



Master of Education in School Counseling
EDUC 637: Group Counseling

Syllabus

Units: 3

Individualized syllabus information will be provided on the LMS "Wall/Announcements" by the instructor, this includes: Faculty Name, Email, Phone, Office Hours, Biography; Section; Class Time; and Term Dates (including 3 weeks for individual meetings, students groups, etc. for the Spring/Fall semesters).

IT Help Contact Info: rsoetech@usc.edu;
rscstudentsupport@rossieronline.usc.edu; 855-558-4531

Hours of Service: 24 hours/day, 7 days/week

Self Help: <https://onlinecampus.support/>

INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

The purpose of this course is for students learn practical and theoretical concepts of group dynamics and group counseling. Participants also learn about systematic and interpersonal dynamics, personal communication styles, fundamental group counseling strategies, and group facilitation.

The purpose of the Master's in School Counseling program is to prepare highly skilled and proficient Professional School Counselors to facilitate K-12 social, emotional, and academic development in key areas including college and career readiness, restorative justice, and trauma informed practice. We align a lens of well-being with the Rossier School of Education's broader mission of achieving educational equity. Our faculty, candidates, staff, and alumni engage in ongoing critical reflection, problem solving, and candid communication on behalf of K-12 students, families, and other stake holders.

The mission of the USC Rossier School of Education is to prepare leaders to achieve educational equity through practice, research and policy. We work to improve learning opportunities and outcomes in urban settings and to address disparities that affect historically marginalized groups. We teach our students to value and respect the cultural context of the communities in which they work and to interrogate the systems of power that shape policies and practices. Through innovative thinking and research, we strive to solve the most intractable educational problems.

LEARNING OUTCOMES/OBJECTIVES

By the completion of this course, you will be able to:

1. Review current research and theories of growth and development as they relate to group counseling in the school setting.
2. Identify ethnic, cultural, socio-economic, and environmental factors that influence student responses to various teaching and learning modalities.
3. Identify elements related to the following areas and demonstrate competence in the following areas:
 - a. Group dynamics
 - b. Ethical issues unique to group work
 - c. Diversity issues relevant to group work
 - d. The body of research that informs group practice
 - e. Stages of group development
 - f. Advocacy and empowerment of students
4. Demonstrate competence in the following skill areas of Group Counseling:
 - a. Group Leader behavior and processing
 - b. Member roles
 - c. Use of group exercises
 - d. Facilitation skills that foster trust, norming, group conflict, alliances, etc.
 - e. Potential implementation of a group model at a practicum site
 - f. Termination/exit procedures
 - g. Response to feedback from peers, professor, and supervisors regarding demonstration of their skills and issues as group counselors in the school setting

Professional Dispositions: In this class, as with all other counseling classes, it is integral that students demonstrate the following professional performance dispositions:

- a. Openness to new ideas
- b. Flexibility
- c. Cooperativeness with others
- d. Willingness to accept and use feedback
- e. Ability to give feedback constructively
- f. Awareness of own impact on others

- g. Ability to deal with conflict
- h. Ability to accept personal responsibility
- i. Ability to express feelings effectively and appropriately
- j. Attention to ethical and legal considerations
- k. Initiative and motivation

Personal and Professional Integrity: Given the nature of this class, students are expected to exhibit personal and professional integrity by maintaining confidentiality for everyone in the class.

Personal Development: It is expected that students will participate in a personal growth group experience in the classroom and explore their roles as group members within this process. This experience is integral to understanding and practicing the skills and process of group work that are necessary for becoming an effective group leader. Students may experience some discomfort exploring issues of personal development (even though students are asked to do this in a school setting). While personal disclosure will be a part of participation in the growth group, each student should share only what they are comfortable with.

COURSE LOGISTICS

CLASS TIME

Per USC policy, courses must meet for a minimum of one 50 minute session per unit per week. For a 1-unit, 15 week course, the minimum contact hours for the semester are 750 minutes or 12.5 hours. Further, a 2-unit, 15-week course requires a minimum of 1500 minutes or 25 hours, a 3-unit, 15-week course requires a minimum of 2250 minutes or 37.5 hours, and a 4-unit, 15-week course requires 3000 minutes or 50 hours. In addition, for each unit of in-class contact time, the university expects two hours of out of class student work per week. <https://arr.usc.edu/services/classroomscheduling/contacthours.html>

Contact time will be met by a combination of synchronous activities (live class meetings, live office hours, guided student discussion, mediated student work groups) and online asynchronous learning (faculty and invited expert video lectures and moderated discussion forum). The course will be taught based on the “flipped classroom design” which means that learning is enhanced when working actively as opposed to listening passively (as in a lecture). In order to make as much time as possible for active work in class, we have pre-recorded the lectures. You will be expected to prepare for class by doing all the reading and watching all the videos before you come to class.

This class will convene for at least 12 synchronous online sessions through the LMS platform and attendance is required at every session. In addition, students are required to complete 12 asynchronous units over the course of this academic term. The LMS is the primary learning management system for this course. The LMS is where you will access your before- and after-class session course content, including discussion boards and any other activities. The LMS is also where you will upload your assignments and monitor your grades. The course may rely on additional technologies, including Zoom, Google Chat, Poll Everywhere, Voice Thread, Popplet, Jing, etc. Details about these technologies will be covered during class as appropriate.

PERSONAL PRESENTATION

Web-based programs define the area in view of the camera as part of the classroom. Students must therefore present themselves and their surroundings as though they are in a physical classroom. Casual public dress is the norm in the online classroom, which may differ from how individuals usually choose to dress in their home environment. Examples of inappropriate personal presentation include, but are not limited to:

- Inappropriate dress, such as revealing clothing, costume, pajamas, bathrobes, or swim attire

- Engaging in a simultaneous activity (e.g., using a telephone, reading a book, knitting)
- Interacting with persons who are not part of the class
- Leaving/pausing the camera frequently or for an extended period of time
- Having other persons or pets in view of the camera
- Actively engaging in child care
- Behaving in an overtly inattentive manner

CHOICE OF LOCATION

Students are required to attend class in a location that allows for their full participation. Specifically, the student must be on camera in an environment that is free of auditory or visual distractions, and that allows for open participation in class discussions. Examples of inappropriate locations include, but are not limited to:

- Commercial establishments with loud background noise or visual distractions
- Nonquiet home areas in which the activities of other residents and/or pets are potential distractions
- Libraries in areas whose rules do not permit students to participate in conversations
- Parks or other outdoor areas that have high level of background noise
- Airports, aboard airplanes or other moving vehicles

EMAIL

You can email your instructor at any time throughout the course. Please understand that every attempt will be made to answer emails within a 48-hour period.

READINGS

American Psychological Association (2009). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association, 6th Edition*. Washington, D.C.: American Psychological Association.

Gladding, S. (2016). *Groups - a counseling speciality* (7th ed). Columbus, Ohio: Pearson, Merrill, Prentice Hall. ISBN-10: 0138755434

Scott, K. (2017). *Radical candor*. New York: St. Martin's Press. ISBN-10: 1250103509

Additional readings may be required or recommended and will be found in ARES. Using ARES is a USC requirement to ensure no copyright violation.

ASSIGNMENTS

To meet the objectives of this course, candidates will complete assignments that may require case study analysis, synthesis, and application of and engagement with key concepts. Additionally, candidates will engage in discussions and reflection activities to expand their own perspectives and promote ongoing examination and evaluation. All written assignments must have a title page and reference page (these should not be included in page count) and must adhere to APA guidelines (e.g., double-spaced, 12-point, Times New Roman font, etc.). Students should follow APA Formatting and Style Guide <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/>). *This is your Portfolio Assignment which should be uploaded to your portfolio later in the program.

| ASSIGNMENTS | Name of Assignment* | Details |
|---------------|-------------------------------|---|
| ASSIGNMENT #1 | Experiential Groups | <p>Students will participate in an experimental group (EG), made up of classmates and the professor. Students will also take turns co-leading part of a group session focusing on a topic of your choice as a group leader. Group leaders are to prepare the purpose, goals, activities, and materials necessary to conduct one session from your Comprehensive Group Proposal (described below). The material used to conduct the one session does not have to be written out or presented in educational form when the group session is co-facilitated.</p> |
| ASSIGNMENT #2 | Comprehensive Group Proposal* | <p>Complete a comprehensive Group Proposal described in a 10-15-page paper. The proposal should address a counseling need typical (or atypical if justified) of a school counseling setting. This paper will be informed by a culmination of course and EG activities, course and outside readings, personal and professional experiences and 10 scholarly references. You should describe an issue of importance to you and your professional school counseling career goals. Students are encouraged to explore educational or therapeutic groups. A possible outline for a therapeutic group would be:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Present a rationale for the group. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conceptualize the problem or issue by describing some possible contributing factors, and paradigm shifts that may be needed. b. Describe the specific population (e.g. high school students, Asian American) c. Present your group screening processes d. Include a review of the relevant professional literature related to your group and/or group counseling. e. Describe a hypothetical yet possible group counseling solution that applies your knowledge and the best practices from the available research and theoretical literatures. f. Present how you will organize the group counseling sessions. A group format that allows for about 8 to 10, 40-minute sessions should be adequate. For each session, describe the activities in relation to group developmental stages, and goals that will be employed. Please include potential problems that may arise (i.e. scheduling conflicts, resistance from teachers, health care providers, parents even members) and ways you might address these issues. g. Present evaluation criteria. h. Class time will be set aside periodically to discuss this paper and your co-facilitation of a group's session. |

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| ASSIGNMENT #3 | Article Abstracts | <p>Complete three abstracts of research articles related to your group proposal topic. The format for these abstracts is as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must be from scholarly journals • Must include <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Article's reference 2. Purpose of article 3. Location of author(s) 4. Critique of article 5. Significance of article to group processes <p>Abstracts will be graded on a scale of 0-5 with five being the highest score given to those abstracts that completely satisfy the above guidelines.</p> |
| ASSIGNMENT #4 | Journals | Each student will be required to submit periodic journals regarding their group counseling experiences as it relates to group counseling theory. Journal prompts will be provided throughout the semester along with due dates. |
| ASSIGNMENT #5 | Asynchronous Discussions/Assignments | You are required to complete discussions and assignments for each unit of the course. |
| ASSIGNMENT #6 | Synchronous Participation | You are required not only to complete the assigned readings, videos and other material before you come to class but to have spent some time critically considering the material. You each are an important part of the classroom experience, and are expected to contribute to discussions and to challenge one another. Although some lecture will be necessary, we are more interested in expanding your minds than in simply repeating the information found in your readings. |

GRADING AND ASSESSMENT

GRADING

The final course grade will be computed from the assignments listed in the table below. Late assignments will receive a 10% reduction in points per day past due date.

| Assignment | Points | Due Date |
|---|------------|-------------------------|
| ASSIGNMENT #1: Experiential Groups | 15 | End of Unit 2,3, & 5-10 |
| ASSIGNMENT #2: Comprehensive Group Proposal | 30 | End of Unit 10 |
| ASSIGNMENT #3: Article Abstracts (3 x 5 points each) | 15 | End of Unit 6,8, and 9 |
| ASSIGNMENT #4: Journals (2 x 10 points each) | 20 | End of Unit 3 and 6 |
| ASSIGNMENT #5: Asynchronous Discussion/Assignments (10 points for each Unit): | 120 | End of each Unit |
| ASSIGNMENT #6: Synchronous Participation (2 points for each Unit): | 24 | End of each Unit |
| TOTAL POINTS | 224 | |

Grading Scale

The final grade for this course will be determined using the following point scale:

| A | A- | B+ | B | B- | C+ | C | C- | D+ | D | D- | F |
|---------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|-------|
| 100-95% | 94-90% | 89-86% | 85-83% | 82-80% | 79-76% | 75-73% | 72-70% | 69-66% | 65-63% | 62-60% | 59-0% |

Assignment Submission Policy

Any work that is submitted after the stated deadline will receive a 10% penalty for every 24-hour period that it is late. If serious circumstances arise that hinder you from meeting the deadline, you must contact the instructor by email BEFORE the deadline, in order to be given consideration.

Incompletes

An incomplete (IN) is given when work is not completed because of documented illness or some other emergency occurring after 80% of the course has been completed. Arrangements for the IN and its removal should be initiated by the student and agreed to by the instructor prior to the final exam. The University policy on Incompletes (IN) is as follows (from the USC Catalogue):

Conditions for Removing a Grade of Incomplete: If an incomplete is assigned as the student's grade, the instructor will fill out the Incomplete (IN) Completion form which will specify to the student and to the department the work remaining to be done, the procedures for its completion, the grade in the course to date, and the weight to be assigned to work remaining to be done when computing the final grade. A student may remove the IN by completing only the work not finished as a result of illness or emergency. Previously graded work may not be repeated for credit. It is not possible to remove an IN by re-registering for the course, even within the designated time.

Time limit for removal of an incomplete: One calendar year is allowed to remove an IN. Individual academic units may have more stringent policies regarding these time limits. If the IN is not removed within the designated time limit, the course is considered "lapsed" and the grade is changed to an IX and it will be calculated into the grade point average as 0 points. Courses offered on a Credit/No Credit basis or taken on a Pass/No Pass basis for which a mark of Incomplete is assigned will be lapsed with a mark of NC or NP and will not be calculated into the grade point average.

Synchronous Participation

Students enrolled in this course are required to read *all* current assignments and complete all other exercise and projects required for each lesson BEFORE each class meeting where the lesson may be discussed and/or related material may be discussed. Please see the rubric below for course participation assessment. If it is necessary to be absent from class because of serious illness or an emergency, you are responsible to master *all* information presented during your absence. Students are expected to collaborate with their peers to ensure that they have the information covered during the session they missed. Students who are consistently late or leave early will only be assigned partial attendance credit for that day. The following rubric provides a guide as to how course participation will be assessed:

| | Active Participation | Moderate Participation | Low Participation |
|--|----------------------|------------------------|-------------------|
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| Preparation | Exhibits evidence of having completed all assignments and activities according to guidelines that were assigned | Attempts to participate and has completed most assignments and activities | Exhibits lack of preparation and non-completion of required assignments |
| Initiative | Initiates discussion and supports points using page-specific references to readings or other materials | Supports points during discussion but uses general references to readings and other materials | Rarely initiates discussion and is not able to reference required readings or other materials |
| Engagement | Furtheres the discussion and builds on the ideas of others; comments and questions reflect having thought deeply about the material | Furtheres the discussion and builds on the ideas of others; general or limited references to course materials | Comments do not further the discussion and do not exhibit careful reflection on the material |

Asynchronous Discussion/Assignments

The following rubric provides a *general guide* as to how Asynchronous Discussion/Assignments in this course will be evaluated:

| | Excellent | Acceptable | Unsatisfactory |
|--------------------------------|--|--|---|
| Depth of thought | Shows evidence of depth of thought in preparation, organization, and clarity. | Evidence of depth of thought could be increased in some areas. | Not evident that serious thought went into preparation or organization. |
| Connection to course materials | Assignment shows engagement with course readings and other relevant literature and integrates this in an appropriate manner. | Some parts lack connection to course readings or other sources, or they are not integrated in an appropriate way. | Fails to relate to course materials and other relevant literature. |
| Completeness | All parts of the assignment are done completely and according to guidelines. | All parts of the assignments or presentation are done completely—however, lacks adherence to guidelines in some areas. | Assignment is not entirely complete, and/or shows marked lack of adherence to guidelines. |
| Format | Writing is free of grammatical, spelling, and format errors and is consistent with APA guidelines. | Writing contains some errors in one or more of the areas related to format. | Writing contains significant format errors that detract from the meaning. |

Guidelines for Discussions

The purpose of discussions is to engage in meaningful dialogue about topics related to this course. This may include your thoughts, ideas, or level of understanding of course concepts. Therefore, please keep your discussions related to topics that are pertinent to the course. Keep criticism constructive. You can disagree or be angry and remain respectful. Students may not post inappropriate material, SPAM to the class, use offensive language, or engage in online flaming. Akin to Socratic seminar, the goal is to engage in a dialogue, instead of a debate, to seek understanding of multiple points of view and to use textual support

when contributing. While hot topic issues are certain to arise, it is important to develop listening skills as well as ways to thoughtfully express your ideas. As participants, you acknowledge that you have joined a community that upholds the following norms that guide discussion and interactions in class:

1. Respect differences of opinion and style.
2. Promote an environment of constructive inquiry and information sharing. Share your knowledge and be willing to ask questions if clarification is needed.
3. Seek to understand more than to be understood.
4. Thoughtfully consider the contributions of your peers.
5. Prepare for and commit to achieving the goals of each class session by completing assignments in a timely manner.

In the Event of Technical Breakdowns

Students may submit assignments to the instructor via e-mail by the posted due date. Remember to frequently back up your work, post assignments once completed, load files onto a power drive, and keep a hard copy of papers/projects.

STATEMENT FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Any student requesting academic accommodations based on a disability is required to register with Disability Services and Programs (DSP) each semester. A letter of verification for approved accommodations can be obtained from DSP. Please be sure the letter is delivered to the instructor as early in the semester as possible. DSP is open 8:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. (California time), Monday through Friday. The phone number for DSP is (213) 740-7766.

STATEMENT ON ACADEMIC CONDUCT AND SUPPORT SYSTEMS

ACADEMIC CONDUCT

Plagiarism – presenting someone else’s ideas as your own, either verbatim or recast in your own words – is a serious academic offense with serious consequences. Please familiarize yourself with the discussion of plagiarism in *SCampus* in Part B, Section 11, “Behavior Violating University Standards” <https://policy.usc.edu/scampus-part-b/>. Other forms of academic dishonesty are equally unacceptable. See additional information in *SCampus* and university policies on scientific misconduct, <http://policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct>.

SUPPORT SYSTEMS

Student Counseling Services (SCS) - (213) 740-7711 – 24/7 on call

Free and confidential mental health treatment for students, including short-term psychotherapy, group counseling, stress fitness workshops, and crisis intervention. <https://engemannshc.usc.edu/counseling/>

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline - 1-800-273-8255

Provides free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. <http://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org>

Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention Services (RSVP) - (213) 740-4900 - 24/7 on call

Free and confidential therapy services, workshops, and training for situations related to gender-based harm. <https://engemannshc.usc.edu/rsvp/>

Sexual Assault Resource Center

For more information about how to get help or help a survivor, rights, reporting options, and additional resources, visit the website: <http://sarc.usc.edu/>

Office of Equity and Diversity (OED)/Title IX Compliance – (213) 740-5086

Works with faculty, staff, visitors, applicants, and students around issues of protected class.

<https://equity.usc.edu/>

Bias Assessment Response and Support

Incidents of bias, hate crimes and microaggressions need to be reported allowing for appropriate investigation and response. <https://studentaffairs.usc.edu/bias-assessment-response-support/>

The Office of Disability Services and Programs

Provides certification for students with disabilities and helps arrange relevant accommodations. <http://dsp.usc.edu>

Student Support and Advocacy – (213) 821-4710

Assists students and families in resolving complex issues adversely affecting their success as a student EX: personal, financial, and academic. <https://studentaffairs.usc.edu/ssa/>

Diversity at USC

Information on events, programs and training, the Diversity Task Force (including representatives for each school), chronology, participation, and various resources for students. <https://diversity.usc.edu/>

USC Emergency Information

Provides safety and other updates, including ways in which instruction will be continued if an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible, <http://emergency.usc.edu>

USC Department of Public Safety – 213-740-4321 (UPC) and 323-442-1000 (HSC) for 24-hour emergency assistance or to report a crime.

Provides overall safety to USC community. <http://dps.usc.edu>

COURSE CALENDAR

Spring and Fall courses run for about 15-16 weeks with 12 units during the semester. These semesters include three separate weeks dedicated to individual meetings, office hours, study groups, etc. The professor will determine which three weeks these will be. The Summer courses run for 12 weeks with 12 units during the semester. All assignments are due at the end of the Unit.

| | Unit Topics | Readings | Assignment Due |
|---------|---|---------------------------------------|--|
| Unit 1 | Introductions, course overview, syllabus review, assembly of groups, icebreakers, group counseling lecture/discussion, and role-playing activity. Signature of confidentiality agreement. | Read Gladding Chapter 1 | |
| Unit 2 | Group Leadership & Diversity Types of Groups; Radical Candor 1 st Experiential Group (EG) | Read Gladding Chapter 2 | |
| Unit 3 | Group Selection & Confidentiality Ethical/Legal Aspects of Group Work; 2 nd Experiential Group (EG) | Read Gladding Chapters 3 & 11 | Journal #1 due 48 hours after Unit 2 live session |
| Unit 4 | Group Stages - Forming | Gladding Chapters 4 & 8 | |
| Unit 5 | Group Stages – Storming 3 rd Experiential Group (EG) | Gladding Chapters 5 & 9 | |
| Unit 6 | Group Stages – Storming & Norming 4 th Experiential Group (EG) | Read Gladding Chapters 6 & 12 | Journal #2 & Abstract #1 due 48 hours after unit 5 live session |
| Unit 7 | Group Stages- Working 5 th Experiential Group (EG) | Read Gladding Chapter 10 | |
| Unit 8 | Group Stages - Terminating 6 th Experiential Group (EG) | Read Gladding Chapter 7 | Abstract #2 due 48 hours after unit 7 live session |
| Unit 9 | Mental Health in Schools 7 th Experiential Group (EG) | Read Gladding Chapter 15; | Abstract #3 due 48 hours after unit 8 |
| Unit 10 | Trauma Informed Movement in Education 8 th Experiential Group (EG) | Read Gladding Chapter 16 & Appendix C | Comprehensive Group Proposal Due |
| Unit 11 | Other Forms of Groups in Schools | | Group Proposal Presentations are due in this live session. Each group member will have 5 minutes to present their proposal and answer questions |

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| | | | by professor and classmates |
| Unit 12 | Overview & Closing Group Proposal Presentations (Poster Session) | | Group Counseling Proposal Presentations due in this live session. Each group member will have 5 minutes to present their proposal and answer questions by professor and classmates. |