, just as you would do with clients. Any breach of confidentiality may result in immediate withdrawal from the course. You are always expected abide by the APA and CAMFT Code of Ethics.

Assignments and Grading Policy

The total points possible for this class is 200.
- 4 Integration Assignments: 15 Points each = 60 points
- Group Observation Reaction Paper: 20 points
- Group Proposal: 50 Points
- Group Proposal Presentation: 20 points
- Final Reflection on Group Participation: 25 points
- Class Participation: 25 Points

Integration Assignments
Integration Assignments will consist of essay questions that ask you to apply insights gained from your readings to your own understandings of your role as a group leader. Each completed assignment will be no more than three double spaced pages using a standard 12-point font.

Integration Assignment 1
A) What are some advantages that you see in using a group format for treatment?
B) Drawing from your reading, what are your current primary concerns or questions about leading a group?
C) In setting up a new group, what are some ethical and legal considerations that you think are most important?

Integration Assignment 2
A) Describe the therapeutic factors and why they are important for understanding and conducting group work.
B) What do you believe about how people heal? In what context do people heal? What must be present in order for people to heal?
C) What methods work to help people heal?

Integration Assignment 3
A) What are your thoughts on preparing people ahead of time for group participation? What kind of pre-group preparation do you think is valuable?
B) What are the main characteristics of a group during the initial stage? What are some typical behaviors of members during the first few meetings?
C) What do you as a group leader see as the most important tasks and functions at this time?

Integration Assignment 4
A) What are some signs that will help you recognize transference in a group? How can you detect transference of members to you? How about transference
between certain members? How can you work therapeutically with transference in the sessions?

B) What steps could you take to become aware of possible countertransference on your part? How can you use your own feelings and reactions toward group members to facilitate the process? When might your reactions impede group process?

C) If you were leading an open group (with changing membership), what would you want to attend to when a member is preparing to leave the group? What signs would you look for in determining the person’s readiness to terminate?

**Group Observation Reaction Paper**

Observe one mutual-help or psycho-educational group meeting such as AA, NA, Al Anon or NAMI. Turn in a brief (no more than 5 page, double spaced, 12 point font) reaction paper including the following information:

1. What, when and where was the meeting?
2. How did you find out about the meeting?
3. What were your emotional reactions to being at the meeting?
4. What reactions to your presence did you experience from other members?
5. Relating your observations to your reading so far, what did you learn about group process and effects from attending this meeting?
6. Would you recommend this type of meeting to a client and why?
7. What would be the most effective way to connect your client to this group?

**Group Proposal**

This paper should be 10 pages, double-spaced using a 12-point font. You will select a specific population (e.g., the elderly, Latino teenagers, adolescent mothers, dual career couples, children with learning disabilities), or client issue (e.g., depression, divorce, loss, smoking cessation, incest) and review the relevant group therapy literature to find out what approaches and techniques have been found to be effective for this population or concern. Based on your literature review and the guidelines provided in chapter 5 of the Corey text, describe the targeted issue (its effects, symptoms, number of people affected), the rationale for providing the type of group you are proposing, and the available evidence for the approach you have selected. Describe the goals of this group, your distribution of responsibilities with a co-therapist and any prescreening, member selection and recruitment that you will do. Using bullet point format, outline a total of 5 sessions, including the objectives, content, techniques, and information contained in each session. See chapters 10 & 11 in the Corey textbook for proposal examples. You may include handouts and a resource list beyond the 10-page maximum. Address the following in your proposal:

1. How will you handle member reactions and group dynamics?
2. How will you address issues related to culture, class, gender, and development?
3. How will you know if the group sessions were effective?

**Presentation**

In 20 minutes, briefly present your group proposal and demonstrate part of one session to the class. Try to elicit role-playing by students to show how the group would progress
and provide example of the types of dynamics that might occur.

**Group Participation Reflection**

Write a paper that is no more than 8 pages (double spaced, 12 point font) about what you learned about yourself through participating in a process group. This is an opportunity for you to **process your own group experience from the perspectives of group member and leader**. Do not identify other group members in this paper. Address what you learned, how you learned it, and how the insight you gained about yourself will impact your life personally and professionally. Provide concrete examples. The following questions may help to guide your self-exploration:

1. **What did you learn about yourself?**
   - Focus on personal qualities, beliefs, and attitudes that may enhance or detract from your effectiveness as a group leader
   - Describe what you see as your strongest and weakest skills as a group leader and your plan for addressing skills that need improvement.

2. **What did you learn about group processes?**
   - Describe the personality of your group
   - Describe the way your group functioned and what you have learned about how groups function and malfunction
   - Describe the evolution of your group in terms of stages of development and specific group processes (e.g., level of trust established, impact of working with co-leaders, conflict and/or resistance, cohesion)
   - Discuss how you will translate what you learned in this course to future groups that you may lead.
Participation

You are required to both attend and participate in class discussion and experiential group work. Missing more than one class session may result in failing the course.

Grading

The various parts of the course add up to 200 possible points. To tabulate your final grade, just add your total points achieved and divide by 2. To convert your percentage points to a letter grade, use the following scale.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>98-100</td>
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<td>93-97</td>
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<td>90-92</td>
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<td>88-89</td>
<td>B+</td>
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<td>83-87</td>
<td>B</td>
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<tr>
<td>80-82</td>
<td>B-</td>
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<tr>
<td>78-79</td>
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<td>60-62</td>
<td>D-</td>
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<tr>
<td>&lt; 60</td>
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Academic integrity

Students should know that the University’s Academic Integrity Policy is available at http://sa.sjsu.edu/judicial_affairs/faculty_and_staff/academic_integrity/index.html. Your own commitment to learning, as evidenced by your enrollment at San Jose State University and the University’s integrity policy, require you to be honest in all your academic course work. Faculty members are required to report all infractions to the office of Student Conduct and Ethical Development. The Student Conduct and Ethical Development website is available at http://www.sa.sjsu.edu/judicial_affairs/index.html.

Instances of academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. Cheating on exams or plagiarism (presenting the work of another as your own, or the use of another person’s ideas without giving proper credit) will result in a failing grade and sanctions by the University. For this class, all assignments are to be completed by the individual student unless otherwise specified. If you would like to include in your assignment any material you have submitted, or plan to submit for another class, please note that SJSU’s Academic Policy F06-1 requires approval of instructors.

Campus Policy in Compliance with the American Disabilities Act

If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability, or if you need to make special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, please make an appointment with me as soon as possible, or see me during office hours. Presidential Directive 97-03 at http://www.sjsu.edu/president/docs/directives/PD_1997-03.pdf requires that students with disabilities requesting accommodations must register with the Accessible Education Center (AEC) at http://www.sjsu.edu/aec to establish a record of their disability.

Student Technology Resources

Computer labs for student use are available in the Academic Success Center located on the 1st floor of Clark Hall and on the 2nd floor of the Student Union. Additional computer labs may be available in your department/college. Computers are also available in the Martin Luther King Library.
A wide variety of audio-visual equipment is available for student checkout from Media Services located in IRC 112. These items include digital and VHS camcorders, VHS and Beta video players, 16 mm, slide, overhead, DVD, CD, and audiotape players, sound systems, wireless microphones, projection screens and monitors.

**SJSU Writing Center**

The SJSU Writing Center is located in Clark Hall, Suite 126. All Writing Specialists have gone through a rigorous hiring process, and they are well trained to assist all students at all levels within all disciplines to become better writers. In addition to one-on-one tutoring services, the Writing Center also offers workshops every semester on a variety of writing topics. To make an appointment or to refer to the numerous online resources offered through the Writing Center, visit the Writing Center website at http://www.sjsu.edu/writingcenter. For additional resources and updated information, follow the Writing Center on Twitter and become a fan of the SJSU Writing Center on Facebook. (Note: You need to have a QR Reader to scan this code.)

**SJSU Counseling Services**

The SJSU Counseling Services is located on the corner of 7th Street and San Fernando Street, in Room 201, Administration Building. Professional psychologists, social workers, and counselors are available to provide consultations on issues of student mental health, campus climate or psychological and academic issues on an individual, couple, or group basis. To schedule an appointment or learn more information, visit Counseling Services website at http://www.sjsu.edu/counseling.
## Course Schedule

*Course schedule is subject to change. You are expected to come to class and check email to remain current.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Reading Due</th>
<th>Evaluation Due</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1/26</td>
<td>Introduction to Group Work: Review Syllabus and Expectations</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/2</td>
<td>The Role of the Group Counselor</td>
<td>Corey Ch. 1 &amp; 2, Yalom Ch. 7</td>
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<tr>
<td>2/9</td>
<td>Ethical and Legal Issues in Group Counseling <em>Evolution of a Group-DVD</em></td>
<td>Corey Ch. 3, Yalom Ch. 1</td>
<td>Integration 1</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Process Group Meeting 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>2/16</td>
<td>Basics of Group Therapy: Theoretical Approaches &amp; Techniques Part 1</td>
<td>Corey Ch. 4, Yalom Ch. 2 &amp; 3</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Process Group Meeting 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>2/23</td>
<td>Theoretical Approaches &amp; Techniques Part 2</td>
<td>Yalom Ch. 4, 5, 6</td>
<td>Integration 2</td>
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<td>Process Group Meeting 3</td>
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<td>3/2</td>
<td>Forming a Group; Therapeutic Factors</td>
<td>Corey Ch. 5 &amp; 6</td>
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<td>Process Group Meeting 4</td>
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<td>3/9</td>
<td>Initial Stage of a Group</td>
<td>Yalom Ch. 8 &amp; 9</td>
<td>Integration 3</td>
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<td>Process Group Meeting 5</td>
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<td>3/16</td>
<td>Transition Stage of a Group</td>
<td>Corey Ch. 7, Yalom Ch. 10</td>
<td>Group Proposal</td>
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<td>Process Group Meeting 6</td>
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<td>3/23*</td>
<td><em>No Class: Spring Break</em></td>
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<td>3/30</td>
<td>Working Stage of a Group</td>
<td>Corey Ch. 8, Yalom Ch. 11</td>
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<td>Process Group Meeting 7</td>
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<td>4/6</td>
<td><em>No Class: Community Release for Group Observation</em></td>
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<td>4/13</td>
<td>Final Stage of a Group</td>
<td>Corey Ch. 9, Yalom Ch. 12</td>
<td>Group Observation Reaction Paper</td>
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<td>4/20</td>
<td>Interpersonal Process</td>
<td>Yalom Ch. 13 &amp; 14</td>
<td>Integration 4</td>
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<td>4/27</td>
<td>Current Issues &amp; Models</td>
<td>Corey Ch. 10 &amp; 11, Yalom Ch. 15</td>
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<td>5/4</td>
<td>Student Presentations</td>
<td>Yalom Ch. 16</td>
<td>Present Group Proposal</td>
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<tr>
<td>5/11</td>
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<td>5/18</td>
<td>Final Day 12/15 12:15</td>
<td></td>
<td>Group Participation Reflection Due</td>
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**Supplemental Readings**

**Web Sites**

- American Group Psychotherapy Association (AGPA): [www.agpa.org](http://www.agpa.org)
- Association for Specialists in Group Work (ASGW): [www.asgw.org](http://www.asgw.org)
- American Psychology and Group Psychotherapy, Division 49 of APA: [www.apa.org](http://www.apa.org)

**Books**


Scholarly Articles


