Welcome to Group!

Course Number and Section(s): COU 650-001/COU 650-003 (MEP 204)
Course Name: Theories and Practice of Group Counseling
Semester and Year: Spring 2022
Office Address: MEP 203C
NKU Email: coastons1@nku.edu
Office Phone: 859-572-1551
Office Hours: Monday 4:30-5:30pm, Thursday 4-6pm, or by appt.

Course Description:
Theoretical and experiential introduction to the nature of group counseling, group dynamics, and group leadership; focus on principles of group dynamics include group process components, developmental stage theories, and group members' roles and behaviors.
Prerequisites:
COU 600 or COU 602, COU 640, COU 641 and Admission to program.

Student Learning Outcomes

CACREP 2016 Standards
Standards evaluated in connection with CACREP Key Objective Assessments are in bold.
[1]CACREP- Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs 2016 Standards

Students will have knowledge of:	**CACREP[1]**	**Content Coverage**	**Class Assignments**
advocacy processes needed to address institutional and social barriers that impede access, equity, and success for clients	2.F.1.e	Lecture	Journals; exams
ethical standards of professional counseling organizations and credentialing bodies, and applications of ethical and legal considerations in professional counseling	2.F.1.i	Ch 3	Readings; exams
strategies for personal and professional self-evaluation and implications for practice	2.F.1.k	Ch 2	Journals; Group plan; readings; exams
self-care strategies appropriate to the counselor role	2.F.1.l	Classroom experience	Journals

ethical and culturally relevant strategies for establishing and maintaining in-person and technology-assisted relationships	2.F.5.d	Ch 3, Ch 5	Readings; exams
counselor characteristics and behaviors that influence the counseling process	2.F.5.f	Ch 2	Readings; exams; journals
theoretical foundations of group counseling and group work	**2.F.6.a**	Ch 4, Lecture	Readings; exams; Group plan; Group Leadership
dynamics associated with group process and development	**2.F.6.b**	Ch 7, 8, 9, Lecture	Readings; exams; Group Plan; Group Leadership
therapeutic factors and how they contribute to group effectiveness	**2.F.6.c**	Ch 6, 8, Lecture	Readings; exams; Group Plan; Group Leadership
characteristics and functions of effective group leaders	**2.F.6.d**	Ch 2, Lecture	Readings; exams; Group Plan; Group Leadership
approaches to group formation, including recruiting, screening, and selecting members	**2.F.6.e**	Ch 5, Ch 10, Ch 11, Lecture	Readings; exams; Group Plan; Group Leadership
types of groups and other considerations that affect conducting groups in varied settings	**2.F.6.f**	Ch 1, Ch 10, Lecture	Readings; exams; Group Plan; Group Leadership
ethical and culturally relevant strategies for designing and facilitating groups	**2.F.6.g**	Ch 1, 3, 8, Lecture	Readings; exams; Group Plan; Group Leadership
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	**2.F.6.h**	Ch 3, Classroom experience	Readings; exams; Group Plan; Group Leadership
procedures for assessing risk of aggression or danger to others, self-inflicted harm, or suicide	2.F.7.c	Ch 3, Lecture	Readings; exams
procedures for identifying trauma and abuse and for reporting abuse	2.F.7.d	Ch 3	Readings; exams
theories and models related to clinical mental health counseling	5.C.1.b	Ch 4	Readings; exams

roles and settings of clinical mental health counselors	5.C.2.a	Ch 11	Readings; exams; Group Plan
legal and ethical considerations specific to clinical mental health counseling	5.C.2.l	Ch 3	Readings; exams; Group Plan; Group Leadership
techniques of personal/social counseling in school settings	5.G.3.f	Ch 10	Readings; exams; Group Plan; Group Leadership

Required Materials

Corey, M. S., Corey, G., & Corey, C. (2018). *Group, Process and Practice* (10th ed.) Brooks/Cole. Additional readings/videos may be posted on the Canvas course site.

Suggested:

American Psychological Association (2019). *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (7th ed.). American Psychological Association.

Course Assignments

Class Attendance, Participation, and Professionalism (48pts):

I invite you to come to class ready to be an active participant in our discussions and share your personal reactions, ideas, and experiences relevant to the readings and the material. Similarly, your willingness to share within group will enrich the experience for yourself and your group. Attendance necessary and expected, as your absence will have an impact on the group dynamic. You will be asked to participate in large and small group membership as both a member and a leader. Your performance within these group experiences will not be graded; however, your attendance is expected and will be graded.

Effective class participation includes: respectful and non-dominating involvement in class discussions, equal participation in group work, and initiative and investment in all course activities. Review Course Policies for professionalism standards.

Journal (42pts):

You will submit a reflective journal each week (unless you are the leader of your group). For the first half of the semester, the journal prompt will follow the same sequence. The first three areas will focus specifically on your group counseling experience (i.e., your thoughts and feelings, subjective experience). The 4th prompt will relate to the textbook material assigned for the week. Your entries should incorporate your understanding of didactic materials; however, you do not need to rehash the textbook or what activities were completed in group. I invite you to share your reactions to what transpired and how you experienced it.

Each entry will focus on four areas:

1. *Your personal experiences,* concentrating on the feelings, thoughts and reactions to people and events experienced in the group,
2. *Your learning and observation of group leadership*, integrating your growing knowledge of group leadership, and

3. *Your learning and observations of group dynamics,* integrating your knowledge of theoretical concepts group development.
4. *Application of the readings and response to prompt for each journal*

Please use names to refer to specific group members and/or leaders. Only the instructor will read your journals. This journal is to be typed in Microsoft Word and uploaded to Canvas prior to the due date.

Exam (150pts):

You will complete an exam shortly after midterm exam on Canvas to assess their understanding and application of the readings, lectures, and discussions.

Group Plan (250pts; APA 7th ed. format expected):

You will have the opportunity to create a group plan psychotherapy, counseling, or psychoeducational group for a problem/population about which you are passionate. The intention of this project is that you will know how to create a group plan from scratch and have a detailed group plan that you can easily implement in your internship or practice following graduation.

The group plan is a research paper that relies heavily on the scholarly literature. The paper will be written in stages throughout the semester; however, all assignments are available on Canvas for you to outline your work and know what is coming. The paper will be written in APA (7th edition). Rubrics, detailed instructions, and example papers are posted on Canvas. This paper can be completed individually or with a partner.

Group Plan Meeting (10pts):

So that you don't go astray, during weeks 5-6, individuals or pairs will meet with me for 15-30 minutes to discuss your group plan, review your plans, and answer any questions you have about the group plan assignment. At any other point, you are welcome to meet with me for assistance.

Library Consultation (Optional - 10pts):

Some topics are easier than others to research. I encourage you to set up a meeting with a librarian at Steely Library to get some support and brush up on your search skills. This assignment is optional, but strongly encouraged.

Group Leadership Experience (25pts):

You will choose another member of your group to be your co-leadership partner. Together, prior to leading your group, you and your co-leader will create a detailed agenda for your group including copies of all handouts and/or descriptions of activities. This plan will be uploaded on the evening you are assigned to lead. The leadership schedule will be co-created based on your preferences.

Following your group leadership experience, leaders will review the evaluation feedback from peers and instructors, review the video of your group leadership, and complete assessment of your own strengths and weaknesses using the Leadership Self-Assessment. A brief reflection of leadership experience will be due within two weeks.

Group Plan Activity Presentation (25pts):

During our final class, you will choose a self-created creative activity from your group plan and present it to the class. Depending on the nature of the activities, several of the activities will be completed in class. Presentations will be due on the Sunday night (11:59pm) prior to the last class.

Submission of Assignments

Deadlines:

All assignments are due by the deadline indicated in the syllabus and should be uploaded to Canvas unless otherwise specified. If you are struggling to meet deadlines, please reach out to me to see what may help reduce the burden.

Late Policy:

Life happens and sometimes it gets in the way of completing your assignments. If something is going on in your personal life that may impact your ability to turn in an assignment on time, please email and let me know. In many cases, we can work together to find create an alternative plan. Thus, late assignments may be accepted at the instructor's discretion with accompanying documentation of extenuating circumstances, without credit lost.

Generally though, if assignments are late, they are still eligible for some credit. Assignments received 1 minute-24 hours late will be worth a maximum of 90% of their original value, and will continue to reduce by 10% per day for 5 days; however, after 5 days they are no longer eligible for credit. Please communicate with the instructor if you believe an assignment will be late. As reaction papers are worth at most 3 points, late papers will lose one point per day for two days and papers turned in after that will receive no credit. Assignments turned in after the final deadline in the syllabus at the end of the semester will not be eligible for credit.

Course Grading

Grading Scale:

- **A**: 93.00-100.00
- **A-**: 90-92.99
- **B+**: 87-89.99
- **B**: 83-86.99
- **B-**: 80-82.99
- **C+**: 77-79.99
- **C**: 73-76.99
- **F**: 0-72.99

Grading Feedback

You should expect feedback on assignments within one week of due date for shorter assignments, and two weeks for longer assignments.

Course Policies

1. I invite you to come prepared to take notes and engage in classroom discussion. Laptops/ tablets are welcome in class; however, non-class related Internet or computer usage is not. Please refrain from shoe-shopping, sports-watching, or exchanging passive aggressive texts with your significant other about who's turn it is to cook (*it's theirs obviously…*). Significant non-class-related internet use can result in deductions in professionalism/ participation grade.

2. Attend class each week, arrive on time, and turn in assignments on time. Class will occur on dates indicated on the syllabus and we will aim to start class on time. All assignments are to be uploaded to Canvas and due dates are indicated in the syllabus. Any changes to the syllabus will be announced during class and/or posted on Canvas. Please contact me immediately if you are experiencing an issue that is preventing you from completing your assignments in a timely manner so we can work together so I can help.

3. Take your time reading prior to class and take notes so you can discuss your thoughts in class. Read with a questioning attitude rather than for absorption of facts: *What do I believe to be true? How does this related to what I've seen in practicum/internship? How does this correspond with my previous experiences with groups? How prepared do you feel to responsible for all that leaders are responsible for? How does what I'm learning related to I've learned in other classes?*

4. Please silence all electronic devices such as cell phones, watches, computers, or whatever newfangled devices you kids are using these days. Given the experiential nature of this course, noisy electronics can present a barrier to the open environment in the classroom. Please step out if you need to take a call.

5. **Students are to act ethically.** As members of the counseling profession, we are all bound by the Code of Ethics of the American Counseling Association. As we will be completing a group experience and sharing our own experiences, please respect the privacy of your classmates. Information learned within the group component of the class is to be kept confidential. Failure to maintain confidentiality is considered a serious ethical violation, which could result in dismissal from the class and/or the program.

6. **All papers are to be submitted using APA format (7th edition) unless otherwise announced.** Presentations and projects should reflect the quality of a professional in the counseling profession. This includes the use of appropriate grammar, logical reasoning, and appropriate professional references that support meaningful points. Do not refer to this syllabus, other papers, or online resources exclusively for APA format. Please purchase or borrow the APA Manual for use with your papers.

7. **You will also be asked to provide professional feedback to peers.** Since feedback is an important aspect of this course, please use professional, well thought-out statements when offering feedback. When done well, appropriate and professional peer feedback can greatly enhance the learning experience for all involved.

8. **Participate in classroom activities.** Unlike other courses at NKU, students in this course may disclose personal information in the context of in-class activities. Because of the intimate nature of group work, certain safeguards will be put in place to protect the privacy and dignity of each student. First, one's grade in this course will not be affected by the information revealed within group. Second, each student has the right to decide how much and what kinds of information to disclose during these exercises. We will review in class the expectation that students will not disclose any personal information obtained from other classmates with anyone outside the classroom. Students who violate this agreement can be dismissed from the course. However, as with any group, confidentiality cannot be guaranteed.

Evaluation Criteria. *The Counselor Education program approaches the construct of professional dispositions as "habits of mind" that render professional conduct more capable and intelligent.*

Dispositions are, therefore, not a state of possession, but rather a state of performance. In addition to assessing knowledge and clinical performance of counseling students at Northern Kentucky University, the counselor education program is also responsible for promoting and assessing professional dispositions. This course, as with all other counseling courses, will support such habits of mind. As well, students will be assessed on 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, and (k) initiative and motivation. These will be evaluated throughout the group class using the professional performance evaluation criteria (see Counselor Education Student Handbook for details).

** The Internet is an extension of the classroom. As such, the decorum and professionalism expected of you in class extends to all postings (e.g., on Canvas, Facebook, etc.) made regarding the course or its content. I expect that you will extend the same courtesy to your fellow students on the Internet as you do in class. Feel free to disagree with the ideas expressed, but work to keep the discussions polite and focused on course ideas.*

Commitment to Open Inquiry, Viewpoint Diversity, and Constructive Disagreement

In order to create a classroom environment that supports respectful, critical inquiry through the free exchange of ideas, the following principles will guide interactions among students and professors in this class:

- People can differ on any number of perspectives, opinions, and conclusions
- No ideas or opinions are immune from scrutiny and debate, even if they come from someone with more experience or expertise than you
- Treat every member of the class with respect, even if you disagree with their opinion
- You will not be graded on whether your professor or peers agree with your opinions

Copyright Statement

As students are expected to adhere to the academic integrity policies of the university and protect the learning environment; therefore, students are prohibited from distributing or selling course materials such as exam questions or lectures. All materials created by the instructor or the textbook publishers are authorized for use in this course for academic purposes, and students are prohibited from publicly posting course materials during or after this course.

Attendance Policy

This course is composed of 16 class periods and it is important that you plan to attend each class period, otherwise you will miss out on the experiential learning intended to bring the material to life. It is important to know that missing more than two class periods can negatively impact your final grade.

Students missing more than two class periods will negatively impact their overall grade by 10%. Hence, if a student misses three class meetings, the highest possible grade the student could achieve would be 90%. If a student misses four class meetings, the highest possible grade the student could achieve would be 80%. If a student misses five classes, the highest possible grade the student could achieve would be 70% and so on.

- *If class must be cancelled due to weather-induced, potentially dangerous driving conditions, announcements will be posted in Canvas and will include an e-mail announcement sent to all students. Please check Canvas and/or your e-mail prior to attending class.*

- *If you are a parent and a child-care issue arises, please contact me ahead of our class meeting time to arrange accommodations.*

Accommodations Due to Disability

The University is committed to making reasonable efforts to assist individuals with disabilities in their efforts to avail themselves of services and programs offered by the University. To this end, Northern Kentucky University will provide reasonable accommodations for persons with documented qualifying disabilities. If you have a disability and feel you need accommodations in this course, you must present me a letter from the Office for Student Accessibility (OSA, SU 303) indicating the existence of a disability and the suggested accommodations. More information on OSA can be found at https://inside.nku.edu/osa.html.

Communication

Students should check their e-mail inbox/Canvas course sites regularly. Students may expect instructor responses to emails within 24-48 hours. If you do not receive a response within this time, please send a follow-up as your email may have been buried in other emails on a particularly heavy email day.

Name/Pronoun:

My gender pronouns are she, her, hers, and I prefer to be addressed as Dr. Coaston. I will gladly honor your request to address you by an alternate name and/or your preferred honorific, and use your preferred gender pronouns. Please advise me of these early in the semester so that I may make appropriate changes to my records.

Changes in the Syllabus

The syllabus is a projection of what the instructor anticipates for the course. The instructor has the right to modify the syllabus in order to adjust to changing circumstances.

Credit Hour Policy Statement

In accordance with federal policy, NKU defines a credit hour as the amount of work represented in the achievement of student learning outcomes (verified by evidence of student achievement) that reasonably approximates one hour (50 minutes) of classroom instruction and a minimum of two hours of out-of-class student work. For every course credit hour, a typical student should expect to spend at least three hours per week of concentrated attention on course-related work including, but not limited to, class meeting time, reading, reviewing, organizing notes, studying and completing assignments. At least an equivalent amount of time is expected for other academic activities such as online courses, laboratory work, internships, practica, studio work and other academic work leading to the award of credit hours.

Estimates of the time required for a student to complete this course are:

40.25 Hours: Class time
30.0 Hours: Reflective journals
37.0 Hours: Reading and reviewing texts, books, videos
3.0 Hours: Midterm Exam
48.0 Hours: Group Plan Paper
6.0 Hours: Group Leadership Experience
1.0 Hours: Group Plan Activity Presentation preparation

165.25 Hours: Total Hours for Course

Tentative Course Schedule

Week 1 – Thursday Class – 1/20/22 – Zoom

- Readings: Corey Chapters 1-2
- Topics/Activities: *Review of syllabus, introduction to each other, group, and the course*
- **Thursday Assignments due:** None
- **Sunday Assignments due: Group Plan Tentative Topic** and **Week 1 Reflection** due before midnight 1/23/22

Week 2 – Thursday – 1/27/22 – Zoom

- Readings: Corey Chapter 5, Canvas reading: Initiating a Counseling Group
- Topics/Activities: *Planning a Group*
- **Thursday Assignments due:** Complete and bring **Attitude Questionnaire** to class
- **Sunday Assignments due: Week 2 Reflection** due before midnight 1/30/22

Week 3 Work – Thursday – 2/3/22 – MEP 204

- Readings: Corey Chapter 4, Canvas reading: Leadership styles
- Topics/Activities: *Group 1, Theories*
- **Thursday Assignments due:**
- **Sunday Assignments due: Week 3 Reflection** due before midnight 2/6/22

Week 4 Work – Thursday – 2/10/22 – MEP 204

- Readings: Corey Chapter 3
- Topics/Activities: *Group 2, Group Ethics*
- **Thursday Assignments due: Group Plan Part 1** due before 11:59pm
- **Sunday Assignments due: Week 4 Reflection** due before midnight 2/13/22

Week 5 Work – Thursday – 2/17/22 – MEP 204

- *Meet with instructor regarding group plan paper*
- Readings: Corey Chapter 6
- Topics/Activities: *Group 3, Initial stage*
- **Thursday Assignments due:** None
- **Sunday Assignments due: Week 5 Reflection** due before midnight 2/20/22

Week 6 Work – Thursday – 2/24/22 – MEP 204

- *Meet with instructor regarding group plan paper*
- Readings: Corey Chapter 7, Canvas readings: Silence, Failures in Group Work, and Toughest Kind of Groups
- Topics/Activities: *Group 4, Transition Stage*
- **Thursday Assignments due:** None
- **Sunday Assignments due: Week 6 Reflection** due before midnight 2/27/22

Week 7 Work – Thursday – 3/3/22 – MEP 204

- Readings: Corey Chapter 8
- Topics/Activities: *Group 5, Working Stage*

- **Thursday Assignments due: Group Plan Part 2** due before midnight 3/3/22
- **Sunday Assignments due: Week 7 Reflection** due before midnight 3/6/22

Week 8 – Spring Break

Week 9 Work – Thursday – 3/17/22 – MEP 204

- Readings: Corey Chapter 9
- Topics/Activities: *Group 6, Final Stage*
- **Thursday Assignments due:** None
- **Sunday Assignments due: Week 9 Reflection** due before midnight 3/20/22

Week 10 Work – Thursday – 3/24/22 – MEP 204

- Readings: Corey Chapter 10-11
- Topics/Activities: *Group 7, School and Agency Groups, Group Paper Prep*
- **Thursday Assignments due:** None
- **Sunday Assignments due: Week 10 Reflection** due before midnight

Week 11 Work – Thursday – 3/31/22 – MEP 204

- Readings: Erford Chapter 19 and Erford Chapter 15
- Topics/Activities: *Guest Speaker/Group Film*
- **Thursday Assignments due:** None
- **Sunday Assignments due: Group Plan Part 3** due before midnight 4/3/22

Week 12 Work – Thursday – 4/7/22 – MEP 204

- Readings: None
- Topics/Activities: *Group Film/Guest Speaker*
- **Thursday Assignments due: Exam** due before midnight 4/4/22
- **Sunday Assignments due:** None

Week 13 Work – Thursday – 4/14/22 – MEP 204

- Readings: None
- Topics/Activities: Student-Led Groups
- **Thursday Assignments due:** None
- **Sunday Assignments due: Week 13 Reflection** due before midnight 4/17/22

Week 14 Work – Thursday – 4/21/22 – MEP 204

- Readings: None
- Topics/Activities: Student-Led Groups
- **Thursday Assignments due: Group Plan Part 4** due before midnight 4/21/22
- **Sunday Assignments due: Week 14 Reflection** due before midnight 4/24/22

Week 15 Work – Thursday – 4/28/22 – MEP 204

- Readings: None
- Topics/Activities: Student-Led Groups
- **Thursday Assignments due:** None
- **Sunday Assignments due: Week 15 Reflection** due before midnight 5/1/22

Week 16 Work – Thursday – 5/5/21 – MEP 204

- Readings: None
- Topics/Activities: Student-Led Groups
- **Thursday Assignments due**: None
- **Sunday Assignments due**: **Week 16 Reflection** and **Group Plan Activity** due before midnight 5/8/22

Week 17 Work – Thursday – 5/12/21 – MEP 204

- Readings: None
- Topics/Activities: Group Plan Activity Presentations
- **Thursday Assignments due**: **Group Plan Final** due before midnight 5/12/22
- **Friday Assignments due**: **Finals Week Reflection** due before midnight 5/13/21
- **All final assignments must be submitted prior to Friday, May 13th to be include in final grades**

*This syllabus is subject to change to meet the needs/demands of the class as deemed necessary by the instructor. Every effort will be made to provide these changes to the class in writing. Notification through any of the established means of communication such as email, Canvas, or update of online syllabus will constitute sufficient notice.

Other Information

For information on university-wide policies governing students, please see the University Common Syllabus on your course Canvas site.