PURPOSE OF THE COURSE

The course is designed around the competencies required for the basic training in the development, guidance, leadership and conduction of groups. Both theoretical and practical aspects are emphasized, with readings, discussion, and participation as to allow the gaining of knowledge about setting group experiences of a varied nature.

COURSE CONTENT

The content of the course deals with the establishment of principles and the development of strategies in the conduction of therapeutic interventions as carried out in and through a group. The modality of the course is academic-clinical. Besides the academic stipulations of the course, the active participation in an ongoing experiential group by each class member is expected, as to optimize learning along several integrated events. Such concomitant experience is not intended to be a therapeutic endeavor, although tacit therapeutic aspects/processes may be present in any group process. Guidelines for such group experiences are provided as to ensure a safe, functional and integrated interpersonal learning.

Class participants are expected to gain knowledge and skills in the following areas:

- Group process and dynamics. Distinctiveness of diverse groups
- Identify the major clinical orientations in the field of group therapy
- Identify counseling techniques at various stages of the group process
- Acquisition of knowledge and understanding of ethical considerations in group counseling
- Develop basic skills in group leadership
- Awareness of cultural issues in the process of group counseling
- Develop a proposal for, organize and lead a group


**Recommended for Further Reading:**


**COURSE LOGISTICS AND ASSIGNMENTS**

**Class participation and attendance.** Class meetings are mandatory and designed to provide academic and experiential learning. Each student will be assigned to a group, facilitated by the rotating leadership of two co-leaders from among the participants. The leaders’ responsibility will be to facilitate the group dynamics during the duration of the term. The observer will present a progress report to the class at the beginning of each lecture period. There will be an opportunity for discussion with the professor concerning the dynamic development of the group. Students benefit from keeping a daily journal of their experiences as a member of the group sessions, which becomes a functional impression in the writing of an experiential, yet academically sound paper.

**A non-graded assignment:** As a final, departing contribution to the experiential group process, each group member will be expected to provide to every other member a summary paper in which a personal/ reflective analysis of the contributions-positive and negative-which were made by each person in the group is offered as a “departure gift” and termination exercise. Assign a (non-grade) evaluation to each member based upon (1) participation with openness; (2) genuineness, empathy and regard for others; (3) fostering cohesiveness; (4) unique contributions in terms of goals, tasks or maintenance aspects of the group process. Copies to the instructor shall be provided. Limit yourself to one page per member.

1. Exam. A take home exam will be provided in a sealed envelope on the last **Friday, May 11th.** The subject matter will be drawn from the textbooks and class
presentations/discussions. Mixed content: T/F, multiple choice, and short answers. After reviewing the course material, the student will respond to the exam’s questions after opening the envelope, having a limit of three hours from such time to finish it. The answers to the exam will be returned (via mail, post marked before or on Tuesday, June 19th 2012. This requirement accounts for 25% of the final grade.

2. Reading/Critique of Textbooks.

a. Reading. Each student is expected to read/study the required texts, plus any recommended works, handouts and materials relevant to the course. The readings will be registered in a reading log, noting the dates, the sources and the number of pages per reading and a cumulative total at the end. The expected number of pages ranges from 1000 to 2000, with corresponding grades assigned (C’s to A’s).

b. Critique. Completion of this requirement includes a critique of both textbooks, Corey & Corey and Yalom’s, highlighting the major themes, topics of special interest, pinpointing strengths and weaknesses as you perceive such, and how these apply to your own development as a therapist. The length of each critique/report is between 2-3 pages, double spaced. The combined reading log and critiques will account for 20 % of the final grade. Due on July 22th.

3. Reflective/Experiential/Academic Paper based upon the group experience. The student will keep a personal journal of the experience, noting both the diverse aspects of the content and the dynamic processes of the group. As a participant-observer aimed with experiential and academic gifts, the student will describe the interactions, the flow of thoughts, emotions, dynamic interactions, etc. which comprised the group process in terms of roles, changes, communication patterns/styles/effects, goals, expectations, and the development (or lack) of cohesiveness. Such experiential data will provide the basic material for analytical musings along the student’s understanding of group dynamics and processes (communication, decision-making, conflict resolution, leadership, etc.) along a theoretical framework/paradigm which might apply. A constructive critique is expected, plus any possible interventions that might have rendered the group an entity that in the student’s perception would have further reflected desirability, functionality or meaningfulness. Not to exceed 7 pp. double-spaced. Due on June 11th. The assignment accounts for 25% of the final grade.

4. A proposal for a therapeutic/growth group. Based upon the course’s thrust and content, it will include the rationale for its existence, its formation, and development. The proposal will focus on suggested activities/processes applicable to a particular
theme/problem/area of growth group within the context of a community of people affiliated on voluntary basis (church, congregation, organization). Not to exceed 10 pages. The value of such assignment is 30% of the final grade. **Due: July 22th.**

**ASSESSMENT OF PERFORMANCE**

The evaluation of the course work will be based upon (1) exam (25%); (2) reading/book reports (20%); (3) participation in the group experience and the experiential paper (25%); and (4) the outline of a group-counseling proposal (30%).

**TOPICS FOR THE WEEK**

   **Reading:** Corey et al. Chapters 1 & 2; Yalom Chapters 1 & 2.  
   **Reading:** Corey et al. Chapter 3; Yalom Chapter 14.

2. **Formation of groups and initial stages.** Group goals Stages of group development. Group process continued  
   **Reading:** Corey et al. Chapter 4; Yalom Chapter 8 & 9.  
   **Reading:** Corey et al. Chapters 5 & 6

3. **Group dynamics: Problems and conflicts within groups**  
   **Reading:** Corey et al. Chapters 7 & 8; Yalom 12 & 13.  
   **Reading:** Yalom Chapter 5.

4. **Focal groups: Set up and running groups focusing on specific problems**  
   Focal groups: Specific problems focused upon -strategies  
   **Reading:** Corey et al. Chapters 9 & 10; Yalom Chapter 15.  
   **Reading:** Corey et al. Chapters 11 & 12.

5. **Church groups: Focal, specific emphasis**  
   Growth groups; discipleship. Evaluating the efficacy of groups  
   **Reading:** Yalom Chapters 15, 16.


Peace, R. *Small group evangelism*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity.


**Journals as sources of articles for a diversity of topics:**

*Journal for Specialists in Group Work*
*Journal of Counseling Psychology*
*International Journal of Group Psychotherapy*
Syllabus Addendum

Academic Standards
Cheating and plagiarism are considered serious breaches of personal and academic integrity. Cheating involves, but is not necessarily limited to, the use of unauthorized sources of information during an examination or the submission of the same (or substantially same) work for credit in two or more courses without the knowledge and consent of the instructors. Plagiarism involves the use of another person’s distinctive ideas or words, whether published or unpublished, and representing them as one’s own instead of giving proper credit to the source. Plagiarism can also involve over dependence on other source material for the scope and substance of one’s writing. Such breaches in academic standards often result in a failing grade as well as other corrective measures. For more information, please consult the Student Handbook.

ADA Policy
The seminary complies with the provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act. A student with a qualifying and authenticated disability who is in need of accommodations, should petition the seminary in accordance with the stated guidelines in the Student Handbook.

Cancellation of Class
In the event the seminary has to cancel a class meeting (impending storm, professor illness, etc.), the Registration Office will send out an email (via the GCTS email account) notification to all students registered in the respective course. If the cancelation occurs the day of the scheduled meeting, the Registration Office will also attempt to contact students via their primary phone contact on record. The professor will contact the students (via GCTS account) regarding make-up. If a weekend class is cancelled, the class will be made up during the scheduled Make-Up weekend (see the academic calendar for the designated dates). For more info, consult your Student Handbook.

Extension Policy
Arrangements for submission of late work at a date on or before the “last day to submit written work,” as noted on the seminary’s Academic Calendar, are made between the student and professor. Formal petition to the Registration Office is not required at this time. This includes arrangements for the rescheduling of final exams.

However, course work (reading and written) to be submitted after the publicized calendar due date, must be approved by the Registration Office. An extension form, available online, must be submitted to the Registration Office prior to the “last day to submit written work.” Requests received after this date will either be denied or incur additional penalty. For a full discussion of this policy, please consult the Student Handbook.

Grades
Faculty have six weeks from the course work due date to submit a final grade. Grades are posted on-line within twenty-four hours of receipt from the professor. Students are expected to check their CAMS student portal in order to access posted grades (unless instructed otherwise). Those individuals who need an official grade report issued to a third party should put their request in writing to the Registration Office.

Returned Work
Submitted hard-copy course work will be returned to the students if they provide a self addressed and postage-paid envelope with their final work. Work submitted without the appropriate envelope will be destroyed after the grade has been assessed and issued.