

**DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WORK
WESTERN KENTUCKY UNIVERSITY**



**Group Dynamics in Social Work Practice
SWRK 522 3 credit hours total Spring 2020**

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Office Hours: T/Th 8:30AM-1:30PM

Online hours- Tuesdays 8:00-9:00AM,
Thursdays 7:30-8:30PM

Other hours by Appt.

Class Meeting Times: Thursdays 5:30PM-7:30PM CST
1/30, 2/13, 3/5, 3/26, 4/23, 5/7

Pre-requisite(s):

Admission to the MSW Program or permission of the instructor.

Course Description:

This course provides the mezzo link in the micro-mezzo-macro practice continuum within the curriculum. Thus, SWRK 522 provides an introduction to group work in social work practice, including dynamics of group interaction, stages of group development, key aspects and elements of group process and group types.

Course Information:

Social work students in the foundation year of the MSW Program are provided with an introduction to key concepts, knowledge, and practice skills related to group work. Experiential exercises are used to promote an understanding of group processes. Contemporary group work is studied within a historical context. In addition to reviewing different types of educational, counseling/ clinical groups, working in groups with marginalized people, committees and task groups will be covered. A specific emphasis is placed on learning methods and skills of group facilitation while involved in group observation and analysis. Ethics and evaluation of group work are covered in this course.

Required Text:

Zastrow, C.H. (2015). *Social work with groups: Comprehensive Practice and Self-Care* (10th edition.) Stanford Connecticut: Cengage Learning.

Recommended Texts:

Ginsberg, L. (2011). *Social work in rural communities*. (5th ed). Alexandria, VA: CSWE Press

MSW Mission Statement:

The mission of the MSW program at WKU is to prepare students for advanced professional social work practice to meet the needs of increasingly diverse rural population in the community, in Kentucky, and in a global society.

Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) Definition of Specialized Practice and Required Core Competencies for MSW Education

[The Council on Social Work Education \(CSWE\)](#) Commission on Accreditation (COA) and Commission on Educational Policy (COEP) developed the [2015 Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards for Baccalaureate and Master’s Social Work Programs](#). These standards form the basis for the WKU MSW Generalist Year Curriculum. As part of these standards, each master’s social work program must design at least nine unique competencies that are used in the creation of their specialized year. Here at WKU, our specialty is [Advanced Generalist Practice in Rural Settings](#). Our program faculty have developed nine (9) unique competencies that are the focus for the specialized year curriculum. Please review the competencies at [WKU MSW Advanced Generalist Competencies](#) to develop an understanding of the content that all WKU MSW students must master prior to graduation. Core competencies addressed in this class are defined as follows:

2015 Competencies Addressed in Course	Course Assignments Assessing Behaviors	Course Learning Outcomes	Competency Dimension
Competency 1: Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior	Professionalism Rubric	3, 6	Values, Cognitive & Affective Processes
	DB	1-6	Values, Skills, Knowledge, and Cognitive & Affective Processes
	PDI	3, 6	Values, Cognitive & Affective Processes
	Group Facilitation	1,3,4,5,6	Values, Skills, Knowledge, and

			Cognitive & Affective Processes
Competency 4; Engage in practice informed research and research informed practice	Article Critique & Annotated Bibliography	1, 2,4	Knowledge & skills
	Group Proposal	1,2,4,5	Knowledge & skills
	Exam I & II	1,2,4,5	Values, Skills, Knowledge,
Competency 6: Engage with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities	Class room simulations	3,4,5,6	Values, Skills, and Cognitive & Affective Processes
	Field Placement	1-6	Values, Skills, Knowledge, and Cognitive & Affective Processes
	DB	1,3,4,5,6	Values, Skills, Knowledge, and Cognitive & Affective Processes
	Group Facilitation	1,3,4,5,6	Values, Skills, Knowledge, and Cognitive & Affective Processes
Competency 7: Assess Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities	Exam I & II	1,3, 4, 5,6	Values, Skills, Knowledge, and Cognitive & Affective Processes
	DB	1--6	Values, Skills, Knowledge, and Cognitive & Affective Processes
Competency 8: Intervene with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities	In class simulations	3,4,5,6	Values, Skills, Cognitive & Affective Processes
	Db	1-6	Values, Skills, Cognitive & Affective Processes

	Group Facilitation	1,3,4,5,6	Values, Skills, Knowledge, and Cognitive & Affective Processes
Competency 9: Evaluate Individuals, Families, groups, organizations, and communities	In class simulations	3,4,5,6	Values, Skills, Cognitive & Affective Processes
	Group Facilitation	1,3,4,5,6	Values, Skills, Knowledge, and Cognitive & Affective Processes

Learning Outcomes

At the completion of this course, students will be able to:

Knowledge:

1. Articulate an understanding of group dynamics and the theoretical frameworks that inform direct practice in groups and communities.
2. Examine the development of social work group work from a historical perspective

Values:

3. Demonstrate an awareness of the distinction between one's personal relationship to and one's professional role with groups

Skills:

4. Demonstrate the ability to create an intervention group based on an evidence-based best practice approach for a particular population-at-risk
5. Demonstrate the ability to analyze task group dynamics and the variety of roles played within group

Cognitive and Affective Processes:

6. Critically analyze behavioral and emotional reactions of peers and self to feedback related to group skills and group participation

Description of Course Assignments:

1. Exams (200 points)

A. Exam I (100 points)

The first exam will cover material discussed and distributed throughout the first third of the course including a variety of key terms and concepts. The first exam will use both objective and subjective measures to assess ability to think logically and critically about the integration of this material into a coherent framework and organization for discussing group work's foundation and historical perspective, its relationship to the generalist perspective, small group dynamics, and issues of diversity.

B. Exam II/Final Paper (100 points)

The final paper will be a comprehensive course assignment. Each student will write an analysis of a group case in terms of the group purpose, group members, and group dynamics. Students will demonstrate the following as part of this assignment:

1. An application of a theoretical model/ method
2. A thorough discussion of group dynamics as they apply to the group being discussed
3. An awareness of values and ethical dilemmas within the group.
4. An understanding of the influence of group dynamics on group design and processes
5. Cultural competence in group leadership

2. Group Development Proposal (100 points)

Students will work with classmates in small groups to develop a proposal to start a group. These small groups should function as task groups. The small groups will create a psycho-educational, therapy, or self-help group proposal. The proposal write up will be a joint project for the group. Each group development proposal will draw upon a theory of social work (SWRK 510 and SWRK 520). Please refer to the rubric on Blackboard. Within the first few weeks of class, students should meet in their groups to

decide on the type, purpose, and plan. This is to be submitted prior to division of tasks for the group.

3. Group Facilitation (200 points)

Each student will be responsible for individually facilitating a group activity (Icebreaker, Team Building exercise, Psycho educational group session, etc.) in class. This demonstration will include the participation of other classmates in a 30-minute activity. A one to two page typed outline of the construction of the activity with goals, objectives, directions and process is required. This assignment will also be peer evaluated. Students will sign up for presentation slots on the course calendar.

4. Annotated Bibliography & Article Critique (100 points)

The expectation is that students access the social work literature (particularly the research literature) in their area of group interest and/or group development. Please locate 5-6 current articles (at least one being a research study) that you review and submit at least two paragraphs for each. One paragraph should describe the article and the other should give your reaction/analysis or discussion of relevance. APA format is required. The entries should also relate to elements of group dynamics, group process and /or group development. At least one entry must reference a research study. One of the articles should be reviewed in a 3-page paper (see rubric).

5. Discussion Boards (DB) (6 @10pts each=60pts)

Each student will respond to six discussion boards answering questions or reacting to concepts and experiences related to group dynamics. Each student will also respond to at least one other classmates posting.

6. Professionalism (40 pts.)

Social workers traditionally serve marginalized populations. Thus, social work professors have an obligation to teach students appropriate professional behavior. Within the classroom setting, both face-to-face and online, professionalism is defined as attendance, preparation, and appropriate behavior with the professor and peers in **all** communications relative to this course.

Further, each student is expected to complete all assignments and assigned readings in accordance with the course schedule. The instructional methods utilized in this course include lecture/discussion, role-play, experiential exercises, and student presentations. Therefore, students are expected to arrive on time and participate **actively** in each class session. Students should be prepared to demonstrate and discuss content of required course assignments, and to submit assignments on time. Each student should complete readings **prior** to the classroom experience and be prepared to *discuss, analyze, and critique* each reading. Please understand that in class you will be developing and applying practice skills that are discussed in your texts and readings. This is an opportunity for you to practice before applying skills you learn in this class in the field. Thus, professionalism grades are assessed on students' *active* participation in class exercises.

Evaluation and Grading

Course grading is based on the following criteria:

<u>Assignment</u>	<u>Maximum Point Value</u>
Exams (2)	200 points
Annotated Bibliography	100
Group Facilitation	200
Group Proposal	100
Discussion Boards (BB) 6@10pts each	60
Professionalism	40
Total Points Possible	<u>700</u>

Grading Scale

The following grading formula will apply:

90%-100%- A

89%-80%- B

79%-70%- C

69% and below- F

Academic Support

Most of us find that we need some academic support and direction during our time in the university. WKU offers many resources that can help you be successful in this course. These are listed below:

Student Accessibility Resource Center

In compliance with university policy, students with disabilities who require academic and/or auxiliary accommodations for this course must contact the Student Accessibility Resource Center located in DSU Room 1074 in the Downing Student Union. The phone number is 270-745-5004. Please do not request accommodations directly from the professor or instructor without a letter of accommodation from the Student Accessibility Resource Center.

Writing Center Assistance

The Writing Center is located in Cherry Hall 123 on the Bowling Green campus and offers online consultations for students who live at a distance or who cannot visit during our operating hours. WKU's writing tutors have been trained to provide helpful feedback to students at all phases of a writing project. They can help you brainstorm ideas, structure your essay, clarify your purpose, strengthen your support, and edit for clarity and correctness. However, they will not revise or edit the paper for you. See instructions on the [Writing Center](#) website for making online or face-to-face appointments. Call (270) 745-5719 during the Writing Center's operating hours (also listed on the website) for help scheduling an appointment.

Learning Assistance at WKU

The Alice Rowe Learning Assistance Center (LAC) is located on the South Campus, SC 238. This facility is open between MSW classes 12:30 – 1:30 for writing assistance, computer access or a quiet place to study.

Off Campus Library Support

The Extended Campus Library Services Office will copy citations, pull library books for students at extended campuses, and send them through the mail. There is no cost to students (although you do have to pay to return the library books). WKU also has a courier service to extended campuses. For further information, go to the [Extended Campus Library Support](#) website. Turn-around time can be anywhere from a few days to two weeks, so plan ahead!

Policy:

Students are expected to adhere to all policies contained with the [MSW Handbook](#) and the [Code of Student Conduct](#) at Western Kentucky University.

Professionalism:

The [NASW Code of Ethics](#) is a guiding framework and source for identifying professional performance. Students are expected to practice in an ethical manner while in the classroom or completing assignments pertaining to this course in accordance with the *MSW Student Handbook*, *WKU Student Code of Conduct* and the *NASW Code of Ethics*. Behaviors especially under consideration are those related to professional practice, mental illness and/or substance use, illegal activity and classroom behavior. Concerns in any of these four circumstances will be documented in a Professional Concerns Form and referred for a Student Professional Concerns Review. Students are expected to understand the policy, in its entirety, found in the *MSW Student Handbook*.

Social Media:

Privacy, confidentiality and professional boundaries must be examined as professional social workers especially in the age of technology. Professional standards found in the *NASW Code of Ethics* must be strictly followed concerning social media. Students using social media sites are expected to use the highest privacy settings on their social media profiles, so field agency personnel and/or clients cannot access photographs and private information. Students are not permitted to link to or view the social media profiles of clients or employees of the field placement agency. In the event that a student's social media profile or linkage is considered a poor professional practice or an ethical violation, the student issue will be documented in a Professional Concerns Form and referred for a Student Professional Concerns Review.

Plagiarism and Academic Dishonesty:

Plagiarism and cheating are prohibited. Academic dishonesty is prohibited by the *MSW Student Handbook*, the *University Code of Student Conduct* and is counter to social work values and ethics included in the *NASW Code of Ethics*. Students are expected to be familiar with these policies and ethical guidelines and to follow them at all times. Any instances of academic dishonesty will mean a grade of "zero" for the assignment and/or course failure. Students should review the "Academic Offences" section of the [WKU Student Handbook](#) and "Acknowledging Credit" sections of the [1999 Code of Ethics, National Association of Social Workers](#).

APA:

Students are expected to use APA style (6th ed.) for writing, citing and listing references. Written assignments must be grammatically correct, typed, double-spaced, and display correct form. Students are expected to submit work that is written at the college level. Students are encouraged to make use university writing resources if needed. The social work profession involves a significant amount of writing (documentation); therefore, the instructor reserves the right to

heavily penalize written work that is of poor quality. This is for all course work to include papers, pamphlets, and online assignments. Online assignments must include in text references and full text at the end of the assignment just as all other written documents in this course.

Participation and Attendance:

Attendance:

Students are expected to participate in developing a positive learning environment with the desire to learn. Class participation is required and includes taking part in online class discussions through active listening and/or verbal comments. Class discussion is a turn-taking activity; participation includes *not talking out-of-turn and not monopolizing the discussion*. Given that we have six (6) synchronous sessions; students may miss one class **for any reason**. Students who miss more than one class period will note a 10% deduction from the final grade percentage for this class.

Assignment Completion:

Students are expected to turn all assignments in on time. Assignments, which are late, will be reduced at a rate of 10% per day. After one week, late assignments will no longer be accepted for credit but must be turned in to complete the course.

Other:

The instructor reserves the right to make changes to the syllabus as needed with reasonable notice and accommodations for the students.

References

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Multimedia:

(These sites have topics & research relevant to Group Work)

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

National Association of Social Workers

www.iaswg.org

International Association for Social Work with Groups (formerly ASWG.org)

www.eaps.org

Eastern Group Psychotherapy Society www.asgw.org Association for Specialist in Group work www.agpa.org American Group Psychotherapy Association

Journals:

Journal of Social Work

Groupwork

International Journal of Group Psychotherapy

Social Work with Groups

Appendix B

Rubric for Group Facilitation

SWRK 522: Group Facilitation						
C1: Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior; C6: Engage with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities; C8 Intervene with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations and Communities; C9: Evaluate Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations and Communities						
Dimension	1 Beginning	2 Developing	3 Marginal	4 Proficient	5 Exemplary	Score/ Comments
1. Outline	Demonstrates 0-1 of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Goal, Purpose or Rationale • Objectives; limitations; restrictions • Theoretical Framework if applicable • Materials needed • Procedures/ directions • Processing/ questions/ discussion/ etc. 	Demonstrates 2-3 of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Goal, Purpose or Rationale • Objectives; limitations; restrictions • Theoretical Framework if applicable • Materials needed • Procedures/ directions • Processing/ questions/ discussion/ etc. 	Demonstrates 4 of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Goal, Purpose or Rationale • Objectives; limitations; restrictions • Theoretical Framework if applicable • Materials needed • Procedures/ directions • Processing/ questions/ discussion/ etc. 	Demonstrates 5 of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Goal, Purpose or Rationale • Objectives; limitations; restrictions • Theoretical Framework if applicable • Materials needed • Procedures/ directions • Processing/ questions/ discussion/ etc. 	Demonstrates ALL 6 of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Goal, Purpose or Rationale • Objectives; limitations; restrictions • Theoretical Framework if applicable • Materials needed • Procedures/ directions • Processing/ questions/ discussion/ etc. 	<hr style="width: 50px; margin: 0 auto;"/> Score earned X 5 <hr style="width: 50px; margin: 0 auto;"/> Score earned

<p><i>Note to Instructor:</i> Item 2 C6: Engage with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities</p>						
2. Facilitation/Engagement	<p>Organized well</p> <p>AND demonstrates the ability to engage the members of the grp as evidenced by the following 1 skills:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building rapport • Eliciting responses • Participant interaction with each other • Active listening skills 	<p>Organized well</p> <p>AND demonstrates the ability to engage the members of the grp as evidenced by the following 2 skills:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building rapport • Eliciting responses • Participant interaction with each other • Active listening skills 	<p>Organized well</p> <p>AND demonstrates the ability to engage the members of the grp as evidenced by the following 3 skills:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building rapport • Eliciting responses • Participant interaction with each other • Active listening skills 	<p>Lacks organization</p> <p>BUT demonstrates the ability to engage the members of the grp as evidenced by the following 4 skills:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building rapport • Eliciting responses • Participant interaction with each other • Active listening skills 	<p>Organized well</p> <p>AND demonstrates the ability to engage the members of the grp as evidenced by the following 4 skills:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building rapport • Eliciting responses • Participant interaction with each other • Active listening skills 	<p>____ Score earned</p> <p>X 5</p> <p>____ Score earned</p>
<p><i>Note to Instructor:</i> Items 3 C8: Intervene with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations and Communities</p>						
3. Facilitation: Intervention	<p>Demonstrates ALL 6 of the following at a beginning level:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of communication skills • Appropriate use of grp 	<p>Demonstrates ALL 6 of the following at a developing level:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of communication skills • Appropriate use of grp 	<p>Demonstrates ALL 6 of the following at a marginal level:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of communication skills • Appropriate use of grp 	<p>Demonstrates ALL 6 of the following at a proficient level:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of communication skills • Appropriate use of grp 	<p>Demonstrates ALL 6 of the following at an exemplary level:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of communication skills • Appropriate use of grp 	<p>____ Score earned</p> <p>X 5</p> <p>____ Score earned</p>

	<p>techniques & tools</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to understand the activity • Ability to Process the activity • Ability to direct the flow of the grp • Ability to use effective task & maintenance functions appropriately 	<p>techniques & tools</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to understand the activity • Ability to Process the activity • Ability to direct the flow of the grp • Ability to use effective task & maintenance functions appropriately 	<p>techniques & tools</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to understand the activity • Ability to Process the activity • Ability to direct the flow of the grp • Ability to use effective task & maintenance functions appropriately 	<p>techniques & tools</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to understand the activity • Ability to Process the activity • Ability to direct the flow of the grp • Ability to use effective task & maintenance functions appropriately 	<p>techniques & tools</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to understand the activity • Ability to Process the activity • Ability to direct the flow of the grp • Ability to use effective task & maintenance functions appropriately 	
<p><i>Note to Instructor:</i> <i>Items 4</i> C9: Evaluate with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations and Communities</p>						
4. Facilitation: Evaluation	<p>EITHER identifies 1-2 strengths and 1-2 opportunities for growth for peers OR self;</p> <p>AND does not offer any substantial and meaningful recommendations</p>	<p>Identifies 1-2 strengths and 1-2 opportunities for growth for peers;</p> <p>AND identifies 1-2 strengths and 1-2 opportunities for growth for self;</p> <p>BUT does not offer any substantial and meaningful recommendations</p>	<p>Identifies at least 3 strengths and 3 opportunities for growth for peers;</p> <p>BUT fails to identify any strengths or opportunities for growth for self;</p> <p>AND offers at least 2 substantial and meaningful recommendations</p>	<p>Identifies 1-2 strengths and 1-2 opportunities for growth for peers;</p> <p>AND identifies 1-2 strengths and 1-2 opportunities for growth for self;</p> <p>AND offers at least 1 substantial and meaningful recommendations</p>	<p>Identifies at least 3 strengths and 3 opportunities for growth for peers;</p> <p>AND identifies at least 3 strengths and 3 opportunities for growth for self;</p> <p>AND offers at least 2 substantial and meaningful recommendations</p>	<p>____ Score earned</p> <p>X 4</p> <p>____ Score earned</p>

<i>Note to Instructor:</i> <i>Items 5- C1: Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior</i>						
5. Writing and APA	Paper has more than 10 spelling and/or grammar errors. OR more than 10 APA errors; AND is conceptually and/or logically unsound.	Paper has 7-10 spelling and/or grammar errors; or 7-10 APA errors; AND lacks flow and is not logically presented.	Paper has 4-6 spelling and/or grammar errors; OR 4-6 APA errors; AND lacks flow, but is conceptually sound.	Paper has 2-3 spelling and/or grammar errors; OR 2-3 APA errors; AND paper is presented logically so that ideas flow nicely.	Paper has 0-1 spelling and/or grammar errors; OR 0-1 APA errors; AND paper is logically and conceptually sound.	_____ Score earned

Total Score: _____/200