

Seattle University
School of Theology and Ministry
901 12th Street, Hunthausen Hall
Seattle, WA 98122-1090

Winter Quarter 2008

STMC 554.01—Group Counseling

Hunthausen Rm. 150
Wed. 9:00 a.m. to 11:50 a.m.

Keith A. Brehob, SJ, PhD, LICSW

Hunthausen Hall 221
Office Hours: After class or by appointment.

Resources and Texts

Yalom, Irvin and Molyn Leszcz. *The Theory and Practice of Group Psychotherapy 5th Ed.*
New York: Basic Books, 2005.

Rutan, Scott, Walter Stone, and Joseph Shay. *Psychodynamic Group Psychotherapy 4th Ed.* New York: The Guilford Press, 2007.

SU Angel Website for this course: (logon with your SU email user name and password) <https://angel.seattleu.edu/angel/frameIndex.htm>. You can also access this site by typing "angel" into the search box of SU's homepage. Additional readings and information will be posted on this site.

Course Description

This course will examine the grounding theories and basic therapeutic principles and techniques associated with effective group counseling. The class sessions are divided into two parts: 1) the theory and clinical practice of group counseling and 2) an experiential training group experience. Topics included in this course are the most common types of therapeutic groups, client selection and screening for groups, the structure of groups, developmental aspects of therapeutic group formation, styles/techniques of group facilitation, and dealing with resistance/relapse in group counseling.

Course Objectives and Goals

- Through readings, class discussions, and class exercises, the Pastoral Counselor in training (PCT) will learn the psychosocial theories supporting the different styles/methods of group counseling.
- The PCT will learn the basic dynamics of group processes and be able to analyze/name the basic elements of all therapeutic groups.
- By observing an active therapeutic group and interviewing the group's facilitator, the PCT will experience examples of working counseling groups in the community.
- By active participation in the experiential training group (50 minutes of each class period), the PCT will experience multiple dynamics associated with membership in a therapeutic group.
- The PCT will gain practical skills in group counseling techniques by being given the opportunity to function as the co-facilitator of the experiential training group.

- By choosing a contemporary mental health issue and designing a therapeutic group model to address the problem, the PCT will gain practical skills in planning and structuring therapeutic groups.

The organizing theme of Seattle University's graduate programs in Pastoral Counseling can be summarized by the following mission statement: "Preparing students for high quality work in multiple settings by providing solid theological, psychological, and clinical education/training." To this end, this course is designed to meet the core content, coursework equivalency requirement in the area of "counseling groups" in the mental health counselor education and licensing guidelines for Washington State. (WAC 246-809-221, last updated 5/20/05).

Requirements

Attendance: Class sessions are the primary means by which the instructor and the Pastoral Counselors in training can share the material introduced in the assigned readings and other experiential activities. Therefore, attendance at all sessions of the course is essential, and absences will negatively affect your final course grade. If you know you will need to miss more than one class session during this quarter, please think seriously about taking this core course at a different time.

Participation: Directly related to attendance is the importance of active preparation and participation in all class activities, exercises, and discussions. A counselor education course of this type requires that all students read and understand assigned materials; learn a complex lexicon of technical terms and definitions; and demonstrate verbally and in writing that the material covered in this course is not only understood but can actively be used in your professional work with clients and colleagues. Appropriate and active participation in the experiential training group portion of this course is also required for successful completion of the course.

Group Observation Assignment: Each student is required to observe, analyze, and share with the class his or her experience as an observer of one or more active therapeutic group sessions. This assignment requires each student to identify an active therapeutic group in the community, ask permission of the group therapist to observe one or more sessions, sit silently outside the group in order to objectively observe the group process, debrief privately with the group facilitator after the session, reflect on the experience, and share the experience with the class at a date and time to be coordinated with the instructor.

Focal Group Project: Each student will identify a mental health issue or problem of personal interest and design a counseling group focused on therapeutic interventions specific to the identified issue or problem. The project plan will be organized and efficiently/effectively written in a style that will clearly communicate to the instructor (and possible future administrators) the beneficial elements of the proposed group:

- The mental health issue or problem that will be addressed by the group;
- The pastoral, spiritual, or theological elements of the issue/problem and how these dynamics will be included in or addressed by the group;
- Current research on the issue/problem as found in professional journals (minimum 2 articles attached to the written project), academic texts, or personal interviews with experts;
- The rationale for the selection and screening of clients for the group;

- The optimal size, session time, duration, and cost/fee of the proposed group;
- The psychological theory and/or group method that will be used predominately in the group (e.g., psychodynamic, cognitive-behavioral, 12 Step, psychodrama, art/music/play, etc.);
- The participation of medical professionals and/or the necessity of psychotropic drugs for membership in the group;
- The structure of the group (e.g., closed/open, co-therapist or not, stated agenda, starting and ending the group, group process of the meeting, attendance expectations, homework or not, activities requiring special rooms or equipment, etc.);
- The ground rules of the group;
- The concepts, therapeutic goals, and skills on which the group is based;
- In general, the interventions that will be most helpful for meeting the goals of this type of group;
- The method for measuring/assessing when and if the group goals/skills are reached;
- Hard copies (added in an appendix) of any homework handouts, posters, assessment instruments, or other printed materials needed for the successful facilitation of the group;
- Identification of problems, expected resistance, or relapse dynamics specific to the issue/problem and how these will be addressed by the facilitator/s;
- Post-group referral or follow-up procedures if warranted;
- A bibliography of sources that were used in researching and designing the group.
- Possible Outline for the Written Report (each report will differ):
 - Title
 - Introduction
 - Selection and Screening
 - Time and Duration
 - Structure
 - Goals
 - Starting the Group
 - Main Concepts and Skills (the work of the group)
 - Main Interventions (specific to concepts and skills, possibly organized by weeks)
 - Criteria for Measuring Change
 - Resistance
 - Relapse Prevention
 - Termination, Referral, or Follow-up
 - Bibliography or References
 - Appendices
 - (attach two articles from professional journals)

Course Calendar

Week One: Introduction to Group Counseling.

Week Two: Therapeutic Factors in Group Counseling: Faith, Hope, and Love.

Week Three: Selecting the Therapist/s and the Clients.

Week Four: Place, Time, Size, Duration, and Structure of Therapeutic Groups.

Week Five: Focal Group I (topic TBA).

Week Six: Group Development in the Therapeutic Process: The beginning, the work, and the end.

Week Seven: Group Observation Sharing.

Week Eight: Dealing with Difficult Clients, Resistance, and Relapse.

Week Nine: Special Issues in Group Counseling.

Week Ten: Review, Final Topics, and Course Evaluation.

Evaluation/Grading

Grading for attendance/participation, the group observation assignment, and the focal group project will be assessed according to Seattle University's Grading System: A = Superior Performance; B = Good Performance; and C = Minimal Performance for graduate courses.

The final course grade will be the combination of the student's weighted performance on each requirement for the course:

- 30% **Attendance/Participation:** Mastery of information in the assigned readings demonstrated by active participation, using appropriate technical language, in all course exercises and discussions. (Note: Students will NOT be given a participation grade for the training group; weekly attendance in the training group is sufficient to meet the instructor's expectation for this portion of the class.)
- 30% **Group Observation Assignment.**
- 40% **Focal Group Project** (written report due on or before last class session at 9:00 a.m.).

If you would like the instructor to return your graded Focal Group Project and final course grade to you at the end of the quarter, please include with your final assignment a self-addressed stamped envelop. If you would like to collect your graded papers at the STM receptionist desk, include with your paper a large envelop on which you write your name and all relevant course information (i.e., Brehob—STMC 554 Group Counseling). All uncollected papers will be destroyed 30 days after the last class session.

If you will need special accommodations for a diagnosed learning disability or physical limitation, follow the policies and procedures outlined in your student handbook, obtain the necessary materials from the appropriate university officials, and present the required documentation to the instructor by the second week of class so that appropriate accommodations can be arranged.

Bibliography

- Bieling, Peter, Randi McCabe, and Martin Antony. *Cognitive Behavioral Therapy in Groups*. New York: The Guilford Press, 2006.
- Corey, Gerald and Marianne Corey. *Groups: Process and Practice*. Pacific Grove: Brooks/Cole Publishing Comp., 2005.
- Hicks, James W. *50 Signs of Mental Illness*. New Haven: Yale U. P., 2005.
- McKay, Matthew and Kim Paleg, Eds. *Focal Group Psychotherapy*. Oakland: New Harbinger Publications, Inc., 1992.
- Roth, Jeffrey. *Group Psychotherapy and Recovery from Addiction: Carrying the Message*. New York: The Haworth Press, 2004.
- Rutan, Scott, Walter Stone, and Joseph Shay. *Psychodynamic Group Psychotherapy 4th Ed*. New York: The Guilford Press, 2007.
- Sauder, Brian and Larry Kreider. *Counseling Basics for Small Group Leaders*. Dove Christian Fellowship International, 2000.
- Scharf, Richard S. *Theories of Psychotherapy and Counseling: Concepts and Cases*. 4th Ed. Stamford, CT: Brooks/Cole, 2007.
- Wicks, Robert J., Richard D. Parsons, and Donald Capps, Editors. *Clinical Handbook of Pastoral Counseling, Volume 1*. Expanded Edition. New York: Integration Books, 1985.
- Wicks, Robert J., and Richard D. Parsons, Editors. *Clinical Handbook of Pastoral Counseling, Volume 2*. Expanded Edition. New York: Integration Books, 1993.
- Yalom, Irvin and Modyn Leszcz. *The Theory and Practice of Group Psychotherapy 5th Ed*. New York: Basic Books, 2005.
- Zuckerman, Edward L. *Clinician's Thesaurus: The Guidebook for Writing Psychological Reports*. 6th Ed. New York: Guilford Press, 2005.

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