PSY 705: GROUP APPROACHES to COUNSELING and PSYCHOTHERAPY
Fall Semester 2014
WED 7:00-9:15pm; Kennedy 012

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Phone: 508-767-7258
Office: Kennedy 218
Office Hours: Mon 12-1:30; Tues 12-3; Fri 12-1:30; By Appointment

REQUIRED TEXTS

COURSE DESCRIPTION
In this course you will become familiar with the theoretical foundation upon which group therapy is built and gain a better understanding of group development, group dynamics, and group leadership styles. You will learn about the historical roots of group therapy and different group therapy approaches and perspectives with a special emphasis on cognitive-behavioral group therapy. Our review of various group therapy treatments for specific adult and youth clinical populations covers a range of different groups including therapeutic, psychosocial, psychoeducational, and process groups. Classes will heavily emphasize class discussions of readings and case examples and also involve student presentations, lectures, and role-play activities.

COURSE OBJECTIVES
The main goal of this seminar course is to provide an in-depth understanding of group therapy processes and dynamics, and a broad overview of various types of group therapy approaches.

1. Differentiate between various types of group therapies.
2. Apply principles of group level dynamics and processes to specific case examples.
3. Critically evaluate group leader interventions with respect to their effect on group members and develop alternative strategies for group interventions based on knowledge of group dynamics and the stages of development.
4. Recognize ethical dilemmas and other challenges unique to group interventions and develop strategies for resolving them.
5. Develop a group therapy program with specific goals, objectives, and interventions and evaluate its merits and shortcomings.

COURSE EXPECTATIONS
Blackboard and e-mail: Course announcements, assignments, and updates to the syllabus will be provided on Blackboard. This information will also be provided on my personal website: http://dradamvolungis.com/. Additional required readings and handouts will also be available on Blackboard and my personal website. Although I will also inform you of any such information in class, it is expected that you utilize Blackboard and check your e-mail to ensure that you are
up to date with all class material and information (especially if you are absent). Lastly, you are strongly encouraged to e-mail me with any questions or concerns. I check my e-mail daily and will often get back to you promptly (i.e., less than 24 hours). However, I ask for at least 24-48 hours to provide a timely reply. I also do my best to reply to emails over the weekend, but please note that some weekends I may not be immediately available to reply until Sunday night or Monday morning (e.g., an e-mail at 6pm Friday may not get a reply until 10am Monday on some weekends). Finally, please e-mail me directly at am.volungis@assumption.edu; do not e-mail me ‘through Blackboard,’ as I do not check Blackboard for e-mail.

Course Readings: Please refer to the “Projected Course Outline” for the due date and topic of each reading. You are expected to have completed the required textbook and journal readings by the indicated class date. In addition to the readings provided in the course outline, you may be required to read supplemental materials to enhance existing readings.

Attendance: Due to the topic of this course being primarily peer presentation and class discussion, it is crucial that you attend class. Much of the value of this course lies in your presence and participation in the classroom. Therefore, your presence is important for the “community within the class.” If you are absent from class, you are still responsible for all information and material covered that day. Also, class will always start and end on time, thus, the expectation is for students to be present for the full duration of class. If you must come late or leave early, please notify me before class.

• Coming late to class is an important issue. Occasionally, events like an accident, flat tire, or similar events can delay your arrival on campus. A pattern of tardiness (even 10 or 15 minutes) is unacceptable, however. You need to allow sufficient time to deal with predictable situations (like finding a parking space on campus, traffic, etc.).

• Even in circumstances where you have an acceptable reason for missing class, you will not receive credit for this class if you are absent for more than 2 classes during the semester. If you do miss more than 2 classes because of personal emergency or similar extenuating circumstances, you may petition the Dean of the Graduate School for an exception to this rule.

IMPORTANT NOTES

Academic Honesty: Representing the work of another as your own is a violation of fundamental principles of truthfulness and an offense against the academic community. Academic dishonesty may result in the student failing the course, at the discretion of the instructor. Academic dishonesty includes cheating on examinations, as well as plagiarism (failure to credit properly the ideas, organization of material or phrasing of another, including the use of term paper or reference paper services). Submitting one’s own work, in part or in whole, to more than one instructor without proper notification is also academically dishonest and subject to appropriate disciplinary action. For more information, please consult Assumption College’s Academic Honesty Police:


This instructor reserves the right to utilize turnitin.com if there are concerns of academic dishonesty.

Students with Disabilities: Assumption College is committed to ensuring the full participation of all students in its programs. If you have a disability (or think you have a disability) and, as a result, need a reasonable accommodation participate in this class, complete course requirements, or benefit from the College’s programs or services, then you should speak with me and contact
the Director of Disability Services, Sharon deKlerk, at x7500. All information regarding disabilities will be treated with confidentiality. Documentation guidelines are available at: http://www.assumption.edu/academics/resources/disabilityservices. Students with disabilities are encouraged to contact me with any questions.

Smart Phones/Cell Phones/Pagers/MP3 Players and the like: All of these electronic devices should be powered off while class is in session. You are expected to devote your attention to each class for its full duration. A ringing/vibrating phone, texting, listening to music, etc. is not only a distraction to me, but more importantly, to your peers. Use of such devices may result in being asked to leave for the remainder of class. If you are expecting an emergency phone call, please notify me before class, sit near the door, and leave the room quietly and quickly if you receive a call.

Laptops in Class: Students are allowed to use laptops in class only if they consult with the class instructor and sign an honesty statement for appropriate class usage. Thereafter, you are welcome to bring and use your laptop in class to follow along with the presentation material and take notes. However, it should only be used to facilitate your learning of the class material. Engaging in other activities that are not related to your learning of course material (e.g., Facebook, e-mail, games) is not only a distraction to me, but more importantly, to your peers. Inappropriate laptop use may result in no longer being able to use your laptop in class.

**METHODS of EVALUATION**

1. **Class Attendance, Participation, & Discussion Blog (20%)**: This course depends greatly on student preparation and participation. To facilitate preparation, students are urged to read all of the material assigned for a given class prior to the day it is to be discussed, and to come to class with notes about the readings. With the exception of the first class and exam due dates, each student is expected to complete a blog post in response to a question provided by the instructor by the beginning of each class. At least two replies to your peers’ posted responses is also required, no later than two days after the original post due date. The discussion board will be available on my personal website: http://dradamvolungis.com/. These reflections are required in the spirit of assuring each student keeps up with the assigned readings and is prepared to engage in class discussion.

2. **Class Discussion Leader (20%)**: Each student will be required to provide a presentation focused on a description of a challenging group therapy case that will be provided to you (this may be done in groups of 2, depending on class size). As the discussion leader, you will present the critical incident in group therapy to the rest of the class and lead class discussion of your critical incident. A more detailed description of the expectations for this presentation (and dates) will be provided no later than the 3rd week of the semester.

3. **Group Therapy Program (60%)**: You will develop your own group therapy program for a specific clinical disorder or population (e.g., siblings of children with mental health disorders, homeless women, couples coping with financial loss, minority adolescents dealing with racial discrimination). For this project, you should not simply copy or replicate an already existing group therapy program. Rather, you should be creative in developing a new group therapy program for an underserved population or disorder, change an already existing individual approach to a group format, or adapt an existing
group program to fit a novel population or disorder for which the original program was not designed. You should structure and write your paper describing your group therapy program similar to group therapy treatment manuals we will review in this course. There are several steps and deadlines to completing this major assignment. **The first step is to submit your typed Idea Proposal by our second class (1/29).** Your Idea Proposal is simply a 1-2 paragraph that briefly describes your idea for your group therapy program and why you are interested in developing such a program for this particular population (10 points out of 150 total points). You can also note any unanswered questions or concerns you have about your group therapy program idea. A more detailed description of the expectations for this paper will be provided no later than the 2nd week of the semester. It is reasonable to expect draft feedback to be returned to students soon no later than 2 weeks after the due date.

### PROJECTED COURSE OUTLINE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th><em>Topic/Reading/Assignment</em></th>
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<tr>
<td>9/3/14</td>
<td><strong>Introduction &amp; Review of Syllabus</strong>&lt;br&gt;&lt;em&gt;Group Basics &amp; Interpersonal Processes&lt;/em&gt;&lt;br&gt;(a) Yalom (2005) – Chapters 1-3</td>
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<td>9/10</td>
<td><strong>Group Dynamics, Processes, and Leadership Styles</strong>&lt;br&gt;(a) Bieling et al. (2006) – Chapters 1 &amp; 2&lt;br&gt;(b) Yalom (2005) – Chapter 5&lt;br&gt;<em>Idea Proposal for Group Therapy Program Due</em></td>
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<td>9/17</td>
<td><strong>Development, Structure, &amp; Implementation of (CBT) Groups</strong>&lt;br&gt;(a) Bieling et al. (2006) – Chapter 5&lt;br&gt;(b) Yalom (2005) – Chapters 8-10</td>
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<td>9/24</td>
<td><strong>Stages of Group Development</strong>&lt;br&gt;(a) Yalom (2005) – Chapters 11 &amp; 12&lt;br&gt;<em>Part A Draft of Group Therapy Program Due</em></td>
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<td>10/1</td>
<td><strong>Overcoming Challenges in (CBT) Groups</strong>&lt;br&gt;(a) Bieling et al. (2006) – Chapter 6&lt;br&gt;(b) Yalom (2005) – Chapter 13</td>
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<td>10/8</td>
<td><strong>Cognitive &amp; Behavioral Strategies in CBT Groups</strong>&lt;br&gt;(a) Bieling et al. (2006) – Chapters 3 &amp; 4</td>
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<td>10/15</td>
<td><em><strong>NO CLASS – Cancelled by Assumption College</strong></em>&lt;br&gt;<em>Part B Draft of Group Therapy Program Due</em></td>
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10/22 Writing a Session Outline for a Group Therapy Program
(a) See treatment manual ‘Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy for Anxious Children’ (Coping CAT Program) in the Beck Library. (Please do not take the manual out of the Beck Library as other students will need to review the manual as well.) *Additional options may be provided by the instructor.*

10/29 CBT Groups for Depression & Anxiety Disorders
(a) Bieling et al. (2006) – Chapters 9 & 10

11/5 CBT Groups for Substance Abuse & Aggression
(a) Bieling et al. (2006) – Chapter 13
(b) Lochman et al. (Eds. Christner et al.) (2007) – Chapter 18

11/12 Discussion of Group Therapy Program
*Peer Review & Feedback – In Class*
*Part C Draft of Group Therapy Program Due*

11/19 CBT Groups for Eating Disorders & PTSD
(a) Bieling et al. (2006) – Chapter 12
(b) Jones (Eds. Christner et al.) (2007) – Chapter 12

11/26 ***THANKSGIVING BREAK***

12/3 Ethical & Multicultural Issues in Group Therapy
(a) Brabender (2002) – Chapter 9
(b) Greeley et al. (1992)

12/10 --Open Date for any “Catch-Up”
--Review & Synthesis
*Final Draft of Group Therapy Program Due*

Right of Revision Statement: As instructor of this course, I reserve the right to make changes to the syllabus as needed. It may be deemed pertinent to modify the syllabus as the class progresses through the semester. You will be informed of any changes as soon as possible, during class or via e-mail and Blackboard.

Revised: 10/15/14