



TAMUC Logo

SWK 509.01W-05W: Advanced Generalist Practice with Small Groups

COURSE SYLLABUS Fall 2026

Web-based

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

Instructor: **Dr. Vickie Gordon**

Office Location: **Henderson 306**

Office Hours: **Tuesdays, 9:00-12:00 in office or by Zoom; Thursdays 1:00-3:00 by Zoom**

Office Phone: **(903) 468-3047**

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University Email Address: **Vickie.Gordon@etamu.edu**

Preferred Form of Communication: **Email**

Communication Response Time: **Within 2 business days/not on weekends**

COURSE INFORMATION

Materials – Textbooks, Readings, Supplementary Readings

Textbook(s) Required:

Jacobs, E.E., Schimmel, C.J., Masson, R.L., & Harvill, R.L. (2022). *Group Counseling: Strategies and Skills*. (9th ed.). Thomson Higher Education.

American Psychological Association. (2019). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (7th ed.). <https://doi.org/10.1037/0000165-000>

Software Required:

- D2L (in MyLeo)
- Microsoft Office

Access at: [Student Instructions to Sign Up Free for Microsoft Office](#)

Optional Texts and/or Materials:

All MSW students must purchase the following study materials to **prepare for the Graduate Comprehensive Exam** they will take in their final semester. You must pass the exam to receive your degree. It is never too early to begin studying for the exam.

[Comprehensive Study Guide](#) (Masters, Clinical, Adv. Generalist) Version 9.0. Social Work Examination Services.

To purchase access: <https://swes.net/all-products/#:~:text=Masters%2C%20Clinical%2C%20Adv.%20Generalist>

Course Description

This Advanced Generalist Practice with Small Groups class provides students with advanced group work theory and skills necessary to lead and facilitate small groups work with social work interventions.

Prerequisites:

Students must have completed all MSW foundation curriculum requirements; been admitted to the MSW program; and be in good standing in the MSW program.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

The Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) requires a competency-based approach to identify and assess what students demonstrate in practice. In social work, this approach involves assessing students' ability to demonstrate the competencies identified in the educational policy. Listed below are the competencies and associated knowledge, skills, values and/or cognitive and affective processes that comprise the expected outcomes for this course. Weekly reading assignments from the text as outlined in the Calendar, allow students to integrate learning of Engagement, Assessment, outlined Interventions, and Evaluations of Families and Groups during the entire learning integration of the course. Assignment 1 is also designed to teach Engagement, Assessment, applied Interventions, and Evaluations of Groups work.

Competencies	Assessment/Assignment	Dimension
Competency 7: Assess Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities		
A. Apply theories of human behavior and person-in- environment, as well as other culturally responsive and interprofessional conceptual frameworks, when assessing clients and constituencies; and	Small Group Issue paper in Assignment 1	Values, Knowledge, Skills, Cognitive Affective & Processes
B. Demonstrate respect for client self-determination during the assessment process by collaborating with clients and constituencies in developing a mutually agreed- upon plan.	Small Group Issue paper in Assignment 1	Values, Knowledge, Skills, Cognitive Affective & Processes
Competency 8: Intervene with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities		
A. Engage with clients and constituencies to critically choose and implement culturally responsive, evidence- informed interventions to achieve client and constituency goals; and	Small Group Issue paper in Assignment 1	Values, Knowledge, Skills, Cognitive Affective & Processes
B. Incorporate culturally responsive methods to negotiate, mediate, and advocate with and on behalf of clients and constituencies	Small Group Issue paper in Assignment 1	Values, Knowledge, Skills, Cognitive Affective & Processes

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Minimal Technical Skills Needed

In this course, you will utilize the Learning Management Systems (LMS) D2L for instructional and learning opportunities, submitting assignments, participating in online synchronous and asynchronous discussions, accessing resources, and completing quizzes/tests. Additionally, you will need the knowledge and skills to use Microsoft Word, PowerPoint, and Outlook Email. If you have any issues with using the various systems or software, you must contact support services and notify the Instructor of the technical issue.

Instructional Methods

This course will be delivered via synchronous and asynchronous sessions via D2L. It will consist of class sessions, pre-recorded lectures, group engagement activities, and various assignments, including experiential learning and practical application of the content areas. In addition, small lectures, discussion activities, and workshops may provide instruction during this course.

Student Responsibilities and Tips for Success in the Course

As a student in this course, you are responsible for engaging in active learning and reaching out

to the Instructor if problems or challenges interfere with optimal learning. Communication is vital when engaged in a fully online, virtual environment.

Expectations for success include:

1. Always demonstrate professional behavior, including respect for the Instructor and peers; being open to feedback and guidance throughout this class and the program.
2. Adhered to the School of Social Work and University student code of conduct and NASW Code of Ethics.
3. Begin reading the assigned text and supplemental readings as soon as possible, focusing on completing all readings prior to engagement with the Instructor or peers.
4. Prepare to engage in live class sessions, discussions, and other activities so you can be a contributor as well as a receiver of knowledge and skills.
5. Actively participate in engagement activities, including live virtual class sessions, online discussions, and interactive learning opportunities -as this is vital for learning and success in both this course and the program.
6. Work ahead when possible. Completing assignments ahead of the due date so you are prepared to submit on the due date.
7. Sign in to the D2L course shell multiple times weekly to access updated announcements or posted resources.
8. Check your university email daily. This is the university, department, and Instructor's official method of communication.
9. Be open and focused on the "process" and not the "product," as earning this degree requires time, effort, work, growth in knowledge, skills, and abilities, along with personal and professional attributes.

GRADING

Final grades in this course will be based on the following scale:

A = 90%-100% of total points

B = 80%-89%

C = 70%-79%

D = 60%-69%

F = 59% or Below

Evaluation for the course grade is according to the following formula:

Assessments	Value
Assignment #1: Small Group Issues Paper	150
Assignment #2: Class Presentation	150
Online Weekly Discussions (15 @ 10 pts.)	150
TOTAL	450 pts.

Assessments

Small Group Issue Paper (Appendix A)

Study an issue in your community (teenage pregnancy, drugs, unemployment, etc.). Describe the development of a group for that population. Address the following issues in your paper:

- A. Brief Introduction
- B. Begin with sanction from the agency (how you will achieve sanction, etc.).
- C. The kind of group that would best serve this at-risk population. (include whether the group will be open or closed and give a rationale for your choice)
- D. Leadership skills needed
- E. Membership recruitment and discussion on rural and urban differences
- F. Time frame
- G. Location and issues associated with either rural or urban group
- H. Physical environment
- I. Basic norms of the group
- J. The stages of the group and the expected process in each stage
- K. Intervention and assessment skills used
- L. Values & Ethical considerations for this population & how you would resolve any ethical dilemmas
- M. Termination
- N. Evaluation

Use of the strength's perspective should be included in this paper

The paper should be no less than eight and no more than ten pages long (not including cover and reference pages). It must be APA style, typed, with one-inch margins, using 12-point font and double spaced. You must use page numbers. You must back up your paper with a minimum of eight professional references, of which four must be social work journals.

Class Presentation (Appendix B)

PowerPoint Presentation Online

Students will pick a classmate (only one peer) and you two will select one of the following methods of group work and prepare a class presentation (Power Point) on that group work method: *Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy, Reality Therapy, Solution Focused Therapy, Self-Help, Cognitive Therapy, Person-Centered Approach, Task-Oriented Group, Gestalt Therapy, or Family Systems Therapy*. The presentation will begin with a description of the application of the method of group work selected including:

- description of the theoretical underpinnings of the method
- techniques/interventions
- special considerations in application of the method in group practice (i.e. not appropriate for a short term, closed ended group).

You will make a Power Point to be posted in a simulated group activity that demonstrates the method of group work on which you have reported. The presentation is supposed to educate your peers and can be used to simulate a group (think that after watching your Power Point a peer could run a group on your subject). Be sure to include questions in the back of PP. Group presentations will be posted as per the following dates.

- Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy (10/12)
- Reality Therapy
- Solution Focused Therapy (10/19)

- Self-Help (Mutual Aid)
- Cognitive Therapy (11/26)
- Person-Centered Approach
- Task-Oriented Model (11/02)
- Gestalt Therapy

You can pick Family Systems Therapy as an alternate to any theories above

Each presentation must include a handout for all class members that outlines the basic elements of this group work.

Online Weekly Discussions (Appendix C)

There are 15 Weekly Discussions that have to be complete the following Monday for all 15 weeks of the semester as per course outline dates.

Due Date Policy

Assignments are due on the due date as per calendar and discussions are due the following Monday.

TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS

LMS

All course sections offered by Texas A&M University-Commerce have a corresponding course shell in the myLeo Online Learning Management System (LMS). Below are technical requirements:

LMS Requirements:

<https://community.brightspace.com/s/article/Brightspace-Platform-Requirements>

LMS Browser Support:

https://documentation.brightspace.com/EN/brightspace/requirements/all/browser_support.htm

Zoom Video Conferencing Tool

https://inside.tamuc.edu/campuslife/CampusServices/CITESupportCenter/Zoom_Account.aspx?source=universalmenu

ACCESS AND NAVIGATION

You will need your campus-wide ID (CWID) and password to log into the course. If you do not know your CWID or have forgotten your password, contact the Center for IT Excellence (CITE) at 903.468.6000 or helpdesk@tamuc.edu.

Note: Personal computer and internet connection problems do not excuse the requirement to complete all course work in a timely and satisfactory manner. Each student needs to have a backup method to deal with these inevitable problems. These methods might include the availability of a backup PC at home or work, the temporary use of a computer at a friend's home, the local library, office service companies, Starbucks, a TAMUC campus open computer lab, etc.

COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT

If you have any questions or are having difficulties with the course material, please contact your Instructor.

Technical Support

If you are having technical difficulty with any part of Brightspace, please contact Brightspace Technical Support at 1-877-325-7778. Other support options can be found here:

<https://community.brightspace.com/support/s/contactsupport>

Interaction with Instructor Statement

If you have any questions or are having difficulties with the course material, please contact your Instructor via email. The Instructor will respond to email queries within two business days.

COURSE AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES/POLICIES

Course Specific Procedures/Policies

Syllabus Change Policy

The syllabus is a guide. Circumstances and events, such as student progress, may require the Instructor to modify it during the semester. Any changes made to the syllabus will be announced in advance.

University Specific Procedures

Ethical Behavior

The School of Social Work expects all students to conduct themselves in an ethical, professional manner in the classroom and field settings consistent with the [NASW Code of Ethics](#).

University Code of Conduct

Texas A&M University-Commerce has established standards of conduct to create and foster an environment that facilitates student learning and development. Students and university student groups are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that demonstrates respect for the rights and property of others and is consistent with the educational goals and mission of the university. This Code of Student Conduct ("Code") focuses on personal responsibility and accountability for students' actions and the impact those actions may have on the greater community. To access student academic and behavioral expectations for students refer to the [Student Guidebook](#).

Students should also consult the Rules of Netiquette for more information regarding how to interact with students in an online forum: <https://www.britannica.com/topic/netiquette>

TAMUC Attendance

For more information about the attendance policy please visit the [Attendance](#) webpage (or copy/paste the following URL in your web browser:

<http://www.tamuc.edu/admissions/registrar/generalInformation/attendance.aspx>)

[If a student believes the final grade is unfairly impacted by attendance requirements, an appeal can be made. This appeal process is explained in "Student Appeal of Instructor Evaluation" - Procedure 13.99.99.R0.05.](#)

Academic Integrity

Students at Texas A&M University-Commerce are expected to maintain high standards of integrity and honesty in all of their scholastic work. For more details and the definition of academic dishonesty, see the following procedures:

[Graduate Student Academic Dishonesty 13.99.99.R0.10](#)
[Graduate Student Academic Dishonesty Form](#)

[Undergraduate Student Academic Dishonesty 13.99.99.R0.03](#)
[Undergraduate Academic Dishonesty Form](#)

University Rules on Research

Students involved in conducting research and/or scholarly activities at Texas A&M University-Commerce must also adhere to standards set forth in [University Procedure 15.99.03.R1 Ethics in Research, Scholarship, and Creative Work](#).

AI Use Policy

Texas A&M University-Commerce acknowledges that there are legitimate uses of Artificial Intelligence, ChatBots, or other software that can generate text or suggest replacements for text beyond individual words, as determined by the course instructor.

Any use of such software must be documented. Undocumented use constitutes academic dishonesty (plagiarism).

Individual instructors may disallow the use of such software entirely for individual assignments or for the entire course. Students should be aware of such requirements and follow their instructors' guidelines. If no instructions are provided, the student should assume that the use of such software is disallowed.

In any case, students are fully responsible for the content of any assignment they submit, regardless of whether they used an AI in any way. This specifically includes cases in which the AI plagiarized another text or misrepresented sources. [Draft 2, May 25, 2023]

[Graduate Student Academic Dishonesty 13.99.99.R0.10](#)
[Undergraduate Student Academic Dishonesty 13.99.99.R0.03](#)

Students with Disabilities-- ADA Statement

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact:

Office of Student Disability Resources and Services

Texas A&M University-Commerce
Velma K. Waters Library Rm 162
Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835
Fax (903) 468-8148
Email: StudentDisabilityServices@tamuc.edu
Website: [Office of Student Disability Resources and Services](#)

Nondiscrimination Notice

Texas A&M University-Commerce will comply in the classroom, and in online courses, with all federal and state laws prohibiting discrimination and related retaliation on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, age, genetic information or veteran status. Further, an environment free from discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression will be maintained.

Campus Concealed Carry Statement

Texas Senate Bill - 11 (Government Code 411.2031, et al.) authorizes the carrying of a concealed handgun in Texas A&M University-Commerce buildings only by persons who have been issued and are in possession of a Texas License to Carry a Handgun. Qualified law enforcement officers or those who are otherwise authorized to carry a concealed handgun in the State of Texas are also permitted to do so. Pursuant to Penal Code (PC) 46.035 and A&M-Commerce Rule 34.06.02.R1, license holders may not carry a concealed handgun in restricted locations.

For a list of locations, please refer to the [Carrying Concealed Handguns On Campus](#) document and/or consult your event organizer.

Web URL:

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/34SafetyOfEmployeesAndStudents/34.06.02.R1.pdf>

Pursuant to PC 46.035, the open carrying of handguns is prohibited on all A&M-Commerce campuses. Report violations to the University Police Department at 903-886-5868 or 9-1-1.

A&M-Commerce Supports Students' Mental Health

The Counseling Center at A&M-Commerce, located in the Halladay Building, Room 203, offers counseling services, educational programming, and connections to community resources for students. Students have 24/7 access to the Counseling Center's crisis assessment services by calling 903-886-5145. For more information regarding Counseling Center events and confidential services, please visit www.tamuc.edu/counsel

School of Social Work & Council on Social Work Education-Specific Policies

Course Engagement

Final Evaluation and Grade Depends on both Classroom attendance and Participation:

Inadequate participation or lack of required time commitment in each class significantly affects students' grades. No matter the course venue, students must engage in a comparable amount of time. Expectations of both Face-to-Face classes and those with Online components include time spent reading and studying course material.

To earn a level of competency within a specific course, students must demonstrate both mastery of content and active engagement.

Mastery of content areas is evidenced by successful completion of course assignments such as written papers, group project deliverables, tests/quizzes, and other tangible products designed by instructors to evaluate knowledge and skills.

Additionally, the Social Work Profession is built upon human interactions and building human relationships – which is defined as engagement. Engagement is defined as meaningful involvement in interactions with the Instructor, peers, and outside stakeholders as appropriate (such as contacting a social worker to interview for a required assignment). Within the classroom setting, whether virtual or F2F, students must actively participate in 80% of engagement activities as outlined by individual instructors. These activities may include but are not limited to, participation in live, synchronous virtual classes, attending a Face-to-Face course when appropriate, interacting with peers in posted discussions, and collaborating in group interactive projects.

Students must meet standards for content mastery on tangible assignments and meet the threshold of active engagement of the time set during a semester by the Instructor.

Instructors are experts in each course content area and set the standards for students to meet to successfully complete the course.

Student Conduct

Students preparing to become professional social workers must adhere to the *University Code of Conduct*, *Department Code of Conduct* and the *National Association of Social Workers (NASW) Code of Ethics*.

Department Code of Conduct

The Academic and Professional Issues Committee (API) hearing is the formal path of due process for a student in regard to the concern being expressed. A student will be referred to the School of Social Work's API by faculty, field instructors, or faculty field liaisons when a concern arises regarding academic and student conduct and/or professional preparation. When “a student who fails to meet the professional expectation of the field for which he/she is preparing may be suspended from further study in that program by the department administering that program” as demonstrated through ethical and/or legal violations; aberrant disregard for School of Social Work Code of Conduct or other concerns as determined by the [Academic and Professional Issues Committee](#).

Graduate Students have the right to appeal to the Graduate Dean according to [University Procedure 13.99.99.R0.39](#).

Undergraduate Students have the right to appeal to the Dean of the College of Education and Human Services according to [University Procedure 13.99.99.R0.41](#).

Mental Health and Well-Being

The university aims to provide students with essential knowledge and tools to understand and support mental health. As part of our commitment to your well-being, we offer access to [TELUS Health](#), a service available 24/7/365 via chat, phone, or webinar. Scan the QR code to download the app and explore the resources available for guidance and support whenever needed.



QR Code TELUS

APPENDIX A
Grading Rubric: Small Group Issues Paper

	Criteria	Max points	Late Submission
1	Brief Introduction	10	
2	Begin with sanction from the agency (how you will achieve sanction, etc.).	10	
3	The kind of group that would best serve this at-risk population.	10	
4	Leadership skills needed	10	
5	Membership recruitment	10	
6	Time frame	10	
7	Physical environment	10	
8	Basic norms of the group	10	
9	The stages of the group and the expected process in each stage	10	
10	Intervention and assessment skills used	10	
11	Ethical considerations for this population & how you would resolve any ethical dilemmas	10	
12	Termination	10	
13	Evaluation	10	
14	APA format	20	
	TOTAL	150	-10

APPENDIX B
Grading Rubric: Class Presentation

	Criteria	Max points	Late presentations
1	Description of the theoretical underpinnings of the method	15	
2	Techniques/interventions	15	
3	Special considerations in the application of the method	15	
4	Techniques/interventions	15	
5	Smooth presentation	15	
6	Questions	15	
7	Handout in back	15	
8	APA format	45	
	TOTAL	150	-10

APPENDIX C
Grading Rubric: Weekly Discussions

	Criteria	Max points	Late presentations
1	Posted what you learned	5	
2	Posted to peers discussion	5	
	TOTAL	10	-3

Week - Week/of	Topic/Assignments	Activities
Week 1 –8/20	Class introduction. Review of course syllabus and read Ch 1- Introduction Week 1 Discussion	Download Syllabus Review PPT1 & video
Week2 – 8/24	Ch 2-Stages of Group, Group Process, and Therapeutic Forces. Week 2 Discussion	Read Text, Chapter 2 Week 2 Lecture & Video Creating Purposeful Grps
Week3 – 8/31	Ch 3-- Purpose of Groups Ch 4 -- Planning Week 3 Discussion	Read Text, Ch 3-4 Week 3 Lec. & Video Group Work Skills
Week4 – 9/07	Ch 5-- Getting Started: The Beginning Stage & Phase Week 4 Discussion	Read Text, Ch 5 Review Week 4 Lecture & Video
Week5 – 9/14	Ch 6 Basic Skills for Group Leader Week 5 Discussion	Read Text, Ch 6 Review Week 5 Lecture Video
Week6 – 9/21	Group Skills: Ch 7 -- Focus; Ch 8 -- Cutting Off and Drawing Out Week 6 Discussion	Read Text, Ch 7-8 Review Week 6 Lecture & Video
Week7 – 9/28	Group Skills: Ch 9 Round/Dyads; Ch 10 -- Exercises /Week 7 Discussion	Read Text, Ch 9-10 Review Week 7 Lecture & Video
Week8 – 10/05	Ch 11 -- Introducing, Conducting, Processing Exercises /Week 8 Discussion	Read Text, Ch 11 Review Week 8 Lecture & Video
Week9 – 10/12	Ch 12 - Leading Middle Stage of Group Presentations Posted Discussion #9 Online	Read Text, Ch 12 Review Week 9 Lecture & Video
Week10 – 10/19	Ch 13 &14 – Using Counseling Theories in Groups; Counseling Presentations Posted Discussion #10 Online	Read Text, Ch 13 & 14 Review Week 10 Lecture & Video
Week11 – 10/26	Ch 17Working with Specific popula. Presentations Posted Discussion #11 Online	Read Text, Chapter 17 Review Week 11 Lecture & Video
Week12 – 11/02	Ch 16 -- Dealing with Problem Situations Presentations Posted Discussion #12 Online	Read Text, Chapter 16 Review Week 12 Lecture & Video
Week13 – 11/09	Ch 15 - Closing a Session Discussion #13 Online	Read Text, Chapter 15 Review Week 13 Lecture & Vid
Week 14– 11/16	Group Discussion #14 Online	Review Week 14 Lecture & Video
Week 15- 11/23	Group Discussion #15 Online Thanksgiving 11/26-27	Class Discussion Week 15
Week 16 11/30	Assignment 1 Paper due Termination	Class Exam