Rowan College at Burlington County
Fall 2015

Introduction to Group Dynamics
HUS 105-300  3 credits

Human Services Program:  http://staff.bcc.edu/human_services/
Human Services Club Facebook Group:  Rowan College at Burlington County Human Services Club

RIGHT OF REVISION:  Rowan College at Burlington County and the instructor of this course reserve the right to make any necessary and reasonable changes to this document.

I am available for anyone who would like assistance with meeting the course requirements or succeeding in the field of Human Services. Please do not hesitate to speak with me.

Course Description:  This course focuses on group functioning and leadership and the factors involved in group cohesion and group conflict, communication systems, emotional styles, and group role function.  It examines how to design and facilitate task groups and therapy groups.

As a result of this course, students can expect to gain competency in the following areas:
- Facilitating learning experiences in group settings.
- Conducting activity programs.
- Group therapy
- Staff development training.
- Facilitating group problem solving and decision making.

A complete description of each competency is available on the HUS program website.

Text:  Toseland, R. and Rivas, R. An Introduction to Group Work Practice, Allyn and Bacon. 7/e

Web Enhancement and Hybrid Course Design

This course is web enhanced and internet instruction may be substituted for classroom time. For successful completion of the course, it is imperative that the student access the course in Blackboard and become fully familiar with the various resources and functions available online. All class handouts, Power Point slides, videos and other materials are available only through Blackboard. Please make certain to log onto Blackboard and explore the online components of the course at the start of the semester. It is recommended that you bring all course materials with you to class either by printing them in hard copy or by bringing an electronic device that grants access to Blackboard. Instructions and log-in for Blackboard are available at http://staff.bcc.edu/distance/login.htm

Structure of the Course:  This course combines multiple mediums for learning. Each
week of the course will combine lecture and interactive learning experiences including group facilitation, participation and training. Upon completion of this course students can expect to be able to work with a range of group types in professional settings. Work completed during this course may be added to a professional portfolio and used to enhance career skills.

**Course Requirements:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requirement</th>
<th>Percentage of Final Grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Midterm Examination</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Examination</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focal Group Proposal / Design</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group Facilitation &amp; Group Activity</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attendance and Preparation for Class</td>
<td>Required to be eligible for a grade of an A</td>
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**Attendance Policy**

Students are required to attend all class periods for the full duration of each such instructional session. Grade penalties for absence will be imposed when a student exceeds a ten-percent absence rate, not to exceed 10% of the final grade. As such, a student who misses 10% or more of the class time (3 daytime classes or 1.5 evening classes) will not have earned sufficient attendance and participation credit and will be ineligible to earn a final grade of an A regardless of scores on tests and other assignments. This includes time missed from class due to absence, lateness, leaving early and extended breaks.

**Special Note for Students Receiving Financial Aid and/or Veterans Aid:** Attendance will be reviewed by Financial Aid and Veterans Aid programs, and benefits will be contingent upon compliance with the program’s regulations.

**Preparation for Class**

Assignments for each unit are detailed in this syllabus and provided for in Blackboard. In advance of each unit, students are expected to read all assigned readings, review assigned materials and print for class the information that is required and will help you to be prepared to actively participate. Students who fail to satisfy the preparation requirement will be ineligible to earn an A for the semester as inadequate preparation credit will have been earned. Attendance and participation are required. Active involvement in the classroom experience may benefit the final grade for the course. Students are responsible for work missed due to absence from class. If you decide to withdraw from the course it is necessary to complete the official withdrawal process. Failure to complete the requirements of the course could result in a failing grade.

**Structure of Exams:** The midterm and final exams each consist of 25 objective questions (2 points each) and a choice of two out of three essay questions (25 points each). Objective questions are definitional, factual and conceptual. A comprehensive review will be provided prior to both exams.
**Focal Group Proposal / Design:** A focal group is designed to provide psychosocial and educational assistance to the group members. Guidelines for writing group proposals are outlined in chapter 15 and the appendix of the textbook. As a requirement for this course, students are asked to select and research a population of interest. This may be a population of persons you are presently working with or have interest in working with in the future. Examples of populations include battered women, couples experiencing relationship difficulties, teenage parents, children of chemically dependent parents, elderly persons living in a nursing home, etc. Write a proposal for the group that you could present to a facility director for consideration. In addition, outline the content of each group session to include the objectives, materials covered and group exercises. At the end of the semester students will provide a training to the class on the topic of the needs of the identified population and suggested methods for working with this population. This assignment should be completed in a professional style with the assumption that it may be used in the future for career development and become part of a professional portfolio. An example of a focal group design will be provided to the class to serve as a guideline for how do design and implement groups. Additional case examples are provided in chapter 15 of the textbook.

**Focal Group Proposal and Class Training Assessment**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>0</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Organization</td>
<td>Proposal is organized into logical sections including an overview of clinical concerns, type of group, duration, frequency, screening and orientation, goals of group and each group meeting and individual meeting agendas, exercises and activities. Training outlines training objectives and specifies recommendations for working with the identified population.</td>
<td>Proposal is organized into logical sections including an overview of clinical concerns, type of group, duration, frequency, screening and orientation, goals of group and each group meeting and individual meeting agendas, exercises and activities. Training outlines training objectives and specifies recommendations for working with the identified population.</td>
<td>Proposal and / or training are not well organized and important data is difficult to locate.</td>
<td>Proposal and training are disorganized.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Completeness</td>
<td>All proposal components are present. This would include an overview of proposed components.</td>
<td>Proposal or training is missing one component.</td>
<td>Proposal or training is missing two components.</td>
<td>Proposal or training is missing three or more components.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Clinical concerns, type of group, duration, frequency, screening and orientation, goals of group and each group meeting and individual meeting agendas, exercises and activities. The training contains training objectives and specifies recommendations for working with the identified population.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Neatness</th>
<th>Proposal is formatted so that information is easily found. All sections have clearly labeled headings.</th>
<th>Proposal is missing headings but pages are still neatly organized with no loose pages.</th>
<th>Proposal is missing the headings and loose pages are present.</th>
<th>Proposal is unprofessional in appearance.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Written Expression</td>
<td>Written proposal is free of spelling and grammatical errors.</td>
<td>Proposal contains one spelling or grammatical error.</td>
<td>Two spelling or grammatical errors are present.</td>
<td>Three or more spelling or grammatical errors are present.</td>
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The following outline may be used to complete a focus group proposal:

- A well designed proposal will provide all the information a person needs to facilitate the group.
- Overview – Summarize the clinical issues and relevant research to justify the value of the proposed group.
- Select Population of Focus – Describe and define the population in detail.
- Goals / Objectives - Identify three things a person can expect to gain as a result of group membership.
- Recruitment and screening – Advertisement, referral sources, criteria for membership, screening instruments, discuss conditions of membership and informed consent, demographic considerations of the whole group.
- Referrals needed
- Needs Assessment
- Length and Time - How long will group sessions last for?, How many group sessions will the group have?, Time limited or ongoing?
- Is the group open or closed to new members?
- Qualifications of facilitator(s) - Solo or co-facilitation, Roles of co-facilitators
- Budget
- Structure of each session – Objectives, exercises, discussion, assignment, handouts, materials needed
• Evaluation
• Referrals
• Marketing
• Sponsorship (In general terms.)

Remember to justify with clinical accuracy and clarity the rational for the design of your group.

**Group Facilitation & Group Activity:** Eight class periods of the semester are dedicated to experiential learning that allows the student an opportunity to experience a group both as a participant and as a group facilitator. 25% of the semester grades is based upon successful completion of this assignment. Credit is earned through the following:

- Attendance and participation in group meetings
- Planning and facilitating or co-facilitating a group meeting
- Conducting a group exercise or activity appropriate for the content and population of the group membership

**Requirements for the First Group Meeting:** The first time students form as a group it will be a leaderless group. Although natural leaders emerge, the course design will allow everyone opportunity to lead the group. As a leaderless group you have several tasks to accomplish during the initial meeting. These guideline will assist with assuring an enriched group experience.

- Introduction of all group members. Tell the group who you are and some information about yourself.
- Based upon who is in the group, determine an appropriate focus of the group. What will the topic of the group’s focus? Will it be a general support group for personal concerns? A skill building group such as assertiveness training or a personal growth and development group?
- Determine the goals of the group.
- Determine the rules of the group. How will feedback to group members be provided? How will such problems as lateness or absenteeism be addressed?
- Designate a schedule for group facilitation or co-facilitation of the group.

**This course adheres to the grading standard of Rowan College at Burlington County:**

A Mastery of essential elements and related concepts, plus demonstrated excellence or originality.
B+ Mastery of essential elements and related concepts, showing higher level understanding.
B Mastery of essential elements and related concepts.
C+ Above average knowledge of essential elements and related concepts.
C Acceptable knowledge of essential elements and related concepts.
D Minimal knowledge of related concepts.
F Unsatisfactory progress. This grade may also be assigned in cases of academic misconduct, such as cheating or plagiarism, and/or excessive absences.

Course Schedule: Please note, the dates are subject to change without notice.

Week 1 Introduction to the course and the study of Group Dynamics, assigned reading chpt. 1
Handouts: “155 Exercises: A Starting Point For Leading Structured Groups”, Russell
“Practical Strategies For Planning Therapy Groups”, Corey

Week 2 Theories of Group Dynamics, assigned reading chpt. 2
Handouts: Examples of structured focal groups

Week 3 Understanding Group Dynamics, assigned reading chpt. 3
Group Meeting Session 1
Handout: “A Group Therapy Need Assessment Survey”, Schlosser

Week 4 Leadership and Diversity, assigned reading chpts. 4 & 5
Group Meeting Session 2
Handout: “What to Observe in Groups”

Week 5 Planning the Group, assigned reading chpt. 6
Group Meeting Session 3

Week 6 The Beginning Stages of the Group, assigned reading chpt. 7
Group Meeting Session 4

Week 7 Midterm Exam Review and Midterm Exam
Group Meeting Session 5
Week 8 Individual and Group Assessment, assigned reading chpt. 8
Group Meeting Session 6

Week 9 Middle Stage Skills, assigned reading chpt. 9
Group Meeting Session 7

Week 10 Intervention with Individuals and the Group, assigned reading chpt. 10
Group Meeting Session 8 / Closure of the Group

Week 11 Task Groups, assigned reading chpts. 11 & 12

Week 12 Group Evaluation andEnding Group Work, assigned reading chpts 13 & 14

Week 13 Group designs review
**Week 14** Group design review and Final Exam review

**Week 15** Final Exam
Final exam is scheduled during final exam week. Please note the schedule change during final exams week.

**College Policies**
In order for students to know their rights and responsibilities, all students are expected to review and adhere to all regulations and policies as listed in the College Catalog and Handbook. These documents can be access at [http://www.bcc.edu/pages/198.asp](http://www.bcc.edu/pages/198.asp). Important policies and regulations include but are not limited to the following:

- Attendance
- Grading Standards
  - Including Withdraw (W) and Incomplete Grades (I & X)
- Student Code of Conduct
  - Including Academic Dishonesty/Plagiarism and Civility
- Use of Communication and Information Technology

**Student Success Services**
RCBC offers a variety of free services for its students including those listed below. Descriptions of these services, as well as many others, can be found in the College Catalog and Handbook and on the RCBC website at [http://www.bcc.edu/pages/109.asp](http://www.bcc.edu/pages/109.asp).

- Academic Advisement ([http://www.bcc.edu/advising](http://www.bcc.edu/advising))
- Career Services ([http://www.bcc.edu/careers](http://www.bcc.edu/careers))
- Educational Opportunity Fund (EOF) ([http://www.bcc.edu/eof](http://www.bcc.edu/eof))
- Financial Aid ([http://www.bcc.edu/financialaid](http://www.bcc.edu/financialaid))
- International Students Office ([http://www.bcc.edu/international](http://www.bcc.edu/international))
- Library/Integrated Learning Resource Center (ILRC) ([http://www.bcc.edu/library](http://www.bcc.edu/library))
- Office of Veteran Services ([http://www.bcc.edu/vets](http://www.bcc.edu/vets))
- Student Support Counseling ([http://www.bcc.edu/cpit](http://www.bcc.edu/cpit))
- Tutoring Center ([http://www.bcc.edu/tutoring](http://www.bcc.edu/tutoring))
- Test Center ([http://www.bcc.edu/testcenter](http://www.bcc.edu/testcenter))
- Transfer Services ([http://www.bcc.edu/transfer](http://www.bcc.edu/transfer))

**Office of Student Support and Disability Services**
RCBC welcomes students with disabilities into the college’s educational programs. Access to accommodations and support services for students with learning and other disabilities is facilitated by staff in the Office of Student Support (OSS). To receive accommodations, a student must contact the OSS, self-identify as having a disability, provide appropriate documentation, and participate in an intake appointment. If the documentation supports the request for reasonable accommodations, the OSS will provide the student with an Accommodation Plan to give to instructors. For additional information, please contact the Office of Student Support at 609-894-9311, ext. 1208, [disabilityservices@bcc.edu](mailto:disabilityservices@bcc.edu), or [http://www.bcc.edu/studentsupport](http://www.bcc.edu/studentsupport).
Educational Technology Statement
Rowan College at Burlington County advocates a technology enhanced teaching and learning environment. Advanced technological tools may be used in any course section to facilitate instruction. Many of our sections are web-enhanced, which means that some of your work will be submitted or completed online. Web enhancements may include online materials, grade books, testing and quizzes and assignment submission. Many students enjoy the flexibility and convenience that these online enhancements have provided, however if you have concerns about the technology involved, please speak to your instructor immediately. If you need assistance with email or Webadvisor, you can find information for the Student Help Desk at http://www.bcc.edu/studenthelpdesk or ext. 1388.