



REH 6250: Group Counseling Course Syllabus Summer, 2023

Instructor and Course Information	
Instructor	Michael Gerald, PhD, LCMHC, CRC, LMHC (Iowa)
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Office Location	SCCE 430
Office Hours (Zoom Link)	By Appointment Only Office Hours: https://usu.zoom.us/j/7677461951?pwd=OWFIVHd5UHVtZUVGMmJMT2E0OU1HUT09
Course Number	REH 6250
Course Name	Group Counseling
Credit Hours	3 Credit Hours
Course Location (Zoom Link)	Main Classroom: https://usu.zoom.us/j/85374195164?pwd=bDZmRWIIS3Z2YkRiVGFzOG5Nb2Yydz09
Course Meeting Dates & Times	Our Class will meet <i>live</i> on Mondays , from 4:30pm – 7:00pm MST Summer, 2023, 14-Week Session runs from 05/08/2023 – 08/07/2023

Indigenous Land Acknowledgement

It is important to acknowledge that I am broadcasting this class from the traditional homelands of the Shoshone-Bannock and Eastern Shoshone peoples. We must acknowledge that the land we are meeting on this semester is the original homeland of indigenous people. As counselors, respecting the histories and cultural identities of the clients we see is vital, so I believe it is important to acknowledge the painful history of genocide and forced removal of indigenous



persons from this territory. I wish to honor and respect the many diverse indigenous peoples still connected to this land on which we gather.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This is an introduction to group counseling, including theory and practice specific to persons with disabilities. Students participate in small and large group sessions while learning about group formation, significant stages of the group process, and ethical/legal issues related to group counseling.

Class sessions will include a combination of lecture, discussion, activity, and live, practice group counseling sessions facilitated by student members of the course.

Readings

Readings will consist of book chapters from the required texts and supplemental empirical articles (posted in Canvas). Supplemental readings can be downloaded from Canvas. Students must complete all readings prior to the class period for which they are assigned, and come prepared to discuss the readings in class. Many readings are technical and somewhat difficult. Students should expect to study the readings as necessary to understand the material.

- **Required Textbook:** Jacobs, E., Schimmell, C. J., Masson, R. L., Harville, R. L., (2016). *Group Counseling: Strategies and Skills*, 8th Edition. Boston, MA: Cengage Learning. ISBN 978-1-305-08730-9.
- **Required Textbook:** Corey, G. (2016). *Theory and practice of group counseling*, 9th edition. Boston, MA: Cengage Learning. ISBN 978-1-305—08801-6.
- **Additional Readings:** Available in CANVAS.

Purpose and Objectives

The purpose of this course is to introduce the methods and practice of group counseling. As such, this course provides theoretical rationale for understanding group development, process, and dynamics and discusses the specific functions of group interaction. This course explores the organization and maintenance tasks associated with group leader/facilitator roles. In addition, this course introduces the basic skills needed to effectively conduct group counseling sessions. Special group management issues and disability applications are explored. Finally, this course provides a basic understanding of how to formulate, start, maintain, and conclude a variety of groups such as support, psychoeducation, job club, and counseling.

By the end of this course, students will:

1. Understand the theoretical foundations of group counseling and group work (*CACREP Standard, 2.F.6.a*);
2. Understand group dynamics, group process, and stages of group development (*CACREP Standard, 2.F.6.b*);



3. Understand therapeutic factors and how they contribute to group effectiveness (*CACREP Standard 2.F.6.c*);
4. Understand characteristics and functions of effective group leaders (*CACREP Standard 2.F.6.d*);
5. Understand approaches to group formation, including recruiting, screening, and selecting members (*CACREP Standard 2.F.6.e*);
6. Understand types of groups and other considerations that affect conducting groups in varied settings (*CACREP Standard 2.F.6.f*);
7. Understand ethical and culturally relevant strategies for designing and facilitating groups (*CACREP Standard 2.F.6.g*);
8. Have participated in direct experiences... as group members in a small group activity, approved by the program for a minimum of 10 clock hours over the course of one academic term (*CACREP Standard 2.F.6.h*).

Student Learning Outcomes

Student Learning Outcome #1: Students will understand the theoretical foundations of group counseling and group work and be able to apply these in their practice setting.

- Assessment Method
 - Live participation in selected group activities.
 - Depending on course enrollment, leading one to two in-class group activities over the course.
 - Quizzes, Practice Reflections, Written Assignments, and Final Exam

Student Learning Outcome #2: Students will participate in a minimum of 10 hours of group related exercises in this class.

- Assessment Method
 - Live participation in selected in-class group activities (8).
 - Live participation in selected out-of-class group activities (3).

Grading Guidelines & Policies

Course Assignments & Point Totals

Assignment	Description	Total Points	Due Date
Weekly Quizzes (9)	Open-book, open-note quizzes will be administered based on the readings and lectures. Quizzes will be available for a week before they are due. The quiz can be accessed through the Quizzes section of our Canvas site, or	90	Weekly



through the module corresponding
with the week the quiz is assigned.

In-Class Practice Reflections (6)	Following the In-Class Practice Sessions each week there will be a Practice Reflection prompt posted on Canvas under each week's module and in the Assignments section of our Canvas page. There will be one prompt for the Group Leader, and a different prompt for the Group Participants.	60	Weekly
Theory Paper	Students will complete one research/practice paper in the course. Students will be asked to select <i>one</i> theoretical approach to Group Work, provide an overview of that theory's approach to group work, as well as a hypothetical 12-session framework for a Group that could be run using that approach. Assignment instructions and applicable resources will be made available on Canvas, under Assignments.	100	07/14/2023
Reflection Paper	At the conclusion of the semester students will complete a Reflection Paper that will include: an overview of their subjective experiences in the course; an evaluation of their own performance as a Group Leader and Group Member; a statement of their initial theoretical orientation and its approach to Group Work; and a reflection on their community-based Group Experiences (including verification of the group experiences).	100	08/09/2023
Outside of Class Group Experience	As part of the requirements of the course, you will need to find an open group in your local community. You will discuss this group with me to ensure its appropriate match to the course and intent. You will contact	X	08/09/2023



the group leader/agency to get permission to attend, let them know you are master's student in a group counseling course and need to attend **three sessions** (*at a minimum*) of group work. You will explain that your primary role is to observe and learn, but that if they would like, you are willing to participate fully as called upon. These experiences will augment the in-class group experiences.

Final Exam	At the conclusion of the semester students will complete a Final Exam. The Final Exam will be available for one week at the end of the course and will cover all material in the course (including material that may not have been presented during class sessions). The Exam will be timed, but will be open-book and open-note.	100	08/09/2023
Total Points		480	

Grading Scale

Grade	Points	Percentage	Grade	Points	Percentage
A	452-480	94%-100%	C	356-383	74%-79%
A-	432-451	90%-93%	C-	336-355	70%-73%
B	404-431	84%-100%	D	308-335	64%-69%
B-	384-403	80%-83%	D-	288-307	60%-63%

Other Course Expectations

- **In Class Work and Attendance**
 - Classroom attendance is important for several reasons. Besides the obvious reason of learning, our program must demonstrate that students participate in 10 clock hours of group work over the course of one semester (CACREP Accreditation Guidelines). Unless otherwise cleared by the instructor, students who miss all or part of class time will receive a lower grade and may need to make up missed hours. Working in small groups, you will participate in 6 Zoom group sessions with your classmates.
 - **CACREP Standard, 2.D.6.h:** *Direct experiences in which students participate as group members in a small group activity, approved by the*



program, for a minimum of 10 clock hours over the course of one academic term

- **Missing more than 1 class session will result in an automatic failing grade a need to retake the course.**
 - **Please discuss absences with me ahead of time in order to accommodate emergency circumstances that may arise.**
- **Outside of Class Group Attendance/Experience**
 - As part of the requirements of the course, you will need to find an open group in your local community. You will discuss this group with me to ensure its appropriate match to the course and intent. You will contact the group leader/agency to get permission to attend, let them know you are master's student in a group counseling course and need to attend **three sessions** (*at a minimum*) of group work. You will explain that your primary role is to observe and learn, but that if they would like, you are willing to participate fully as called upon. These experiences will augment the in-class group experiences.
- **Skills Demonstration**
 - Students will be evaluated for a basic level of group counseling competency via group observations at some point during the live class sessions. This will be assessed on a pass/fail basis. There is a subjective component to this evaluation. Students that are not fully engaged, demonstrating problem behaviors, and otherwise disrupting the group will be asked to leave the group for the evening. Should this happen again, the student will be removed from the course, receive an overall failing grade, and expected to complete the course at a future date.
- **Canvas**
 - All assignments will be turned in using our Canvas site. Assignments sent via email as attachments **will not be accepted** unless previously approved by the instructor. All assignments are due on the due date, by 11:59pm.
- **NOTE: It is important for students to understand that evaluation of counselors in training extends beyond letter grades, completed assignments, and points earned. Students are also evaluated in terms of their professional practice competency, so please be mindful that your conduct in the course as a group leader, group member, and student, is equally important in terms of evaluation to your ability to complete assignments.**

Disclaimer



Adjustments in syllabi are often necessary to best achieve the purpose and objectives of the course. I reserve the right to change readings, assignments, and the relative importance of the assignments for the final grade. If changes are necessary, students will be given reasonable advanced notice and rational for changes. In the event changes are made, the amended syllabi will be discussed in class and uploaded into CANVAS.

Special Education and Rehabilitation Department Policies for Grading Guidelines

1. Criteria for the awarding of each letter grade should be specified in the course syllabi for all courses.
2. Grades given in all courses should truly reflect differences in student performance, not just meeting minimum criteria.
3. All graduate students must maintain a 3.0 grade point average to remain an active student in the graduate program (a USU Graduate School policy).

Academic Honesty

It is expected that student work will conform to the highest standards of academic honesty. Incidences of academic dishonesty (e.g., cheating on tests, plagiarism, lying to supervisors and cooperating teachers) will be referred to program committees for disciplinary action.

Notice of Academic Dishonesty

The University expects that students and faculty alike maintain the highest standards of academic honesty. For the benefit of students who may not be aware of specific standards of the University concerning academic honest, the following information is quoted from the code of Polices and Procedure for Students at Utah State University, Article V, Section 3; Violations of University Standards, Acts of Academic Dishonesty:

- A. Cheating includes intentionally: Using or attempting to use or providing others with any unauthorized assistance in taking quizzes, tests, examinations, or in any other academic exercise or activity; Depending upon the aid of sources beyond those authorized by the instructor in writing papers, preparing reports, solving problems, or carrying out other assignments; Substituting for another student, or permitting another student to substitute for oneself, in taking an examination or preparing academic work; Acquiring tests or other academic material belonging to a faculty member, staff member, or another student without express permission; and Engaging in any form of research fraud.
- B. Falsification includes the intentional and unauthorized altering or inventing of any information or citation in an academic exercise or activity.
- C. Plagiarism includes knowingly representing, by paraphrase or direct quotation, the published or unpublished work of another person as one's own in any academic exercise or activity without full and clear acknowledgement. It also includes the unacknowledged use of materials prepared by another person or agency engaged in the selling of term



papers or other academic materials

(<http://catalog.usu.edu/content.php?catoid=12&navoid=3140&hl=Integrity&returnto=search>).

Violations of the above policy will subject the offender to the University discipline procedures as outlined in Article VI, Section 1 of the Handbook. Those procedures may lead to: (a) a reprimand; (b) a grade adjustment; (c) being placed on warning or probation; (d) suspension from the University; or (e) expulsion from the University.

[Learn more about the USU student code of conduct.](#)

Grievance Process (Student Code)

Students who feel they have been unfairly treated [in matters other than (i) discipline or (ii) admission, residency, employment, traffic, and parking - which are addressed by procedures separate and independent from the Student Code] may file a grievance through the channels and procedures described in the Student Code: Article VII Grievances

(<https://studentconduct.usu.edu/studentcode/article7>).

General Course Policies

Distance learning presents some pedagogical challenges for both instructors and students. Therefore, to maximize learning in this course, students are expected to participate in all Zoom sessions in a professional manner. Students should minimize distraction by turning off other electronic devices (e.g. televisions, cell phones, etc.) and minimizing other Internet web pages while class is in session. Students are required use the raise hand feature on adobe connect to ask questions and dialogue with the instructor. Students are also required to participate in in class group activities. During these discussions, students must use their microphone. Please remember to mute your microphone when you are not speaking.

Learning Environment

Proper decorum is to be observed in the virtual classroom, as outlined in the student code (<http://catalog.usu.edu/content.php?catoid=4&navoid=581>). Students are expected to engage in reasonable and substantial preparation for their coursework, to follow course and class guidelines as set forth in syllabi and as enunciated by their instructor, and to complete all academic exercises with integrity. All interactions with faculty members, staff members, and other students shall be conducted with courtesy, civility, decency, and a concern for personal dignity. The following are the course policies that should be followed during all online discussions, activities, presentations, and testing.

1. Refrain from the use of excessive profanity or derogatory statements about sexual orientation, ethnicity, religion, race, gender, age, etc.
2. Respect your peers (e.g., do not judge opinions or monopolize the discussion thread).



3. Sharing of personal experiences is encouraged in the context of the course material. However, the instructor and the students are expected to maintain confidentiality and are asked not to discuss personal accounts shared by colleagues outside of the class setting.
4. Remember, cameras are required for full participation. Some classes may require the camera to be on all the time, other courses may require limited or no cameras. However, we encourage you to ***consider your actions and environment*** while on camera that may impact the learning environment for the class.
 - a. It may be necessary for you to arrange options for childcare and pet care to minimize distractions.
5. Assignments are due on the dates noted in the course syllabus.
6. Audio signals on cell phones, pagers, and watches should be turned off, or, if you must be available, set them to vibrate. If you get a call that you need to take, take it outside of the “classroom”. Leave and return quietly with as little disruption as possible.
7. Please use your laptop only for class activities or discussions.

Professional Performance Standards (PPS)

Part of performing at your best level in this program will require a high degree of self-awareness. The following information is quoted from the Utah State University (USU) Rehabilitation Counseling Education Program performance policy...

The relationship between personal behavior and professional competence has long been recognized in the rehabilitation counseling field. Rehabilitation counselors must be aware of the impact of their own physical, mental, and/or emotional issues on the counseling process, and the potential harmful effects these unresolved issues can have on consumer progress and outcomes.

Additionally, the Code of Professional Ethics for Rehabilitation Counselors (CRCC, 2017; https://www.crc certification.com/filebin/pdf/ethics/CodeOfEthics_01-01-2017.pdf) states:

Section D.3.a - IMPAIRMENT. *Rehabilitation counselors are alert to the signs of impairment from their own physical, mental, or emotional problems and refrain from offering or providing professional services when such impairment is likely to harm the client or others. They seek assistance for problems that reach the level of professional impairment, and, if necessary, they limit, suspend, or terminate their professional responsibilities until such time it is determined that they may safely resume their work. Rehabilitation counselors assist colleagues or supervisors in recognizing their own professional impairment and provide consultation and assistance when warranted with colleagues or supervisors showing signs of impairment and intervene as appropriate to prevent harm to the client. (See A.9.d.)*



If you feel you are struggling in any way, we as faculty encourage you to reach out to us. We will work together to find suitable methods for supporting you.

In addition to meeting the academic standards set forth in the USU Rehabilitation Counseling Program, students are expected to conduct themselves in an ethical, responsible and professional manner. They must be knowledgeable of and at all times adhere to the general standards of professional ethics and practice set forth by the Commission on Rehabilitation Counselor Certification (CRCC, see the code of ethics page referenced above). More specific to this class and the overall rehabilitation counseling program, specific Professional Performance Standards include:

1. Openness to new ideas
2. Flexibility
3. Cooperativeness with others
4. Willingness to accept and use feedback
5. Awareness of own impact on others
6. Ability to deal with conflict
7. Ability to accept personal responsibility
8. Ability to express feelings effectively and appropriately
9. Attention to ethical and legal considerations
10. Initiative and motivation
11. Awareness of and attention to the unique cultural and societal issues related to disability

The rehabilitation counseling program has also adopted a set of professional dispositions to be demonstrated by all students. The professional dispositions include:

- Self-awareness, including humility, self-reflection, and understanding of place in history
- Integrity, including personal responsibility, maturity, honesty, courage, and congruence
- Commitment, including counseling identity, investment, advocacy, collaboration, and interpersonal competence
- Openness to idea, learning, change, giving and receiving feedback, others, and self-development
- Respect to self and others, including honoring diversity, self-care, and wellness

Skills: At a minimum, students are expected to develop a graduate-level understanding of the following skills: research, writing, presentation, collaboration, technology, and critical thinking. It is also important that you do not make assumptions regarding the content, policy, or other elements of this class. Please feel free to contact me directly to address any questions or concerns you may have.

Professional Writing: Within graduate school and as a professional, it is expected that we be able to communicate clearly with precision and formality. Before any submission of any



assignment, students can approach the Writing Center at USU for support in editing. The Writing Center has a link so you can schedule an online session if necessary. They can be reached by phone: (435) 797-2712, or Email: usuwritingcenter@gmail.com. More detailed information about the Writing Center can be accessed at: <https://writing.usu.edu>

Attendance: Students are expected to attend all live Zoom sessions. Attendance is a critical aspect of student success and classroom engagement. Students should let the professor know in advance if they need to be absent. In the event of a personal emergency, getting word to the professor about personal absences, as soon as possible, is appreciated. Should absences occur, students are expected to follow-up with peer colleagues regarding missed content, and then with the instructor for consultation, if further elaboration on content is needed.

Participation: Students are expected to participate in all teaching activities. Participation is a critical aspect of student success and classroom engagement. Sharing professional and personal experiences related to the topic under discussion is invited as a way of adding to the overall learning environment whether we are meeting online or in-person. Students are expected to demonstrate respect for one another in the way that they ask questions, make comments, and engage in the overall academic exchange of concepts, topics, and ideas.

Emotional and Mental Wellbeing

Graduate school can be a very stressful experience. Utah State University has a mission to support students in all facets of life including their emotional well-being. All USU students have access to confidential mental health services through Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS). This includes a full range of counseling services, workshops, and support/therapeutic groups. If you live in the Logan area, CAPS is located in the Taggart Student Center (TSC 306, 435-797-1012). If you live outside the Logan area, please contact Justin Barker, PsyD at justin.barker@usu.edu. Services you may be eligible for include:

- Consulting, referral, and therapy via video conferencing
- Referrals to providers throughout the State of Utah
- Initial consultation and help with referral to out-of-state students
- Recorded and live workshops on common topics such as sleep, stress/anxiety, depression, etc.

If suicide is an issue, you can get help from the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-TALK (8255).

Additional Wellness and Support Resources

Emergency services for trauma or life-threatening situations, please call 911.

[National Suicide Prevention Lifeline](#) at 1-800-273-TALK (8255).

[Sexual Assault and Anti-Violence Information office \(SAAVI\)](#): 435-797-7273

Domestic Violence services –

- [National Domestic Violence Hotline](#)



- 1-800-799-SAFE
- [More information about Domestic Violence and Services](#)
- [CAPSA](#)
 - 24-Hour Cache Valley Crisis Line: 435-753-2500.

[Utah State University Rehabilitation Counseling Master's Program](#)

- Kris Wengreen, Advisor kris.wengreen@usu.edu or 435-797-3246

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

Students with ADA-documented physical, sensory, emotional, or medical impairments may be eligible for reasonable accommodations. Veterans may also be eligible for services. All accommodations are coordinated through the Disability Resource Center (DRC) in Room 101 of the University Inn, (435)797-2444 voice, (435)797-0740 TTY, (435)797-2444 VP, or toll free at 1-800-259-2966. Please contact the DRC as early in the semester as possible. Alternate format materials (Braille, large print or digital) are available with advance notice. Their website can be found at: <https://www.usu.edu/drc/>

Utah State University Campus Policies (<https://studentaffairs.usu.edu>)

Utah State University (USU) is committed to creating and maintaining an environment free from acts of sexual misconduct and discrimination, and to fostering respect and dignity for all members of the USU community. [Title IX](#) and [USU Policy 339](#) address sexual harassment in the workplace and academic setting. The university responds promptly upon learning of any form of possible discrimination or sexual misconduct. Any individual may contact USU's Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity (AA/EO) Office for available options and resources or clarification, leading to an informal resolution of the matter. All USU [employees are required to report](#) any disclosures of sexual misconduct to the USU Title IX Coordinator. The only exceptions are for those who provide health care, mental health services and victim advocacy. [Learn more and access information and forms for reporting an incident to USU.](#)

Title IX – Sexual Misconduct and Discrimination

Utah State University is committed to creating and maintaining an environment free from acts of sexual misconduct and discrimination and to fostering respect and dignity for all members of the USU community. Title IX and USU Policy 339 (<https://www.usu.edu/policies/339/> ([Links to an external site.](#))) address sexual harassment in the workplace and academic setting. The university responds promptly upon learning of any form of possible discrimination or sexual misconduct. Any individual may contact USU's Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity (AA/EO) Office for available options and resources or clarification, leading to an informal resolution of the matter. Further information and forms for reporting an incident to USU can be found here: <http://aaeo.usu.edu>. If you or someone you know has experienced sexual assault, please contact the Sexual Assault and Anti-Violence Information office (SAAVI) at 435-797-7273 or see their website at www.usu.edu/saavi/, or contact the



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CAPSA 24-hour crisis line at (435) 753-2500. If you or someone you know needs emergency services for trauma or life-threatening situations please call 911.