

**SHIPPENSBURG UNIVERSITY
BACHELOR OF SOCIAL WORK PROGRAM**

Course: SWK 275: Group Skills in Social Work
Professor Name: Dr. Jen Clements

COURSE DESCRIPTION

SWK 275 Social Work Skills for Working with Groups

This course expands the assessment and intervention skills learned in *SWK270* (a prerequisite) to working with groups. Students will learn how group theories should inform their developing of group leadership skills. The course emphasizes the planning, facilitating, and evaluating of groups often used in social work practice. *Prerequisite: SWK270*

BSW PROGRAM MISSION

The mission of the Shippensburg University BSW program is to provide comprehensive preparation for competent entry level social work practice and/ or graduate study. This program includes (1) a curriculum grounded in the generalist approach; (2) a special emphasis on the respect for diversity and human rights; and (3) involvement and leadership in the practice community from the local to the global.

DEFINITION OF THE GENERALIST APPROACH

A generalist social worker uses critical thinking and self-awareness to draw on the profession's knowledge, core values and skills to engage in ethical practice. Practice activities include assessment, prevention and intervention with client systems (individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities) across diverse populations. These activities are informed by research and focus on client strengths. Generalist social work is grounded in a liberal arts foundation and guided by a systems approach that emphasizes person-in-environment; professional social work values; empowerment; and commitment to social and economic justice and human rights.

BSW PROGRAM GOALS

1. To prepare students to use the generalist approach to become a competent entry-level social work practitioner and/or to prepare students for graduate study in social work.
2. To provide leadership about diversity and human rights issues to the University and the region in order to work towards greater inclusion and social justice.
3. To collaborate with the practice community for mutual professional growth and development, with an emphasis on regional partnerships.

BSW PROGRAM CORE COMPETENCIES

Upon completion of the Master of Social Work degree, students will be able to:

1. Identify as a professional social worker and conduct oneself accordingly.
2. Apply social work ethical principles to guide professional practice.
3. Apply critical thinking to inform and communicate professional judgments.
4. Engage diversity and difference in practice.
5. Advance human rights and social and economic justice.
6. Engage in research-informed practice and practice-informed research.
7. Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment.
8. Engage in policy practice to advance social and economic well-being and to deliver effective social work services.
9. Respond to contexts that shape practice.
10. Engage, assess, intervene, and evaluate with individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities.

COURSE COMPETENCIES

Consistent with the Council on Social Work Education's Educational Policies and Accreditation Standards, the Shippensburg University BSW Program strives to build competency in its students in ten areas. Specific core competencies are accomplished through course objectives stated in terms of underlying practice behaviors comprised by the competency standard. This course contributes to students' mastery of the following specific core competencies through the respective practice behaviors and assignments:

Competency 1: Identify as a professional social worker and conduct oneself accordingly.

Practice Behavior 2: Practice personal reflection and self-correction to assure continual professional development

Related Assignments: *Leadership Assessment of Simulation; IASWG Standards Paper; Course Performance Review*

Practice Behavior 3: Attend to professional roles and boundaries

Related Assignments: *Leadership Assessment of Simulation; IASWG Standards Paper;*

Course Performance Review

Practice Behavior 4: Demonstrate professional demeanor in behavior, appearance, and communication

Related Assignments: *Course Performance Review*

Practice Behavior 6: Use supervision and consultation

Related Assignments: *Class Discussion and Simulation*

Competency 2: Apply social work ethical principles to guide professional practice. Practice Behaviors.

Practice Behavior 1: Recognize and manage personal values in a way that allows professional values to guide practice

Related Assignments: *Class discussion, Course Performance Review, Simulation*

Practice Behavior 2: Make ethical decisions by applying standards of the National Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics and, as applicable, of the International Federation of Social Workers/International Association of Schools of Social Work Ethics in Social Work Statement of Principles

Related Assignments: *IASWG Standards Paper; Simulation*

Practice Behavior 3: Tolerate ambiguity in resolving ethical conflicts

Related Assignments: *Simulation*

Practice Behavior 4: Apply strategies of ethical reasoning to arrive at principled decisions

Related Assignments: *IASWG Standards Paper; Leadership Assessment of Simulation*

Competency 3: Apply critical thinking to inform and communicate professional judgments.

Practice Behavior 1: Distinguish, appraise and integrate multiple sources of knowledge, including research-based knowledge, and practice wisdom

Related Assignments: *Leadership Assessment of Simulation*

Practice Behavior 2: Analyze models of assessment, prevention, intervention, and evaluation

Related Assignments: *Quizzes, Debate on Computer Mediated Group Work*

Practice Behavior 3: Demonstrate effective oral and written communication in working with individuals, families, groups, organizations, communities, and colleagues.

Related Assignments: *Simulation; Leadership Assessment of Simulation; IASWG Standards Paper*

Competency 6: Engage in research-informed practice and practice-informed research.

Practice Behavior 2: Use research evidence to inform practice

Related Assignments: *Simulation Proposal*

Competency 7: Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment.

Practice Behavior 1: Utilize conceptual frameworks to guide the processes of assessment, intervention, and evaluation

Related Assignments: *Simulation Proposal*

Practice Behavior 2: Critique and apply knowledge to understand person and environment

Related Assignments: *IASWG Standards Paper; Leadership Assessment of Simulation; Class Discussion*

Practice Behavior 4: Demonstrate knowledge of the range of social systems in which people live and their impact on achieving health and well-being.

Related Assignments: *Class Discussion*

Competency 10 (a): Engage with individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities.

Practice Behavior 1: Substantively and affectively prepare for action with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities

Related Assignments: *Simulation Proposal*

Practice Behavior 2: Use empathy and other interpersonal skills

Related Assignments: *Simulation*

Practice Behavior 3: Develop a mutually agreed on focus of work and desired outcomes

Related Assignments: *Simulation*

Competency 10 (b): Assess individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities.

Practice Behavior 1: Collect, organize, and interpret client data

Related Assignments: *Simulation*

Practice Behavior 2: Assess client strengths and limitations

Related Assignments: *Simulation*

Practice Behavior 3: Develop mutually agreed-on intervention goals and objectives
Related Assignments: *Simulation*

Practice Behavior 4: Select appropriate intervention strategies
Related Assignments: *Simulation*

Competency 10 (c): Intervene with individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities.

Practice Behavior 1: Initiate actions to achieve organizational goals
Related Assignments: *Simulation proposal; Class Discussion*

Practice Behavior 2: Implement prevention interventions that enhance client capacities
Related Assignments: *Simulation*

Practice Behavior 3: Help clients resolve problems
Related Assignments: *Simulation*

Practice Behavior 4: Negotiate, mediate, and advocate for clients
Related Assignments: *Simulation*

Practice Behavior 5: Facilitate transitions and endings
Related Assignments: *Simulation*

Competency 10 (d): Evaluate interventions with individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities.

Practice Behavior 1: Critically analyze, monitor and evaluate interventions
Related Assignments: *Leadership Assessment of Simulation*

TEXTBOOKS

Required texts:

IASWG, (2006). *Standards for Social Work Practice with Groups* New York: NY: IASWG Press. [Document posted on D2L.]

Toseland, R. & Rivas, R. (2012). *An introduction to group work practice* (7th ed.). Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

Shulman, L. (2012). *The skills of helping individuals and groups* (7th ed.). Belmont, CA: Thomson Brooks/Cole.

Required supplemental reading:

American Psychological Association. (2010). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (6th ed.). Washington, D.C.: Author.

COURSE OUTLINE

Refer to the weekly agenda, labeled Course Outline, posted to D2L.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Course Requirements:

1. Quizzes – Four Quizzes.

160 points

2. Observation of an Outside Group (AKA: Face-to-Face Group)

Each student must observe (or participate in) an outside real life, face-to-face group experience. The choice of the group must be approved by the professor prior to beginning the group.

Credit will be given once during the semester. You may want to keep a journal so that you remember details for later on when writing reports. The assignment will reflect both observations of group dynamics and process. Face to face groups must be **attended for a minimum of 6 weekly sessions**.

Detailed guidelines for the report will be provided in class.

Points = final paper

3. Computer Mediated Groupwork

Each student must observe (or participate in) an internet on-line group experience. **Students will be involved with the on-line group for a minimum of three times per week for three weeks.** The choice of the group must be approved by the professor prior to beginning the group.

Credit will be given once during the semester for the on-line group experience. It may be helpful to keep a journal about your observations for each week of your on-line group. The written report will reflect upon both the observations of group dynamics and process. On line group contact requirements are outlined in the detailed guidelines provided in class handout. Discussion of appropriate groups to utilize will occur in class. The class will prepare a debate on online treatment. If not successfully prepared, students will also write a report. Details will be discussed in class.

Internet group treatment debate

25 points

3. Simulation and Feedback

Students are required to simulate a facilitation of a treatment group as defined in Toseland & Rivas. **Each student must lead at least one simulation to pass the course.**

In order for students to conduct a simulation she/he must write a proposal for the development of their group using the group proposal outline in Toseland and Rivas, Appendix D; an agenda for the session; prompting cards for each member of the group simulation; and any handouts that will be distributed or referred to in the simulation. All of these items will be graded.

Thus, when facilitators turn in their Group Simulation Proposal Packet on the date listed on the course outline, the Group Simulation Proposal Packet will contain the following items:

1. Group Proposal (T&R, 2012, Appendix D)
2. Session Agenda (Beginning, Middle, and Ending Phase)
3. Prompting cards for each member of the simulation. In addition to providing information particular to a member, provide general information to inform participants on the group (session#, phase, and any other pertinent info.).
4. Handouts

In the simulation, students will lead a 30-minute mutual aid group (students must arrange for timekeeping). Facilitators will determine the kind of treatment group in the Group Proposal.

Students must evaluate their peers in class after each simulation. These evaluations will be collected by me at the end of class and given back to the group leaders along with written feedback from me. The grade for the simulation is based on the preparation and a self-assessment paper. Guidelines for the paper will be given out in class. If a student is absent from class (whether excused or not), s/he will not be able to provide peer in-class evaluations, and therefore, will lose points.

• Peer in-class Evaluations	20 points
• Simulation grade (this is based on your Simulation performance and your assessment of your leadership of the group via a paper. The written assessment is due 1 week after simulation.)	55 points
• Group Simulation Proposal Packet	<u>25 points</u>
TOTAL	100

4. Final Exam/paper:

Using the "*Standards for Social Work Practice with Groups*" from the International Association for Social Work with Groups reflect on the six sections and your own practice. Specific guidelines for this final will be given out 1 week before the due date.

50 points

5. Participation/course performance review

Because this is a practice class, participation will influence your grade significantly. In addition to coming to class having read all required materials, students are expected to participate in class discussion, role plays and other experiential activities in class. Therefore, if a student attends class but does not participate, s/he cannot earn full points. Moreover, points are deducted for absences. Student earns "F" in course if misses 3 classes. Communication with the professor inside and outside of class (including email) is a part of this grade. So please note that all internet communication with professor should be professional meaning written in proper English and complete sentences, not to mention the email should be re-read before sending for tone appropriateness. Additionally, communication appropriateness with peers and being responsible to peers is part of the grade.

65 points

TOTAL POINTS FOR THE COURSE = 400

COURSE POLICIES

Course Performance Review:

The professor takes responsibility for monitoring the classroom climate to provide an atmosphere conducive to student learning. This includes serving as a resource and guide for the student's professional learning, ensuring that the classroom offers a safe opportunity for exchange of ideas and opinions, and fairly evaluating all student work.

Students are expected to attend all classes, to come to class on time, to take responsibility for having done the reading, to complete all assignments on time and to the best of their abilities, and to actively participate in the class discussion and activities. Students are expected to attend and participate in all the sessions of their external groups.

Students are expected to work collaboratively and responsibly to apply the principles of professionalism (The NASW Code of Ethics is the standard for professional behavior.) A sincere effort to learn and grow are key elements in the development of the professional self and will be evaluated by the professor as a part of the student grade.

All students are expected to follow the NASW Code of Ethics (available on-line at naswdc.org) and the IASWG Standards of Social Work Practice with Groups in their professional activities related to this class. Any unprofessional behavior is subject to grade reduction. Please keep this in mind when sending email. Points are taken off the grade for each absence.

Grading:

The grade will be calculated based on the percentage of points earned according to the following scale:

A	(95-100%)
A-	(90- < 95%)
B+	(88- < 90%)
B	(85- < 88%)
B-	(80 — <85%)
C+	(78— < 80%)
C	(70 – < 78%)
D	(60 - < 70%)
F	(< 60%)

NOTE: Points earned or percentage will NOT be rounded.

- All majors must earn a C or better in all social work courses in order to be eligible to go into the Field. All assignments for the course must be completed in order for the student to pass the course. Plus and minus grading will be used.
- All assignments must be submitted at the beginning of class on the due date or the assignment is considered late. Being absent from class or late when work is due means that work is late. Do not miss class because work is due. It is better to come to class and submit

the work late than to miss or arrive to class late. **Late assignments will lose 10% for the first DAY late and an additional 10% for each day late thereafter.** So yes, you can ask professor for an extension to an assignment, but please understand 10% is subtracted for each day. An absence from class will result in an assignment being late unless it is emailed to the professor prior to the start of the class. The professor is not responsible for any emails that do not arrive or arrives without correct attachments. All attachments must be in .doc or .docx format. It is recommended that the student copies self on the email and emails the professor an additional message informing of the attachment in the previous email. The professor will confirm receipt of email when it is read.

- Because of the participatory nature of this course, it is not possible to ‘make up’ most work when absent, regardless of the reason. **In general, if a student is absent (regardless of reason) from an equivalent of 3 classes, s/he will fail the course. Another way that a student can fail the course based on absences alone (regardless of the reason) is if s/he misses 50% or more of in-class simulations.** If the student finds him/herself in this position due to unforeseen circumstances such as hospitalization, etc., the instructor recommends the student withdraw from the course. S/he can seek a medical withdraw if withdrawing from all courses (provided that you have medical documentation and paperwork is submitted through the Dean of the College of Education & Human Services Office [3rd floor Shippen Hall]). Otherwise, the student will need to take a “F” in this course. **In short, students cannot pass this practice-based course without being present and active in class, in addition to completing all assignments.**
- Students are expected to attend class, be prepared for class by doing the assignments, and to participate appropriately and professionally in the classroom activities. A common cold, stomach ache, etc. does not count as an extenuating circumstance. For those assignments where your peers are counting on collaboration, you must act responsibly. Failure to do so will result in the lowering of your course grade
- **When absent from class, you are expected to notify the professor, in advance of class time. At the same time, when absent from class, you are expected to get notes and handouts from reliable classmates. The professor will not respond to emails requesting information due to absences.**
- Exams are expected to be taken on the day outlined in the syllabus. Students with a documented disability through the Office of Disability Services, and are in need of accommodation for exams, will take exams outside of the class, so please discuss the matter with the instructor at least two weeks in advance in order for appropriate arrangements to be made. It is the student’s responsibility to arrange test taking appointments with the Office of Disability Services. If you have a disability that impacts your learning but have not had it documented through the Office of Disability Services, please contact them. Otherwise, the instructor cannot make accommodations.
- **The professor reserves the right to modify the course schedule and assignments during the semester.**
- Items posted to D2L will be in .pdf or Word 2010 format. Thus, you will need the appropriate software to open documents. Instructor will not format documents differently, so if you do not have this software, then make sure to download materials while on campus or make a copy from a classmate. If you do not use Microsoft Word 2010 for word processing, which creates a .docx file, you must save your work as an .rtf file for me to be able to open it

and read it. All software programs provide for this option. However, due to APA formatting, it is highly recommended that you save your work as a Microsoft Word document even if it means using a campus-based computer so that formatting is not altered, which can impact your grade.

- Additional quizzes/assignments are an option if students appear unprepared for class discussion of reading assignments.
- All assignments are to be written in a professional tone and at an academic level following APA formatting guidelines outlined in the APA Manual, 6th edition. The Learning Center is available to all students. It is encouraged that students utilize these services. Please inform the professor when you utilize the Learning Center.

UNIVERSITY ACADEMIC POLICIES

Students with Special Needs

The social work department is committed to providing appropriate assistance for students with disabilities. All accommodations must be done through the Office of Disability Services with Director, Paula Madey. The professor cannot make accommodations without documentation through the Office of Disability Services.

Academic Honesty

Please refer to *Policies governing undergraduate courses*, Shippensburg University Undergraduate Catalog, The Swatoney, and the Social Work Department's Undergraduate Handbook.

You are responsible for reading and complying with all University policies. One form of academic dishonesty is plagiarism. According to the above mentioned source: Plagiarism is the inclusion of someone else's words, ideas, or data as one's own work. When an individual submits work that includes the words, ideas, or data of others, the source of that information must be acknowledged through complete, accurate, and specific references, and if verbatim statements are included, through quotation marks or other accepted citation practices. By placing his /her name on a scholarly product, the student certifies the originality of all work not otherwise identified by appropriate acknowledgments. Plagiarism would thus include representing as one's own any academic exercise (e.g. written work, computer program, sculpture, etc.) prepared totally or in part by another. An individual will avoid being charged with plagiarism if there is an acknowledgment of indebtedness whenever one:

1. quotes another person's actual words;
2. uses another person's ideas, opinions, or theories, even if they are completely paraphrased in one's own words;
3. borrows facts, statistics, or other illustrative materials, unless the information is common knowledge.

Student Discrimination Grievance Procedure

Please refer to the SU Student Discrimination Grievance Procedure policy statement in the SU Student Handbook.

Style and Language Guidelines

All of your assignments must be typed according to guidelines of the American Psychological Association (APA) *Publication Manual* (6th ed.), including one-inch margins and standard 12 font. It is expected that grammar and spelling will be correct and your language clear and concise. Be sure to review manual for using language that is bias free and people first.

SU's Policy on Delays/Cancellations

In the event of a campus-wide schedule change, such as a delayed opening due to weather, information will be posted on the website at www.ship.edu. Information will also be available on the SU Hotline at 717-477-1200.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

D2L:

The use of Desire to Learn (D2L), an online website to facilitate your education, is one method of course delivery for this course. You are responsible for having adequate computer capabilities to be able to complete the course. Technical assistance is provided through D2L under the HELP command on the D2L homepage. I am not able to help with these matters. The website address is <https://d2l.ship.edu/>

Technical Support: Technical Support is provided by our 24/7 Help Desk. You can talk to a technical support representative via phone, live chat or a submitted ticket on the Help Desk Web site. Call the Toll-free Number (877) 395-2988 or Online Chat at <http://chat.perceptis.com/c/passhe/shippensburg/>

Communications:

Any messages posted on D2L or emails sent by the professor during the semester will be considered official communication.

The University is very concerned that you use your Millersville/Shippensburg online accounts. If you do not, they and I are not responsible for any problems encountered and won't be able to help you if your messages aren't being received or sent. If you have just activated your account be sure to test it with me ASAP. **Be sure the email address in use is your correct email.** It was taken from the University system. If this is not your current email, you must change it on both the University student system and D2L.

LIBRARY INFORMATION

The website for the Ezra Lehman Library at Shippensburg University is <http://www.ship.edu/library/>

Disclaimer

The course syllabus is a guide and a plan for the semester. When changes become necessary they will be announced in class.

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