

NIAGARA UNIVERSITY
Department of Education

Dr. S. Pappalardo

I. Course Number and Title
EDU 617 - Group Dynamics (3 credit hours)

II. Course Catalog Description
The general objectives of the course are to promote an increased understanding of group dynamics and to develop certain skills and positive attitudes toward the use of group counseling procedures.

III. Educational Philosophy:

The Niagara University graduate counseling programs (Mental Health Counseling and School Counseling) have adopted a constructivist approach to education. In addition, the graduate counseling programs adhere to the **Council on the Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) Eight Core areas**. The Eight CACREP Core areas are listed below:

- a. Professional Identity: Addressed in EDU 617.
- b. Social and Cultural Diversity: Addressed in EDU 617.
- c. Human Growth and Development: Addressed in EDU 617.
- d. Career Development: Not addressed in EDU 617.
- e. Helping Relationships: Addressed in EDU 617.
- f. Group Work: Addressed in EDU 617.
- g. Assessment: Not addressed in EDU 617.
- h. Research and Program Development: Not addressed in EDU 617.

III. Course Requirements (strictly adhered to)

- A. Regular Attendance
It is expected that each class member will not only attend consistently but will take an active part in the experiential aspects of the course. Attendance will be taken--poor attendance will affect the final grade for the course.
- B. Term Project
Write a paper which describes your personal analysis of your group process.
DUE DATE: _____
- C. In-Class Project
Work as a member of a small group to develop and make a presentation to the entire class as described above.
DATE OF PRESENTATION: _____
- D. Portfolio Piece:
 1. Write-up a description of five (5) new pieces of knowledge you acquired from the course.
 2. Describe five (5) new skills you acquired from the course.
 3. Discuss how the above knowledges and skills have affected you as a professional.
- E. Title of Text
Johnson, D.W. and Johnson, F.P. (2000). Joining together - group theory and group skills (7th ed.) Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon.
- F. Method of Evaluation for Grades
 1. Individual supervision by professor
 2. Participation and contribution in experiential phases of course
 3. Completeness and comprehensiveness of term project
 4. Quality of work submitted in group project and individual term project

G. Other

1. Office Hours--as scheduled with department secretary/any time by appointment
2. Location of Office: O'Shea Hall, B-14
- 3, Telephone: Office - 716/286-8545 Home - 716/745-3264

IV. Course Objectives:

The general objectives of the course are to promote increased understanding, awareness, and sensitivity on the part of the student to the process of group dynamics as well as to develop skills, knowledge and positive attitudes toward the use of group procedures in his/her professional setting. More specifically, the course will develop the following competencies in the student:

- A. Be able to participate as a group member in a human relations group whose objective is (a) the communication of oneself to others and (b) the helping of others to do the same
- B. Be able to demonstrate, in the course of group interaction, the concepts involved in group formation and development
- C. Be able to demonstrate, in the course of group interaction, an increased awareness of Self and his/her potential for personal growth and change
- D. Be able to demonstrate perceptual accuracy for personal growth and change
- E. Demonstrate an increased ability in the following areas:
 - 1. Leadership skills
 - 2. Analysis of group activity
 - 3. Decision making skills
 - 4. Recognition of motivation(s) in self as well as others
 - 5. Flexibility in perception of options and alternative courses of action in problem resolution
 - 6. Acceptance of the existence of limits
 - 7. Building of trust
 - 8. Risk taking
 - 9. Trying out new behaviors, asking for, and responding to feedback from others
- F. Demonstrate an attitude that the skills and knowledge learned can be applied to his/her Professional area
- G. Demonstrate a familiarity with literature and research relevant to group dynamics

V. Outline of Course Content

- A. Introduction to groups and group dynamics
 - 1. The concept of group
 - 2. What is a group?
 - 3. What is group process?
- B. The individual in the group
 - 1. What an individual brings to a group
 - 2. How the group impacts on the individual
- C. Group syntality (development)
 - 1. Model(s) of group development
 - 2. Comparison of group development stages
- D. Group energy
 - 1. Group motivation systems
 - 2. Group value systems
- E. Group structure
 - 1. The position system
 - 2. The role system
 - 3. The relationship system
- F. Group functioning (process)
 - 1. The communication system
 - 2. The control system
- G. Problems in groups
 - 1. Diagnosing problems
- H. Addressing group dynamics involved when persons with special needs/multicultural Differences are group participants

VI. Methods of Instruction

Each class will be divided into two segments. The first half of the class will consist of mini lectures by the instructor and experiential activities to illustrate the lecture materials. The second half of each class will focus on small group experience. Each person in class will be assigned to a task group of four to five people. The purpose of this group is to develop and make a presentation to the entire class on a topic related to the subject matter of the course. Suggested topics, but not an all inclusive list, are:

- A. Norms
- B. Roles
- C. Variables affecting group productivity
- D. Group conflict
- E. Power in groups
- F. Status and conformity
- G. Nonverbal and verbal communications in groups
- H. Leadership
- I. Special types of groups

VII. Bibliography

- Benjamin, A. (1978) Behavior in small groups. Boston: Houghton-Mifflin.
- Carroll, M., Bates, M., & Johnson, C. (1997). Group leadership. Denver: Love.
- Corey, G. (1990). Theory and practice of group counseling. Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole.
- Corey, M., & Corey, G. (1998). Becoming a helper. Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole. (Required)
- Forsyth, D.R. (1990). Group dynamics. Belmont, CA: Brooks/Cole.
- Galanes, J., & Brillhart, J. (1997) Communicating in groups: Application skills. Chicago: Brown and Benchmark.
- Mayeroff, M. (1971). On caring. New York: Harper and Row.
- Napier, R.W., & Gershenfeld, M.K. (1993). Groups: Theory and experience (5th ed.). Boston: Houghton-Mifflin.
- Tubbs, S. (1988). A systems approach to small group interaction (3rd ed.). New York: Random House.
- Wheelan, S.A. (1994). Group processes: A developmental perspective. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.