AGS Course 532
Group Psychotherapy and Counseling
Spring 2017 Venable

1) **Course Designation and Identifier**

1.1 Adler Graduate School
1.2 Course number 532
1.3 Group Psychotherapy and Counseling
1.4 Three (3) credits
1.5 Prerequisite: 511

2) **Course Description**

The purpose of this course is to familiarize students with skills and techniques for effective group counseling and leadership of groups. This course will introduce students to the basics of group counseling and group dynamics. A variety of content areas will be covered as they pertain to group communication patterns: verbal and non-verbal, leadership, trust, cohesion, risk-taking, group membership roles, facilitation skills, group problem-solving, decision-making, conflict resolution, interviewing techniques, and summary session report writing.

2.1 **Class Format:** Each class session will include an experiential group where students have an opportunity to participate in a group with classmates. Each student will have an opportunity to be a group member, group leader, and observer. While not intended as an intensive therapy group, students will engage in the sharing of personal information to contribute to the experiential group. Further, sharing is not a requirement for grading or evaluative purposes, and you will not be graded on the amount of sharing during the experiential group.

2.2 **Special Considerations for Class Format:** Throughout this course, we will explore group process through in-class activities and your experiential group. These components are meant to encourage the practice of group leadership skills, encourage critical thinking, and contribute to ongoing professional development.
3) **Texts, Materials and Resources**

3.1 **Required text**


3.2 **Required Articles & Other Resources**


4) **Competencies and Learning Outcomes**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CACREP Standard</th>
<th>Expected Student Outcomes: Upon successful completion of this course, the student will be able to:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.F.6.a</td>
<td>Identify theoretical foundations of group counseling and group work.</td>
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<td>2.F.6.b</td>
<td>Demonstrate understanding of the dynamics associated with group process and development.</td>
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<td>2.F.6.c</td>
<td>Be familiar with therapeutic factors and how they contribute to group effectiveness.</td>
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<td>2.F.6.d</td>
<td>Identify characteristics and functions of effective group leaders.</td>
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</table>
2.F.6.e Identify approaches to group formation, including recruiting, screening, and selecting members.

2.F.6.f Demonstrate understanding of types of groups and other considerations that affect conducting groups in varied settings.

2.F.6.g Understand ethical and culturally relevant strategies for designing and facilitating groups.

2.F.6.h Participate as group member in 10 clock hours of a small group activity.

5) **Special Project Time (SPT)**

Special Project Time (SPT) allows students the opportunity to integrate course materials. SPT is meant to be a self-contained experience, requiring 45 hours to complete. SPT generally focuses on either (a) an experiential exercise paired with a short integrative writing component or (b) a research exercise and a short integrative writing component.

An integrative SPT experience can be based on an individual project or a group project. SPT experiences may be constructed in such a way that they pertain to students’ unique degree plans. For example, Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist students, Licensed Professional Counselor students, and Licensed School Counselor students may construct a SPT experience unique to their chosen disciplines. This is done in consultation with the course counselor.

6) **Assessment Plan/Evaluation Procedures**

**6.1 Participation in Class/Social Interest (20 points)**

Attendance and promptness:

1) Attendance is expected at every class session, unless there is a valid reason for missing and is pre-arranged with the instructor. Promptness is expected and appreciated. Unexcused absences will have an effect on the “social interest” aspect of your grade for this class. If you have a legitimate reason for missing, please let your instructor know prior to or immediately upon returning to class.

a. Preparation - Graduate students are expected to come to class well prepared, including:
   - Completing all assigned readings.
   - Being ready for small and large group discussions.

b. Participation and cooperation.
   - Active participation in class activities AND in-class group.
   - Quality of participation in class discussions and small groups.

c. Support and feedback to peers.
   - Offer constructive comments when in pairs, small or large groups.
   - Professionally critique other groups’ presentations.

d. Respect for confidentiality.
   - Being actively involved in a course like this entails some level of self-disclosure. Because of the nature of the vulnerability, trust, and openness necessary to learn about counseling, it is extremely important that confidentiality be maintained. Revealing personal information about
others outside of the classroom is a breach of confidentiality and is unacceptable.

6.2 Ethics Reflection paper (10 points)

This is a 2-page paper focusing on ethics in the group counseling process. Discuss two or three unique ethical considerations when working with clients in a group based on the ACA code of group ethical standards. What specific dynamics might arise that would create concern and what would you do to handle them? **You need to use 2-3 hypothetical scenarios to make your points.**

***Further details given in class.***

***DUE: 6/15/17 by start of class.***

6.3 Self-Reflection & Leadership Exploration Presentation (15 points)

Outline the traits of an effective leader. Reflect on your personal characteristics and preferences that may affect your group leadership style and prepare a self-exploration presentation. Discuss the theoretical approaches to group intervention that fit best for you, and the aspects of group leadership that might be most challenging. Explore what areas you need to develop outlining specific goals for professional development.

For one week of class, don’t give advice to anyone in your life. Offer reflective listening or ask stimulating questions. Observe when you are tempted to give advice and why. Notice if people respond differently if you are simply curious with questions or practice reflective listening. Discuss this in your presentation to the class.

***Further details given in class.***

***DUE: 6/3/16, by start of class.***

6.4 Group Process Observations (15 points)

This assignment has two parts. First you will observe a live group process once outside of class (i.e. Leader led recovery group, self-help group, etc.) and second, you will observe live demo group facilitation in the class. Further details for a summation will be discussed in class. There will be 10 minute presentation/sharing with class based on your observations.

***DUE: 6/8/17, by start of class***

*If consent forms are needed, please keep signed copies at the agency where observation occurred.*

6.5 Journal reflections (15 points)

Journal Processing and Question/Topic of the Day

Each student is expected to keep a journal to share personal reflections about the in-class group process. You may choose to write/draw/collage or a combination of all three in your journal. The journal is meant to be a confidential tool, to be shared only with the
instructor (or others upon your choosing), and its contents are a reflection upon personal insights, feelings, thoughts, and observations about the group experience. Please spend a minimum of 30 minutes after each in-class group experiential.

Journal Reflection Guidelines: 1-2 pages after EACH in-class group (6 total)
1. Personal Reactions - what you said, what you thought, how you felt in the in-class group experiential. Please write from the first person (using “I”) to address personal reactions to the experience. What did you notice?
2. Group Process Reflections - reflect on your personal reflections on areas such as group roles, norms, pressures to conform, cohesiveness, leadership, communication etc.
3. Include thoughts about any Question/Topic of the Day and any other relevant topics from readings or related to the group process.


6.6 SPT Final Project: Therapy Group Design (25 points)

The cumulative assessment for this course includes developing an outline/curriculum for a group as well as a write up of the process of planning and implementing the group. It is meant to serve as a synthesis of all course content including course readings, in-class activities and group, and assignments.

Part 1) Video Demonstration: In a live, recorded video (audio optional) presentation, pretend you are actually speaking to a new therapy group.

From Unit 6, what “agreements” could you utilize to create a safe space for your group members? Share the guidelines you’d encourage members to use regarding interpersonal interactions, giving feedback to each other, etc.? Introduce yourself, outline the group agreements, confidentiality requirements (give examples so your members know what this means), roles of the both the leader and members, and some sort of trust building exercise as members introduce themselves (you don’t have to actually “do” the trust exercise, just make a statement to explain it.)

Part 2) “Group Design” Students will design a "group" in which they will construct the basic elements of group psychotherapy. Students will identify a population (e.g., substance abuse, youth, adult inpatient, etc.) of their choice for this group. This is a therapy group not a “support group.” Consider choosing a group you might be able to actually facilitate in your career.

Paper should include the following:
- Describe the group composition and purpose of your group. Discuss the special challenges or needs that might arise from the particular population you chose.
- Assessment of the Clinical Situation: What clinical factors are involved that you need to consider for this group? What pre-screening questions will you use?
- Formulation of Goals: What might be reasonable and attainable goals for this group?
• Modification of Technique: What factors do you need to consider when using techniques with this group? What therapeutic factors would you utilize and why?
• Create a scenario to describe the flow of one session in the “Middle Stage” and probing questions you might ask as the leader. Show a back and forth exchange between yourself and members to demonstrate your skills as a group therapist.
• Paper must be minimum of 6 pages of content, max of 8 (i.e., not including the cover page or references); use Times New Roman 12 point double spaced. APA 6th edition style writing; use 3-6 recent scholarly references. Papers will be assessed for critical thinking, depth, grammar, APA format, references, flow and utilization of concepts learned in the course.
• Paper Due Saturday night of Week 7 by 11:59 PM. A Grading Rubric is used for this assignment and can be found on the Moodle page. Please follow the rubric closely when completing this assignment.

***Further details provided in class***

7) Assignment Overview

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment or Activity</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
<th>Point Value</th>
<th>Course Outcome Addressed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participation in Class</td>
<td>Every class</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>All</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assignments:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Self-Reflection Presentation</td>
<td>6/3/17</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>All</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group Observations</td>
<td>6/8/17</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>All</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethics Reflection paper</td>
<td>6/15/17</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>All</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Journal reflections</td>
<td>6/28/17</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>All</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPT Final Project: Therapy Group Design</td>
<td>7/1/17</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>All</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total points</td>
<td></td>
<td>100</td>
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8) **Grading: (Based on total points for the class)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>GPA</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>93-100</td>
<td>4.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>90-92</td>
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<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>87-89</td>
<td>3.33</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>83-86</td>
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<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>80-82</td>
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<td>C+</td>
<td>77-79</td>
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<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>70-76</td>
<td>2.0</td>
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R    Retake- Needs more time or instruction to meet requirements of the class
NC   Quality of work or participation falls below minimum expectations, including:
- Not attending class.
- Not properly notifying registrar of a withdrawal
- Missing class periods in excess of the number allowed by AGS’s course attendance policy (see section 9 below)
- Not resolving a grade of incomplete within 45 days after the last class meeting (not the assignment due date) and an agreed upon extension has not been arranged by the student and instructor. The Incomplete turns to No Credit (NC) and the course must be repeated at full price.

9) **Writing Guidelines including APA Format**

9.1 **Written Assignments**

All written assignments in courses at the Adler Graduate School, including those submitted in online courses, must be in APA format, unless specifically noted by the course instructor.

Reference for APA format:
- Purdue Owl https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/

10) **Attendance and Participation Policy**

Since courses are structured according to an intensive five-week format, regular and punctual attendance is of prime importance. Students are expected to attend all class meetings. When a student is unable to attend class, it is a courtesy (as well as expected professional behavior) to notify the course instructor in advance using the e-mail or phone provided in this syllabus. If a student misses more than two class units, the decision whether to allow a grade or issue a retake is left to the discretion of the instructor. It is the instructor’s prerogative to allow or not allow make up work or to
deduct points or issue a lower grade based on missed class sessions. Students who miss **four class units** will automatically receive a grade of NC (No Credit) for the class and are expected to repeat the class at full price.

Courses may have additional attendance requirements based on the structure of the course. Specifics for this course are listed here:

10.1 **You can positively affect your participation grade by:**
   1.) Arriving on time, being prepared for class and being ready to actively participate by making effective comments that raise the overall level of discussion for all class participants.
   2.) Asking thoughtful questions that will enhance discussion and engage your peers.
   3.) Listening carefully to, supporting, and engaging your peers and instructor in discussion.

10.2 **You will negatively affect your participation grade by:**
   1.) Not attending class. Even if you meet Adler Graduate School attendance requirements, there is no make-up work for a missed class.
   2.) Dominating class discussion, thereby restricting others’ ability to participate.
   3.) Disrupting others in class by having “side bar” conversations and arriving late.
   4.) Making offensive, disrespectful comments during discussions that do not promote professionalism and the tolerance necessary in our field.
   5.) Using electronic devices such as, but not limited to a cell phone, ipad, ipod, computer, or other personal electronic devices during class unless you are instructed to do so.

**Questions or appeals** about the implementation of the attendance policy may be directed to the Academic Vice President.

11) **Participation Disclaimer**

Active participation in class discussions/exercises/demonstrations is encouraged. As with other AGS courses, in this course, individual students must determine for themselves the level of personal disclosure/intimacy that is appropriate for them. Faculty members and students do not disclose confidential, personally identifiable information concerning their clients, students, research participants, organizational clients, or other recipients of their services. Whenever confidential information and material is used in any AGS course, students and faculty members are expected to observe AGS policy concerning the handling of confidential information/material. Full descriptions of these policies are readily available.

12) **Academic Integrity Policy**

Honesty and trust among students and between students and faculty are essential for a strong, functioning academic community. Consequently, students are expected to do their own work on all academic assignments, tests, projects, and research/term papers. Academic dishonesty, whether cheating, plagiarism, or some other form of dishonest conduct may result in failure for the work involved. Academic dishonesty could also
result in failure for the course and, in the event of a second incident of academic dishonesty, suspension from the Adler Graduate School. Here are examples of academic dishonesty:

- **Cheating** - Intentionally using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information, or study aids in any academic exercise. The term academic exercise includes all forms of work submitted for credit.
- **Fabrication** - Intentional and unauthorized falsification or invention of any information or citation in an academic exercise.
- **Facilitating academic dishonesty** - Intentionally or knowingly helping or attempting to help another to violate a provision of academic integrity.
- **Plagiarism** - The deliberate adoption or reproduction of ideas or words or statements of another person as one's own without acknowledgment.

13) **Nondiscrimination Clause**

The Adler Graduate School is an equal opportunity educator and employer. The Adler Graduate School does not discriminate on the basis of race, creed, color, national origin, sex, age, sexual orientation, veteran status, or physical disability in the employment of faculty or staff, the admission or treatment of students, or in the operation of its educational programs and activities. The institution is committed to providing equal education and employment opportunities in accordance with all applicable state and federal laws.

14) **Learning Accommodations (including students with disabilities)**

If a student in this course has a documented learning disability, inform the instructor during the first week of class. The instructor needs to know on the front end so that s/he can work with you. The Adler Graduate School is committed to helping all students be successful, as best as can be reasonably accommodated. Documenting a learning disability occurs at the student’s expense. When documented appropriately, the Adler Graduate School makes all reasonable accommodations.
## Course Outline

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Reading</th>
<th>Learning Outcomes</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Saturday</td>
<td></td>
<td><a href="http://www.acacodeofethics/group">www.acacodeofethics/group</a> Counseling.com</td>
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<td>DUE: Group Observation (present reflections)</td>
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<td>DUE: Ethics Paper</td>
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<td>DUE: Journal Reflections (by 6/28/17 at 11:59 pm);</td>
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<td>DUE: SPT (by 7/1/17 at 11:59 pm)</td>
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16) **Instructor Contact Information**
Lisa Venable, MA  
Lisa.Venable@alfredadler.edu  
612-250-7859

Adler Graduate School  
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