

EMMANUEL BIBLE COLLEGE
GS212AA Group Dynamics
Winter, 2010

Mission Statement

Emmanuel Bible College provides Bible-based post-secondary education equipping women and men to think, live, serve and lead as mature Christians in the Church and in the world.

Instructor

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Course Description

This course provides an examination of the theory, principles, and techniques of working with small groups in a variety of contexts. Attention is given to social climate, membership and leadership functions, ethics and other variables as they relate to their effect on the group process and individual behaviour. Group work with specific populations will be discussed. Interventions to address challenging group dynamics will be explored. Group simulations (role play) will be used to facilitate an experiential component to the learning.

Course Objectives

1. Understand different kinds of groups and their functions.
2. Recognize typical stages of group development.
3. Understand the role of the group leader in different types of groups, and at different stages of development.
4. Learn effective interventions to promote safety and growth in groups.
5. Gain experience as a participant and/or leader in small group simulations.
6. Be able to analyze and evaluate the interactions and processes of a group using the basic concepts learned in this course.

Text

Corey, G & Corey M. (2010). *Groups: Process and Practice, 8th Edition*. Pacific Grove: California, Brooks/Cole Publishing Company.

Alternate editions of the text are acceptable.

Additional readings will be put on reserve at the library.

Evaluation

Group reflection paper (35%), Mid-term exam (30%), Final exam (35%)

Reflection Paper

Students will be required to write a reflection paper that analyzes a group role-play scenario that will be done in class. Students will be able to choose one role play from a number that will be enacted. The assignment will ask students to address the following issues:

- A. What kind of group was being run? Why do you think this? Commenting on the characteristics of the type of group and how you see these in the role-play would be helpful.
- B. Did the group appear to be a safe and healthy environment, and what did the leader do to facilitate this? Conversely, if the group appeared unhealthy, where did the leader go wrong? What could he or she have done to promote safety?
- C. What universal therapeutic factors were present in the group, or absent from it? For those that were absent, please list those that you think would have been particularly helpful, and explain why. For those that were present, please explain where you saw them in action.
- D. What stage of development was the group in? Why do you think this?
- E. What are the main tasks of the leader in this stage, and how well did the leader seem to accomplish these tasks?
- F. Describe any problem behaviors or group roles that were present. Please highlight any apparent issues of transference or counter-transference.
- G. Describe any helpful group roles that were present.

- H. What skills or interventions did the leader utilize in this group? Do you think they were effective? Why or why not? What skills were missed that might have been helpful? Why do you think this?
- I. Is this a group that you would want to be a part of? Why or why not?

Please support all of your conclusions with an explanation, making reference to the role-play and related information from the text or reserve readings.

Writing Instructions

All thoughts, quotations and ideas that were not created originally by you, yourself, must be referenced using the **APA** style. *If you do not reference others' ideas you will fail the assignment automatically.* Failure to use the APA format correctly will result in lost marks. You must include with your paper a copy of the role-play you are analyzing. Role-play scripts will be handed out in class. All segments of this paper must be typed and double-spaced. Gender inclusive language must be used. A paper length of 8-10 pages is recommended. Recognize, however, that it is vital to balance quality with quantity of writing. Edit your work carefully because spelling, punctuation and grammar will be marked.

Late Assignments

Assignments received after the due date will lose 5% for each week-day they are late. Extensions for *extraordinary circumstances* (e.g. serious illness or injury, death of a loved one etc.) must be approved by the instructor *prior to the due date*. Documentation validating the circumstance may be required. Extensions will *not* be granted for being “busy.”

Examinations

The **mid-term exam** will cover all the material presented prior to the exam. The format will be short answers.

The **final exam** will cover material from the entire course. The format will be short answers and possibly case analysis.

Attendance

The EBC policy on attendance will be followed. More than one unexcused absence will result in a loss of 6% for each class missed. To have an absence marked as excused, you need to communicate with your professor the legitimate reason for the absence as soon as you are able. Absence due to illness may need to be validated with a doctor's note. More than 3 unexcused absences may result in failure of the course. If you feel you need to be exempt from this policy, please contact the Academic Dean and the instructor.

Reading and Lecture Schedule

January 15

-Review of syllabus, introductions and goal-setting, an integrated theory of group work, different kinds of groups (Corey and Corey Chapter 1; Kottler Chapter 1, on reserve)

January 22

-Helpful personal qualities for group leaders, essential leadership skills, the co-leadership model (Corey and Corey Chapter 2)

January 29

-Ethical issues associated with group work, multiculturalism (Corey and Corey Chapter 3)

February 5

-Stage theory overview

-The *pre-group stage*: connecting with possible members, prescreening, practical considerations and other preliminary issues (Corey and Corey Chapter 4)

February 12

-The *initial stage*: characteristics of this stage, leader and member roles, creating trust and safety, goal setting, common issues (Corey and Corey Chapter 5)

February 19

Mid-term exam, 90 minutes

-The *transition stage*: characteristics of this stage, problem behaviors and difficult members, transference, common issues (Corey and Corey Chapter 6)

February 26
Reading Week, no class

March 5

-The *working stage*: characteristics, progressing to this stage, working with fear, important tasks, therapeutic factors, common issues (Corey and Corey Chapter 7; Yalom Chapter 1, on reserve)

-Role-play number one

March 12

-The *final stage*: characteristics, important tasks, termination, evaluation, follow-up, common issues (Corey and Corey Chapter 8)

-Role-play number two

March 19

Group work with special populations: groups for children or adolescents (Corey and Corey Chapters 9 and 10)

-Role-play number three

March 26

-Group work with special populations: groups for adults or the elderly (Corey and Corey Chapters 11 and 12)

-Paper is due

April 2

Good Friday, no class

April 9

-Counselling and therapy groups, theories of intervention (Kottler Chapter 6, on reserve).

See Exam Schedule for Final Exam

Bibliography

Corey, M.S. & Corey G. (1992). *Groups process and practice* (4th Ed.). Pacific Grove: Brooks/Cole Publishing Company.

Gangel, K.O. (1989). *Feeding and leading*. Wheaton: Victor Books.

- Gumaer, J. (1984). *Counselling and therapy for children*. New York: The Free Press.
- Shulman, L. (1979). *The skills of helping: individuals and groups*. Itasca: Peacock Publishers Inc.
- Wickham, E. (1993). *Group treatment in social work, an integration of theory and practice*, Toronto: Thompson Educational Publishing, Inc..
- Yalom, I.D. (1985). *The theory and practice of group psychotherapy* (3rd Ed.). New York: Basic Books.