

Argosy University
Master of Arts in Professional Counseling

Course Syllabus

Course title: PC 6505 Group Counseling

Course number and section: PC 6505 BLB

Course dates and on-campus meeting dates and times:

Course dates: October 31 through December 20, 2005

On-campus meeting dates: November 18-20 and December 16-18, 2005

Course location: Argosy University Atlanta campus, room TBA

Instructor's name: Mary Kate Reese, Ph.D., L.P.C.

Instructor's general availability to students: I usually check my email daily and will respond to questions received via email within 24-48 hours. If sending me an email, **please** put "PC 6505" in the subject line to alert me that your message is from a student. If you need a more immediate response during the week, please call my office voicemail and leave a message (770-407-1030) and I will return your call within 24 hours.

Instructor's Phone numbers and E-Mail address:

Office: (770) 407-1030

Fax: (770) 671-0476

Email: mkreese@argosyu.edu

COURSE DESCRIPTION/OBJECTIVES:

A broad understanding of group development, dynamics, and counseling theories is explored. Group leadership styles are discussed in addition to basic and advanced group counseling methods and skills. Several different approaches to conducting group counseling are reviewed.

Learning Outcomes:

- 1) Students will demonstrate a knowledge of the eleven therapeutic factors which are intrinsic to the group counseling process.
- 2) Students will identify the typical stages of group development and basic group theory principles.
- 3) Students will learn to facilitate a group which focuses on process and "here and now" issues.
- 4) Students will demonstrate the ability to modify a prototypic group to the needs of a particular setting, issue, or purpose.
- 5) Students will demonstrate an understanding of the ethical and professional issues relevant to group therapy.
- 6) Students will demonstrate knowledge of the basic techniques/strategies that are useful in leading groups and that differentiate group from individual counseling.
- 7) Students will demonstrate an understanding of the use of various theoretical approaches to group counseling.
- 8) Students will understand how to work with diverse populations in group settings.

Methods of Assessment/Evaluation:

- 1) Midterm Exam

- 2) Final Exam
- 3) Group Visits outside of class and write-up of the experience (12-step meetings)
- 4) Paper: Group Proposal (using correct APA publication format)
- 5) Class Participation
- 6) Discussion Questions (online)

Required Text(s)/Readings:

TEXTS:

Yalom, I.D. (2005). *The theory and practice of group psychotherapy* (5th edition). NY: BasicBooks.

Corey, G. (2004). *Theory and Practice of Group Counseling, 6th edition*. Wadsworth Publishing.

Corey, G. (2004). *Student Manual for Corey's Theory and Practice of Group Counseling, 6th Edition*. Wadsworth Publishing.

ADDITIONAL REQUIRED READINGS: Handouts/readings as assigned in class.

Grading policy:

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

- 1) Completion of reading assignments prior to each weekend of class.
- 2) Active participation in class discussions and activities.
- 3) Completion of assigned paper (group proposal).
- 4) Completion of midterm, final exam, and other class quizzes.
- 5) Attendance at two open 12-step meetings and completion of a summary of each experience.
- 6) Active participation in responding to online Discussion Questions posted by the instructor through Argosy Online during assigned weeks.

GRADING CRITERIA

Midterm	50 points
Final	50 points
Group Proposal	80 points
12 Step Meeting Summaries	20 points
Participation	80 points
Discussion Questions (online)	20 points (5 points each week a question is assigned)

TOTAL POINTS POSSIBLE: 300 points

Grading scale:

A	93-100%	mastery of content/concepts	(279-300 points)
A-	90-92		(270-278 points)
B+	87-89		(261-269 points)
B	83-86	good understanding of material	(249-260 points)
B-	80-82		(240-248 points)
C+	77-79		(231-239 points)
C	73-76	rather basic understanding, more work is needed to	(219-230 points)
C-	70-72	perform appropriately and at a professional level	(210-218 points)
F	<70	measured performance indicates material was not adequately understood	

Attendance Policy:

Argosy University requires that all course syllabi include the following statement on attendance: "Any excessive amount of class time missed will negatively impact upon the grade. Weekend Students: More than 3 hours will result in automatic loss of one full letter grade. More than 6 hours missed will result in automatic failure.

Evening Students: More than 6 hours missed will result in loss of one full letter grade. More than 8 hours missed will result in automatic failure.

If you have emergencies that prevent you from attending class, you will most likely be encouraged to withdraw from the class. Please notify your instructor and the program office concerning any anticipated absences. Consult your Argosy Catalog and Program Handbook for information concerning withdrawal policies."

Academic Dishonesty/Plagiarism:

Argosy University seeks to foster a spirit of honesty and integrity. Any work submitted by a student must represent original work produced by that student. Any source used by a student must be documented through normal scholarly references and citations, and the extent to which any sources have been used must be apparent to the reader. The University further considers resubmission of a work produced for one course in a subsequent course or the submission of work done partially or entirely by another to be academic dishonesty. It is the student's responsibility to seek clarification from the course instructor about how much help may be received in completing an assignment or exam or project and what sources may be used. Students found guilty of academic dishonesty or plagiarism shall be subject to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal from the University.

If you are unsure what constitutes plagiarism, visit the following web site:

http://www.turnitin.com/research_site/e_home.html. Argosy University routinely submits student papers to Turnitin.com for Originality Reports. Papers submitted to Turnitin are checked against published works, content on the Internet, and every other paper submitted to Turnitin.

ADA Information:

It is the policy of the Argosy University/Atlanta to make reasonable accommodations for qualified students with disabilities, in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). If a student with disabilities needs accommodations to complete the instructor's course requirements, the student must notify the Director of Student Services. Procedure for documenting student disability and the development of reasonable accommodation will be provided to students upon request.

TECHNICAL SUPPORT: IF YOU ARE HAVING ANY TROUBLE ACCESSING THE ONLINE COMPONENT OF THIS COURSE (THROUGH <http://online.argosyu.edu>) OR POSTING ON THE DISCUSSION BOARDS, REMEMBER THAT TECHNICAL SUPPORT IS AVAILABLE 24 HOURS A DAY TO ASSIST YOU! Call Embanet at 1-866-256-5883 or email support@embanet.com.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

Note: Class Participation will be scored according to: (1) Appropriate participation in discussions, (2) Active participation in role-plays; (3) Openness to feedback from teacher and other students; (4) Providing helpful and appropriate feedback to other students; (5) Respect for others' opinions; (6) Attendance for full time that class meetings are in session.

IMPORTANT NOTE: “Active Participation” means that you may choose to participate in different ways throughout the in-class weekend. While you are expected to participate in some of the group exercises and experiences as a member (in the “inner circle”) in order to receive the benefit of the experiences, you will usually have some choices around in which of these you participate. Class members who are taking the outside observer role during group exercises (in the “outer circle”) have an important role in the discussions after each exercise as well. We will have further discussions in class about this subject before conducting any in-depth exercises or groups.

Instructions for assignments and additional information:

PAPER: A GROUP PROPOSAL

NOTE: YOU MUST GET INSTRUCTOR APPROVAL FOR YOUR PROPOSED GROUP BEFORE PROCEEDING WITH YOUR PAPER! YOU WILL BE REQUIRED TO GIVE ME A ONE-PARAGRAPH DESCRIPTION OF YOUR PROPOSED GROUP THE FIRST NIGHT OF CLASS. MANY OF THE IMPORTANT ISSUES WHICH NEED TO BE ADDRESSED IN YOUR PAPER WILL BE ELABORATED ON IN CLASS, SO DO NOT WRITE THE PAPER TOO EARLY. YOU MAY, HOWEVER, BEGIN TO NARROW YOUR FOCUS AND GATHER PRELIMINARY REFERENCES.

Each student will be required to develop a group aimed at treating a disorder or population of your choice. A review of the current literature (the past 10 years) should support the use of your chosen group type with the specific population you are choosing. You must include (and incorporate, in proper APA Publication Manual format, into your paper) a reference list of 6-10 articles from professional (peer-reviewed) journals that show **research support** for your proposal. The group proposal should be typed, double-spaced, and 7-9 pages (maximum) in length. Please use the following format to write your paper. **The paper must also follow correct APA Publication Manual format!** (assignment adapted from Corey’s Student Manual)

Breakdown of points for grading: 80 points total

Group Description: 4 points

Rationale: 20 points

Group Leaders: 3 points

Selection of Members and Group Flier: 15 points

Structure of the Group: 20 points

Evaluation: 3 points

Writing Skills (spelling, grammar, clarity, organization, correct APA format): 15 points

GUIDELINES FOR WRITING A PROPOSAL FOR A GROUP

A clear and convincing proposal is often essential for translating a good idea for a group into actual practice. If you are going to create a group under the auspices of your supervisors or an agency, you will probably have to explain your rationale and proposed methods. It is useful to write out your proposal, for doing so can help you conceptualize your goals, procedures, and strategies for evaluation.

The following guidelines provide you with some direction in designing a group. To gain practice in developing, writing, and presenting a proposal, think of a group that you'd eventually like to organize. Once you have decided on a particular type of group (for example, a group for parents of 4-12-year-olds who want to learn better child-rearing skills, a group for children whose parents have divorced in an elementary school, or a group for adolescents who are having academic problems in school), consider the following questions in drafting your proposal. **These questions are just starting points for your writing, which should be much more elaborate in each section.**

GROUP DESCRIPTION

1. What type of group will you create? Will it be a counseling group? a therapy group? a personal-growth group? Will it be long term or short term?
2. Whom is the group for? Is it for a particular population, such as children in an elementary school? for outpatients in a community mental-health center? for substance abusers in a residential setting? for parents who are having major problems in relating to their children? for couples who hope to learn better communication skills?
3. What led you to choose this particular type of group for your proposal (what is your interest in the topic?)

RATIONALE

4. What are your goals for this group; that is, what will members gain from participating in the group? What are the short-term goals? Long-term goals? Are the goals and objectives specific? How will these goals be accomplished in a group setting? How will the long-range goals be evaluated during the course of the group and once it comes to an end?
5. Why is there a need for such a group? In what ways would a group provide definite advantages over individual counseling?
6. What is the research support for this project? Do you have a clear and convincing rationale for your group? Are you able to answer questions that might be raised? (Include your summary of relevant literature here)

GROUP LEADERS

7. Who will lead the group? What are his or her qualifications? If you will be leading the group, will you be doing so alone, or will you be working with a co-leader?
8. If working with a co-leader, describe how you plan to handle the division of responsibilities/roles/etc. between leaders.

SELECTION OF MEMBERS

9. What are some of the ways in which you will announce your group and recruit members for it? Where will you get members? What will you want to convey in any written announcements? **You will need to create and attach to your paper an actual flyer type advertisement for your group.**
10. What kind of screening and selection procedures will be used? What is the rationale for using these particular procedures? Whom will you include, and whom might you exclude?
11. How many members will be in the group? Where will the group meet? How often will it meet? How long will each meeting last? Will new people be allowed to join the group once it has started (will it be closed or open)?

STRUCTURE OF THE GROUP

12. What structure will the group have? Will leaders use a particular theoretical orientation? Explain in detail how your theoretical orientation will be demonstrated through the types of activities or approaches in this group. Will it be designed around special topics and issues? Will there be a "here and now" focus? What topics are likely to be the focus of the group?

13. How will members be prepared to derive the maximum benefit from the group? What ground rules will the group have?

14. Will you ask members to formulate contracts as a basis for structuring the sessions? What are some advantages and disadvantages of using contracts for your particular group?

15. How will you handle the fact that people will be taking some risks by participating in the group? What will you tell them about these risks, and what will you do to safeguard them from unnecessary risks? Will you take any special precautions with minors?

16. Will your group be voluntary or mandatory? If the members are required to attend, what measures are you taking to increase the chances of gaining their cooperation? How might you deal with the resistance of members who did not want to participate?

17. What specific ethical considerations may need to be addressed in your group? Does your proposal reflect an awareness of ethical practice? What ethical guidelines will you follow? [Be sure to review “Association for Specialists in Group Work (ASGW) Best Practice Guidelines” for this section]

18. What techniques and procedures might you employ in the group? Will there be structured exercises? Will you emphasize role-playing? Will members be expected to practice new skills outside of the group sessions?

19. To what extent will you be available for individual consultation with group members? If the members are having difficulties resulting from the group, are you willing to meet with them privately, or do you expect them to bring up these problems in the group? When might you suggest a referral for a particular member?

EVALUATION

20. What evaluation procedures do you plan? Will you evaluate each session? If so, how? Once the group ends, what methods might you use to assess the overall effectiveness of the group?

21. What follow-up procedures might you use? Will you meet each member privately to discuss the degree to which he or she has met personal goals? Will you meet with the group as a whole one or more times for evaluation purposes?



TWELVE STEP MEETING SUMMARIES

Each student is required to attend two **open** 12-step meetings and write a 1-2 page typed, double-spaced summary of each experience. Please note that the meetings **MUST** be Twelve Step Programs (which all have the word “Anonymous” in their title) not a support group of any other type. The first meeting needs to be an open Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) meeting; the other meeting may be any other type [such as Al-Anon, Narcotics Anonymous (NA), Cocaine Anonymous (CA), Overeaters Anonymous (OA), Prescriptions Anonymous, Codependents Anonymous (CODA), or Emotions Anonymous (EA).] If you already participate in a 12-step program, please attend meetings other than the ones you normally attend.

Be sure that the meeting you attend is listed as an “Open” meeting, which means that anyone interested can attend (versus a “Closed” meeting, which is for persons who identify themselves as having the particular issue or addiction which the meeting addresses).

Your typed summary of the experience should include the following:

1. The type, location, day and time of the meeting.
2. Your feelings prior to the meeting, during the meeting, and after the meeting.
3. The topic or theme of the meeting.
4. Observations about the people attending the meeting.
5. What you learned from this experience.

Information on Small Group Experiences PC 6505

The standards developed by the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP, 2001) state, “Over the course of one academic term, students meet for a minimum of 10 clock hours in a small-group activity approved by the program. This planned group requirement is intended to provide direct experiences as a participant in a small group.”

As a program, we strongly support this requirement as an essential component of effective counselor training. Participation in both the didactic and experiential components is required for successful completion of this course. Throughout this class, you will be participating in various group experiences. These may include process groups, topic-focused groups, and/or group exercises from specific theoretical orientations. The goals of these group experiences are: (1) for you to experience what it’s like to be a member of a group; (2) to increase your awareness of self, others, and interpersonal dynamics; and (3) for you to develop an understanding of how your own personal issues and styles of communication may influence your work as a group facilitator.

We do not see any major psychological or physical risks associated with these group experiences. These groups are not intended to be in-depth, psychotherapy groups. The experiences, however, will hopefully increase your awareness of how you behave in group situations, how your behavior affects others, and how others’ behavior affects you. Because of this, the group experience may raise issues for you and feel uncomfortable at times.

As noted, participation is required but you are free to make decisions about what personal information you are willing to share as well as the depth of your disclosures. Your grade for this course will be based on the quality of your graded tests/assignments and upon attendance at group sessions, NOT upon the nature or level of your group disclosures or participation. Full participation in each group session should enhance your learning experience in group counseling, but you will not be penalized if you choose to limit your participation. You decide how much or how little you will disclose and participate in these group experiences.

You have a responsibility as a student to try to get as much from this experience as possible. You also have the right to expect that the facilitator will protect you against undue peer pressure, physical threats, and intimidation. You will be expected to develop an individual goal and to communicate this to the group (ex.: “to increase my comfort level with giving feedback to others on how they impact me”).

Your small group experiences will be lead by your instructor. At times, you may be asked to serve as a process observer and/or co-leader during some group sessions to strengthen your group analysis and leadership skills.

It is essential that we all respect the privacy of our colleagues. Please honor the confidentiality of information disclosed in both the small group experiences and the group class. Confidentiality is difficult to insure in such a large group and people may inadvertently breach confidentiality; it is up to each of us to maintain the integrity of our class, our groups, and our fellow group members by being aware of how we discuss our experiences outside of the small group and class meetings. Virtually all conversation in the small groups is confidential information to be exchanged only among members of that group. In the event a group member reveals information that leads to the suspicion of child abuse or neglect or to the intent to do harm to self or others, confidentiality must be breached to protect those in danger. General observations and insights about group process may be discussed outside the group, but not as an alternative to discussing such matters within the group as well.

As a future counselor, group worker, and group participant in this course, you are expected to learn and adhere to the Association for Specialists in Group Work *Best Practices* (ASGW, 1998) and the American Counseling Association's *Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice* (ACA, 2005).

In accordance with these ethical codes, the instructor of this course is charged with maintaining the integrity of the counseling profession as well as training the students involved with this course.

We hope that your group experiences will be both enjoyable and educational. The guidelines discussed here are important for creating a safe environment for you as a student and group member. Please raise any questions or concerns that you have about the group experiences during the first in-class group and throughout the term.

CLASS SCHEDULE OF READINGS, TOPICS, AND ASSIGNMENTS:

Note: Prior to the first weekend class meeting, please have the following chapters read. Your midterm exam will be based on these chapters:

Yalom Text: Chapters 1-6, 8, 11, 12

Corey Text: Chapters 1-5

Week 1: Oct. 31-Nov. 6

Yalom text:

Ch. 1 The Therapeutic Factors

Ch. 2 Interpersonal Learning

Ch. 3 Group Cohesiveness

Ch. 4 The Therapeutic Factors: An Integration

Corey text:

Ch. 1 Introduction to Group Work

Review information found at the end of the syllabus about how participation is assessed, the guidelines for your Group Proposal Paper and for the two 12 step meeting summaries.

Respond to Discussion Question Online:

Week One question: Take the "Multicultural Counseling Competencies: A Self-Examination" instrument starting on page 9 of your *Student Manual for the theory and practice of group counseling, 6th edition*. You do not need to post your responses or your scores on the Discussion Board. Instead, write and post a summary of the following: (1) Your thoughts, feelings, and reactions while completing this instrument and after seeing your scores, (2) The areas that you identified as strengths and weaknesses, and (3) at least one specific way in which you could increase your multicultural counseling competencies over the next year.

NOTE: Post your response to the question by Saturday at 5 pm EST. Near the end of the week, please go back and read your classmates' responses.

Week 2: November 7-13

Yalom text:

Ch. 5 The Therapist: Basic Tasks

Ch. 6 The Therapist: Working in the Here and Now

Ch. 8 The Selection of Patients

Corey text:

Ch. 2 Group Leadership

Ch. 3 Ethical and Professional Issues in Group Practice

Respond to Discussion Question Online

Week 2 Question: Go to the website for the Association for Specialists in Group Work (ASGW), a division of the American Counseling Association (ACA) at

<http://www.asgw.org/> and explore. For your Discussion Board Question posting this week, share something that you found out about groups or group counseling from this site that was of interest to you. Also, comment on why it might be useful to have a specialty organization such as this one for counselors who do group work.

NOTE: Post your response to the question by Saturday at 5 pm EST. Near the end of the week, please go back and read your classmates' responses.

Week 3: November 14-20

Yalom text:

Ch. 11 In the Beginning

Ch. 12 The Advanced Group

Corey text:

Ch. 4 Early Stages in the Development of a Group

Ch. 5 Later Stages in the Development of a Group

Review prior reading assignments.

Prepare a one paragraph description of your proposed focus for the Group Proposal Paper. The paragraph should include a description of the specific type of group you wish to do, the population who would be appropriate for the group, the setting, and the length. This description is due on Friday, November 18th at 6:00 pm. [Example: My group proposal will be to develop a group for adolescent boys (ages 15-18) who have been referred to the group by juvenile courts due to charges related to drug use or abuse. Adolescents who have additional legal charges for any incidents of violence will not be included in this group, although boys who have other legal charges such as petty theft will still be included. The group will be a required part of the boys' probation, and will last 12 weeks. The group will take place at an outpatient agency and will be held after school one day a week for 2 hours each session.]

In-Class Weekend November 18-20, 2005

Friday 6:00 - 10:00 pm

Saturday 9:00 -5:00 pm

Sunday 9:00 - 3:00 pm

Topics/Activities:

Process group experiences

Questions regarding Group Proposals and 12-Step Meeting Assignment

Summary and Review of text material

Additional group exercises

MIDTERM EXAM

Week 4: November 21-27

Corey text:

Ch. 6 The Psychoanalytic Approach to Groups

Ch. 7 Adlerian Group Counseling

Ch. 8 Psychodrama

No Discussion Question this week.

Week 5: November 28- December 4

Corey text:

Ch. 9 The Existential Approach to Groups

Ch. 10 The Person-Centered Approach to Groups

Ch. 11 Gestalt Therapy in Groups

Respond to Discussion Question Online

Week 5 Question: As a group leader, do you think it is important to have a theoretical approach to groups? Why or why not?

Week 6: December 5-11

Corey text:

Ch. 12 Transactional Analysis

Ch. 13 The Behavioral Approach to Groups

Ch. 14 Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy in Groups

Respond to Discussion Question Online

Week 6 Question: Write a couple of sentences of dialogue in which you are introducing a client to the idea of group therapy as a recommendation for him/her. Write as if you were speaking these words to a client. Feel free to include aspects of the imaginary client's demographic background or presenting problem that might contribute to you recommending group. Then, respond to these questions from your client:

CLIENT: "But isn't group second rate therapy compared to having my own counselor?"

CLIENT: "I'm afraid that listening to other people's problems will just make me more depressed..."

CLIENT: “I’ve had bad experiences in other groups (church, clubs, friends). What will make this different?”

Complete your two 12-Step Summaries and email them to the instructor by Saturday, December 10, 2005 at 5 pm.

Week 7: December 12-18

Corey text:

Ch. 15 Reality Therapy in Groups

Ch. 16 Comparisons, Contrasts, and Integration (skim)

Ch. 17 The Evolution of a Group: An Integrative Perspective (skim)

Group Proposal Paper is due to be submitted electronically through www.turnitin.com by Thursday, December 15, 2005 at 8 pm. You will also be required to bring a paper copy or your paper to class on Friday, December 16, 2005 to turn in at 6:00 pm.

In-Class Weekend: December 16-18, 2005

Friday 6:00 - 10:00 pm

Saturday 9:00 -5:00 pm

Sunday 9:00 - 3:00 pm

TOPICS/ACTIVITIES:

Discuss Group Proposals

Review of text material

Group exercises and activities

Final Exam

Week 8: December 19-25

No Discussion Question.

NOTE: TOPICS/ASSIGNMENTS AND DISCUSSION QUESTIONS MAY BE SUBJECT TO CHANGE AS DEEMED APPROPRIATE BY THE INSTRUCTOR