



The mission of Concord University is to provide quality, liberal arts based education, to foster scholarly and creative activities and to serve the regional community (<http://www.concord.edu/academics/>).

Course Prefix, Number and Title: SOWK 308 Practice with Groups

Course CRN # and Section: CRN: 20216, Section 30

Semester Taught: Spring 2019

Professor: Ms. Christie Norris-Bowling

Credit Hours: 3

Office Location: Marsh Hall, A116

Prerequisites: SOWK 161, 230, 236, 237, 271 (2701), 370 (may be taken concurrently), PSY 101, SOC 101, ENG 101, 102, Social Work major, formal admission to the Social Work Program

**Office Hours: Main Campus
Tue.-12:30-3pm
Thur-12:30-1:30pm
Beckley Campus
Tue. 6-7pm
Thur. 3-4pm
Or by Appointment**

Course Time: T 1900-2130 (7pm-9:30pm)

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**College/Department Website:
www.concord.edu/sws**

Course Description/Rationale:

Methods of intervention appropriate for working with small groups are emphasized. Focuses on values, knowledge and skills appropriate for the generalist social work practitioner at the beginning professional.

Course Management System: Blackboard

Hardware/Software Needed: Microsoft Word

Text requirements:

Toseland, Ronald & Rivas, Robert. (2017). *Introduction to Group Work Practice* (8th Ed).
Needham Heights: MA.

Concord University Educational Goal(s)

Attitudes: Tendencies conducive to self-knowledge, personal growth and development, and responsible citizenship as demonstrated by the following:

1. Cultivation of and support for attitudes and practices that foster physical, mental, emotional, and social well-being.

National Standards (if applicable) For example, NCTM, IRA, CAEP, etc.

Council on Social Work Education (CSWE)

Social Work Competencies

Upon graduation from Concord University's Social Work program, students will master the following core competencies:

Competency 1: Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior

- Make ethical decisions by applying the standards of the NASW Code of Ethics, relevant laws and regulations, models for ethical decision-making, ethical conduct of research, and additional codes of ethics as appropriate to context
- Use reflection and self-regulation to manage personal values and maintain professionalism in practice situations
- Demonstrate professional demeanor in behavior; appearance; and oral, written, and electronic communication
- Use technology ethically and appropriately to facilitate practice outcomes
- Use supervision and consultation to guide professional judgment and behavior

Competency 2: Engage Diversity and Difference in Practice

- Apply and communicate understanding of the importance of diversity and difference in shaping life experiences in practice at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels
- Present themselves as learners and engage clients and constituencies as experts of their own experiences
- Apply self-awareness and self-regulation to manage the influence of personal biases and values in working with diverse clients and constituencies

Competency 3: Advance Human Rights and Social, Economic, and Environmental Justice

- Apply their understanding of social, economic, and environmental justice to advocate for human rights at the individual and system levels
- Engage in practices that advance social, economic, and environmental justice

Competency 4: Engage in Practice-informed Research and Research-informed Practice

- Use practice experience and theory to inform scientific inquiry and research
- Apply critical thinking to engage in analysis of quantitative and qualitative research methods and research findings

- Use and translate research evidence to inform and improve practice, policy, and service delivery

Competency 5: Engage in Policy Practice

- Identify social policy at the local, state, and federal level that impacts well-being, service delivery, and access to social services
- Assess how social welfare and economic policies impact the delivery and access to social services
- Apply critical thinking to analyze, formulate, and advocate for policies that advance human rights and social, economic, and environmental justice

Competency 6: Engage with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities

- Apply knowledge of human behavior and social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks to engage with clients and constituencies
- Use empathy, reflection, and interpersonal skills to effectively engage diverse clients and constituencies

Competency 7: Assess Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities

- Collect and organize data, and apply critical thinking to interpret information from clients and constituencies
- Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks in the analysis of assessment data from clients and constituencies
- Develop mutually agreed-on intervention goals and objectives based on the critical assessment of strengths, needs, and challenges within clients and constituencies
- Select appropriate intervention strategies based on the assessment, research knowledge, and values and preferences of clients and constituencies

Competency 8: Intervene with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities

- Critically choose and implement interventions to achieve practice goals and enhance capacities of clients and constituencies
- Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks in interventions with clients and constituencies
- Use inter-professional collaboration as appropriate to achieve beneficial practice outcomes
- Negotiate, mediate, and advocate with and on behalf of diverse clients and constituencies
- Facilitate effective transitions and endings that advance mutually agreed-on goals

Competency 9: Evaluate Practice with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities

- Select and use appropriate methods for evaluation of outcomes;
- Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks in the evaluation of outcomes
- Critically analyze, monitor, and evaluate intervention and program processes and outcomes
- Apply evaluation findings to improve practice effectiveness at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels

Council on Social Work Education, 2015. Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards.

Specific Learning Outcomes

The student will:

1. Demonstrate a level of knowledge suitable for beginning generalist social work practice with small groups from rural through global perspectives. (Comp 3 & 6)
2. Demonstrate a clear understanding of the significance of research in providing sound theoretical practice theory and for evaluating the effectiveness of practice.(Comp 1, 4, & 6)
3. Identify the types of groups, understanding their similarities and differences. (Comp 2, 6 & 7)
4. Demonstrate a theoretical and experimental understanding of prevailing theoretical models for intervention through groups and incorporation of the importance of human relationships, a person in environment perspective and the use of self. (Comp 1, 2, 6, 7, & 8)
5. Demonstrate knowledge of the vast array of group compositions in rural and global environments. (Comp 2, 7, & 6)
6. Demonstrate the ability to apply generalist social work practice skills with groups. (Comp 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, & 9)
7. Demonstrate an understanding of the social work values underlying practice with groups. (Comp 1, 2, 3, 6, 7, & 8)
8. Demonstrate appropriate evaluation, recording and documentation skills for working with groups. (Comp 9)
9. Demonstrate knowledge of the impact of minority status and diversity on group functioning with emphasis on appropriate practice implications. (Comp 2 & 7)
10. Demonstrate an awareness of the effect of social oppression and economic injustice on groups. (Comp 3)

Course Requirements

Class Participation (20 points):

Students are to be prepared for discussion of the texts and will remain current with assigned readings. Periodically exercises will be completed during class.

Moreover, exercises will be assigned to be completed between class meetings. Some of the exercises will relate to the Social Work Code of Ethics and to the application of human behavior theories in groups and families.

Students are expected to attend class regularly, be prepared for and participate in class discussions/exercises. Remember that attendance also factors into your class participation grade at all levels.

Plan a Treatment Group (40 points):

Plan a treatment group for a Specific Population, i.e. children, aged, those with substance abuse problems, men who batter, etc. within a community social service or health care agency you are familiar with. The choice of the topic should reflect your interest in a particular area of group work. This assignment culminates in a written paper.

Outline for Planning a Group and Paper:

1. Introductory paragraph explaining the group
2. Purpose: Purpose of the group (its goals)
3. Role of the worker in the group (e.g., chair, facilitator, therapist)
4. Literature review on the social problem being addressed in the paper

5. Literature review on the group work methods that have been used to address the social problem
6. Agency Sponsorship:
 - Agency name and mission
 - Agency resources relevant to the group (i.e., physical facilities, financing, staff, etc.)
 - Agency geographic location (community, not address), sponsorship, demographic characteristics of clientele, type of staff, any other characteristics that might affect group
7. Membership: Target population for the group—who you would like to reach. Appropriateness of the population with respect to the agency mission and group purpose.
8. Recruitment: Method(s) for recruiting members.
9. Composition: Criteria for including or excluding members.
10. What characteristics you would like group members to be heterogeneous on, and what characteristics homogeneous, and why.
 - Size: Open or closed membership.
 - Demographic characteristics important to group purpose.
 - How will the expected composition affect interaction or group development? Include age, gender, ethnicity/race, sexual orientation, disability or any other special considerations that may affect the composition.
11. Norms and Roles: What are the most important group norms you would like to develop?
12. How will composition affect the norms or their development? Are there specific roles you would like members to develop within the group? If so, describe these roles.
13. Orientation: Whether potential members will be screened, and if so, how and for what characteristics. Preparation for group membership and roles (e.g., pre-group interview or letter, discussion at beginning of group).
14. Contract: Describe and justify the number of meetings, frequency, length, and times for meetings. If appropriate, depending on the type of group, describe the types of contracts with individual group members, or the group as a whole that you would try to foster.
15. Environment: Physical arrangements (room, space, materials, room set-up, other considerations. Financial arrangements (budget, expense, charges, income) and any special arrangements (child care, transportation, access for persons with physical handicaps, etc.).
16. Structure: How will the group conduct its work? (e.g., discussion group, arts-and-crafts, exercises, role plays, etc.). Will there be a structure for each group meeting? How will the structure help the group achieve its' goals.

In Class Group Facilitation Assignment (Not graded – see below)

Depending on the size of the class, pick two or three other classmates and decide on a group you would like to role play. This could be any type of treatment group, ex. anger management, children's social skills group, support group, grief support, assertiveness training, cognitive behavioral, etc. Develop roles for other members of the class so that you have a group of 5 to 6 participants. Develop a written agenda for the group meeting, and a second page where you have some additional resources/references other students could use if they were going to lead such a group. If your group is not a structured group, develop a 1 or 2 page resource handout which contains information about the group, what you are trying to accomplish and references from the literature that students could refer to if they were going to lead this type of group ex. support group, growth group etc. We will use a fishbowl format where the rest of the class members will sit in a circle around the group you form. Each student in your planning group must take a turn being the group leader. Each group leader should facilitate the group for approximately 15 to 20 minutes (a total of 40 to 45 for entire group). This will not be a graded assignment. It will be pass/fail. If it is not done it will take 10 points away from your 20 point class participation grade. It is designed to

give you a chance to lead a group and to be a participant in a group. Please sign up for a time slot from session 11 to session 15.

Midterm Exam – 20 points

Final Exam – 20 points

Grading Policy and Scale, Make-up Policy, Late Work:

Grading Scale:

90 – 100 points = A

80 – 89 points = B

70 – 79 points = C

0 – 69 points = F

Course Timeline (Schedule of Assignments/Assessments/Presentations)

COURSE OUTLINE

Week One- January 15- Introduction to course – review syllabus

Chapter 1-**Introduction**: Values and Ethics, Classifying Groups, Group vs. Individual, Types of Groups

Week Two- January 22

Chapter 2-**Historical & Theoretical Developments**: Treatment Groups, Theoretical Foundation Applied to Groups

Week Three-January 29

Chapter 3- **Understanding Group Dynamics**: Communication, Cohesion, Group Culture

Week Four- February 5

Chapter 4-**Leadership**: Power and Empowerment, Effective Leadership, Interactional Model of Leadership-Purpose, Type, Environment, Members and Leader

Week Five- February 12

Chapter 5-**Leadership & Diversity**: Culture Sensitivity, Culture Influence and Group Behavior, Intervening with Sensitivity to Diversity

Week Six – February 19

Chapter 6-**Planning the Group**: Purpose, Sponsorship, Membership, Recruitment of Members, Composing the Group, Orientation, Contracting, Preparation, Reviewing the Literature, Group Proposal

Week Seven- February 26

Chapter 7-**The Group Begins**: Beginning Stage, Introductions, Defining Purpose, Confidentiality, Acceptance in a Group, Goal Setting, Contracting, Motivating Members, Involuntary Members, Obstacles

Week Eight-March 5

Chapter 8-**Assessment**: Defining, Assessment Process, Diagnostic Labels, the Change Process and Problem Solving, Assessing Individuals and the Group as a Whole, Connection of Assessing and Intervention

Midterm Exam (Chapters 1-7, any blackboard notes and in-class activities)

SPRING BREAK- Week of March 11- No Class!!

Week Nine- March 19

Chapter 9-**Treatment Groups: Foundation Methods**: Group Meeting Prep, Group Work Structure, Empowering Group Members, Helping in Goal Attainment, Reluctant Group Members

Week Ten- March 26

Chapter 10- **Treatment Groups: Specialized Methods**: Interpersonal and Intrapersonal Interventions, Environmental Interventions, Changing Communication and Interaction Patterns, Changing Group Culture, Agency Support for Groups, Interagency Networking, Increasing Community Awareness

Week Eleven- April 2

Chapter 11- **Task Groups: Foundation Methods**: Group Meeting Prep, Sharing Information, Enhancing Involvement and Commitment, Dealing with Conflict, Making Effective Decisions, Evaluating, Problem Solving Model

In Class groups

Week Twelve-April 9

Chapter 12-**Task Group: Specialized Methods**, Brainstorming, Focus Groups, Quality Improvement Teams, Large Organizational Groups, Community Groups, Social Action Strategies

In Class groups

Week Thirteen-April 16

Chapter 13-**Ending the Group's Work**: Process of Ending, Unplanned Termination, Ending Meetings, Learning from Members, Feelings about Ending, Planning for the Future, Referrals

In Class groups

Week Fourteen-April 23

Chapter 14-**Evaluation**: Why Evaluate? Methods, Needs Assessment, Monitoring Methods, Measures of Evaluating, Choosing a Measure

In Class groups

Group Plan Paper Project Due

Week Fifteen- April 30

Summation of content from semester, Evaluation of In-Class Groups, Suggestions and Recommendations for Groups

In Class groups

Final Examination- Tuesday, May 7th at 7pm

Accessibility/Accommodations:

Concord University is committed to responding to the needs of students with disabilities as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act. Please inform your instructor at the beginning of the class semester if

you have a disability and are requesting accommodations. It is your responsibility to self-disclose that you are requesting accommodations. The University and instructor will provide you with a reasonable accommodation. You should register with CU's Disability Services Office, located in the Athens campus Jerry and Jean Beasley Student Center, Bottom Floor, across from the Campus Post Office. The Disability Services Office phone is 304-384-6086 or you can email the Director, Nancy Ellison, at nellison@concord.edu for assistance.

Academic Dishonesty

Academic dishonesty is morally unacceptable as well as destructive to the learning and teaching atmosphere. Academic dishonesty includes the giving or receiving of improper help on examinations or assignments, falsifying documents, and plagiarism (the act of stealing and using, as one's own, the ideas or the expression of the ideas of another). Such dishonesty can lead to a variety of penalties — including but not limited to failure of assignment, failure of course, loss of institutional privileges, or dismissal from the University. (See University Catalog Academic Policies and Procedures.)

Concord University Honor Code

A Concord University Honor Code was approved by students, staff, faculty, administration, and the CU Board of Governors. The Code states:

"As a member of the Concord University Community I will act with honesty and integrity in accordance with our fundamental principles and I will respect myself and others while challenging them to do the same."

The Honor Code is intended to unite the Concord community behind a culture of honesty, integrity, and civility.

Class/Online Attendance Policy

Regular class attendance is part of a student's academic obligation at Concord. Irregular attendance may affect academic performance adversely and is detrimental to the atmosphere of a class. (See University Catalog Academic Policies and Procedures.)

Emergency Alert System

In an effort to increase safety and security on our campus, Concord University encourages everyone to register for instant text message alerts. Alerts will only be used for security and safety notices. All students, faculty, and staff are eligible to receive text message alerts on their cell phones or email alerts. Please contact the IT Help Desk for further assistance (304-384-5291).

Emergency Information

Emergency/courtesy telephones are located at the main entrance of each residence hall and at various other locations on campus. Emergency telephones can be identified by the flashing blue light and will provide the user with a direct link to Public Safety at the press of a button. To report an on-campus emergency, call 304-384-5357 or 911. The Office of Public Safety is located on the bottom floor of the Rahall Technology Center. For further emergency information go to: <http://www.concord.edu/administration/office-public-safety>.

Inclement Weather Policy

As a general policy, the University will remain in normal operations during adverse weather conditions. In the event of severe weather conditions, the following may occur:

University Closure

No students or employees are to report.

Classes Cancelled

Students do NOT report BUT employees are expected to report to work at their normal time.

Operating on an Inclement Weather Delay

Under this schedule, all 8 a.m. classes will start at 10 a.m. Students and faculty will follow the Inclement Weather Schedule. (See <http://www.concord.edu/emergency-alerts> for Athens/Beckley Inclement Weather Schedules.)

**Announcements invoking the late schedule or other options referenced above are aired on area radio and television stations and are sent as text and email messages to those enrolled for this service.*

Student Conduct

In classrooms, online, laboratories, and during any activities that are part of course requirements, students are expected to observe reasonable rules of conduct.

Sexual Harassment & Assault

Federal law, Title IX, and Concord University policy prohibits discrimination, harassment, and violence based on sex and gender (Including sexual harassment, sexual assault, domestic/dating violence, stalking, sexual exploitation, and retaliation). If you or someone you know has been harassed or assaulted, you can receive confidential counseling support through the Concord University Counseling Center (304-384-5290). Alleged Violations can be reported non-confidentially to the Concord University Title IX Coordinator at 304-384-6327 or titleix@concord.edu. Reports to Campus Security can be made at (304-384-5357). As an employee at Concord University, I am a mandatory reporter which means I must report any sexual misconduct I am made aware of. This includes verbal or written (such as in an assignment) disclosures of sexual harassment or sexual assault.

Technology Services

Contact the CU Help Desk at extension 5291 from campus or 304-384-5291 off campus. You may also e-mail cuhelpdesk@concord.edu.

Syllabus Disclaimer

"This syllabus is subject to change based on the needs of the class. Please check it regularly."

Miscellaneous (for example):

Helpful Website:

www.socialworkers.org

www.naswwwv.org

<http://www.library.uiuc.edu/edx/elecswrk.htm>

<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/>

<http://www.cswe.org/>