I. COURSE DESCRIPTION

This advanced group work course is a selected topic that supports advanced social work practice courses and is of interest to students but are not a part of the regular curriculum. The course will build on knowledge obtained in the first year MSW program. The focus is on the development of skills needed to plan, prepare, facilitate, terminate, and evaluate a group designed to help adolescents build interracial relationships. Students will deliver the program to a racially diverse group of high school students interested in building interracial friendships. Prerequisites: SWK6150; SWK6160; SWK6320; SWK6390.

II. TEXTS AND REQUIRED READING

REQUIRED:


Toseland, R. W. & Rivas, R. F. (2005). *An introduction to group work practice* (5th ed.). Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon. (used in foundation group work course; will be put on reserve in the AU Library)

III. INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

This course will help students develop the crucial skills involved in designing and leading groups with a focus on overcoming the difficult barriers around race continuing to plague this society. As the U.S. becomes more diverse in its racial makeup, social workers are increasingly called upon to help in situations involving racial tension and conflict. In this course students will examine social group work
theory and practice literature which looks at working with adolescents in groups, dealing with conflict in groups, and working with racially heterogeneous groups. The course will highlight the effective use of activities to promote self-awareness, comfort, and confidence in interracial relationships. Students will design, implement, and evaluate a weekend residential group experience for high school students from a variety of races and communities.

This is a practice course which helps students to integrate and apply relevant concepts at an advanced level. Working with conflict and diversity, especially in group work with youth, are among the most challenging practice issues faced by social workers. The course also helps students to further integrate and apply course material on social justice, and on the importance of the creation of community for both prevention and intervention. It will also provide an experience of evaluating the effectiveness of a program in a meaningful way.

IV. COURSE OBJECTIVES

Upon completion of this course:

1. Students are able to apply advanced clinical social work knowledge and skills from the clinical concentration to group work with adolescents of diverse populations, emphasizing their inherent strengths and coping resilience. They are ready to lead racially heterogeneous groups with increased comfort and skill working in with anxiety, prejudice, and conflict (Clinical Concentration Objective 1; EPAS Curriculum 4.1, 4.2, and 4.5)
2. Students are able to use their understanding of the forms and mechanisms of oppression and discrimination to plan an effective group experience for a racially heterogeneous group of youth. (Building on Foundation Objective 4; EPAS Curriculum 4.1)
3. Students have achieved sufficient awareness of their own identity, anxieties, stereotypes, and limitations to have increased their comfort in approaching group members who are racially different with a respectfully curious stance and an open mind. (Clinical Concentration Objective 6; Building on Foundation Objective 3; EPAS Curriculum 4.1 and 4.5)
4. Students are able to demonstrate their ability to advance the quality of their group work practice and their commitment to the larger social work profession. (Clinical Concentration Objective 2)
5. Students are able to understand the value base of the profession and its ethical standards and principles, and incorporate these into social group work practice with racially heterogeneous groups. (Foundation Objective 2; EPAS Curriculum 4.0 and 4.1)
6. Students are able to articulate the program’s conception of both foundation and advanced practice; including theories, practice skills, policy and research principles as they relate to working with interracial groups; they are able to see how practice principles related to working with racial differences can be generalized to working with differences other than race. (Clinical Concentration Objective 3)
7. Students are effective in assessment, intervention, and evaluation of social work services to groups. (Clinical Concentration Objective 6)

V. TEACHING METHODS/CLASS CLIMATE

This course will use lecture, informed discussion, experiential exercises, and film. Since it is a “laboratory” course, students will have an actual experience designing, implementing, and evaluating an interracial adolescent group. The class will become a learning community, with students sometimes working in groups and integrating their work and life experience with the course material in class discussion.
Moodle Use Policy: All course information, syllabus, assignments, notes and so forth will be posted on Moodle. Students are responsible for printing the course materials and taking them to class. The instructor will not provide extra copies.

Aurora University Classroom Conduct Policy: Students enrolled in AU courses have the right to learn in an environment where all individuals are treated equitably and with respect. Behaviors in class that interfere with the learning experience are not permitted. Disruptive or disrespectful behaviors may result in dismissal from the class by the instructor. Continued problems will be reported to the College Dean and/or the Dean of Student Life for further action. Course instructors may also impose class related sanctions on the offending student.

Professional Conduct: Students in a professional program should conduct themselves as professionals in relation to their behavior during class and in completion of all assignments. All members of the learning community are to be treated respectfully. Talking in class when another person is speaking is unacceptable and will be regarded as unprofessional behavior. Cell phones and pagers should be silent in classrooms. If you anticipate being called, or that you will need to leave the classroom during sessions, please sit close to the door to avoid disrupting other students when you leave the classroom to receive or return a call. At the discretion of the professor, class conduct that is not professional will likely result in a lowered grade.

Shared Client and Agency Information: In the classroom, students and professor will occasionally discuss clients and agencies. In these discussions, it is expected that information about clients and agencies should be disguised or eliminated, if clients could be identified, and that this information is to be held in confidence, within the bounds of the Code of Ethics. You must disguise the identity of clients in written assignments including changing the name of the client.

VI. EVALUATION AND GRADING

Details about class assignments can be found in Part IX of this syllabus.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grades</th>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Course Objectives</th>
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<tr>
<td>A. Prepared Participation</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7</td>
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<tr>
<td>B. Journal</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>1, 2, 3, 4, 5</td>
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<td>C. Midterm Exam</td>
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<td>1, 2, 5, 6</td>
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<tr>
<td>D. Final Paper</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7</td>
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</tbody>
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Total Points: 100

Grading Scale
A = 200 - 180 points
B = 179 - 160 points
C = 159 - 140 points
F = 139 points and below
Deadline for Submission of Class Assignments
The policy of the School is that no work submitted after the close of the last scheduled class session of the course will be accepted for inclusion in the grade for that term. Only work submitted before the close of the final class session of the course in question will be considered. True emergencies may warrant an Incomplete (see Policy Regarding Course Incompletes below).

Grading Policy
At the end of the course, letter grades are awarded as defined:

A  (4 quality points per semester hour) Excellent. Denotes work that is consistently at the highest level of achievement in a graduate college or university course.

B  (3 quality points per semester hour) Good. Denotes work that consistently meets the high level of college or university standards for academic performance in a graduate college or university course.

C  (2 quality points per semester hour) The lowest passing grade. Denotes work that does not meet in all respects college or university standards for academic performance in a graduate college or university course.

F  (0 quality points per semester hour) Failure. Denotes work that fails to meet graduate college or university standards for academic performance in a course.

Policy Regarding Course Incompletes
Students are expected to complete all work before the final session of the class. Incompletes are not granted automatically. A grade of “I” may be assigned only in cases of illness, accident, or other catastrophic occurrence beyond the student’s control. It is the responsibility of the student to request, in writing, an Incomplete prior to the end of the term and to complete, with the professor, the University required Petition for Incomplete Grade. The petition must be approved by the Director of the School of Social Work as well as the Dean of the College of Professional Studies. If an Incomplete is granted, all work must be completed by the deadline specified by the professor, which must be on or before the last day of the fourth week of classes in the next term, excluding summer session. Students who do not complete the Petition for Incomplete Grade, or who fail to complete the required work, will be assigned a grade of F.

Professional Writing Standards
All printed work submitted to this professor should be prepared at a graduate standard of professional editing in accordance with the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (5th Ed.). Therefore, allow sufficient preparation time for proofreading and correction of typing errors, misspellings, and grammatical errors.

The reason for this expectation is that professionals are often judged based upon the quality of their written work. Carelessness in spelling and editing suggests that there will also be mistakes in the substance of the work. Therefore, written work, which has misspellings and other editing problems, is likely to be graded down on this basis alone.

Note: If you need help with your writing skills, Aurora University’s Learning Center (630-844-5520) may be able to assist you in improving them. The efforts you make will help you with your courses at AU as
well as throughout your professional career because you will continue to be judged by other professionals on the basis of your written work.

**Submitting Class Assignments**
Assignments must be submitted to the professor during class sessions unless otherwise arranged. Faxing class assignments to the School of Social Work is NOT permitted.

**VII. CODE OF ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

Aurora University’s core values include integrity and ethical behavior. A community of learners, Aurora University students and faculty share responsibility for academic honesty and integrity. The University expects students to do their own academic work. In addition, it expects active participation and equitable contributions of students involved in group assignments. Aurora University’s Code of Academic Integrity (henceforth, the Code) prohibits the following dishonest and unethical behaviors, regardless of intent.

**Cheating.** Cheating is obtaining, using or attempting to use unauthorized materials or information (for example; notes, texts, or study aids) or help from another person (for example looking at another student’s test paper, or talking with him/her during an exam), in any work submitted for evaluation for academic credit. This includes exams, quizzes, laboratory assignments, papers and/or other assignments. Other examples include altering a graded work after it has been returned, then submitting the work for re-grading; or submitting identical or highly similar papers for credit in more than one course without prior permission from the course professor.

**Fabrication.** Fabrication is unauthorized falsification, invention or copying of data, falsification of information, citations, or bibliographic references in any academic course work (for example, falsifying references in a paper); altering, forging, or falsifying any academic record or other University document.

**Plagiarism.** Plagiarism is representing someone else’s work (including their words and ideas) as one’s own or providing materials for such a representation, (for example, submitting a paper or other work that is in whole or part the work of another, failing to cite references, presenting material verbatim or paraphrased that is not acknowledged and cited).

**Obtaining an Unfair Advantage.** This is (a) stealing, reproducing, circulating or otherwise gaining access to examination materials before the time authorized by the professor; (b) stealing, destroying, defacing, or concealing library materials with the purpose of depriving others of their use; (c) intentionally obstructing or interfering with another student’s academic work; or (d) otherwise undertaking activity with the purpose of creating or obtaining an unfair academic advantage over other students’ academic work.

**Unauthorized Access to computerized records or systems.** This is unauthorized review of computerized academic or administrative records or systems; viewing or altering computer records; modifying computer programs or systems; releasing or dispensing information gained via unauthorized access; or interfering with the use or availability of computer systems of information.

**Facilitating academic dishonesty.** This is helping or attempting to assist another commit an act of academic dishonesty in violation of this Code (for example, allowing another to copy from one’s test or allowing others to use or represent one’s work as their own).
Notes: Examples provided are illustrations only and are not inclusive. Other behaviors, not exemplified, apply. Please refer to the “A-Book” or graduate catalog (online at www.aurora.edu link to “current students”) for complete Code policies (reporting, discipline, appeal, etc.).

VIII. TENTATIVE CLASS SCHEDULE

SESSION 1: INTRODUCTION AND COURSE OVERVIEW
January 9

Topics:
- Introductions
- Going over the syllabus
- Goals of course
- Goals of groups with teens

Readings:
None

SESSION 2: DYNAMICS OF THE TARGET PROBLEM
January 16

Topics:
- Assessing obstacles to interracial friendship
- Family and community obstacles: socialization
- Personal obstacles: fear as a learned response
- Understanding the dynamics of interracial tension and conflict

Readings:
Tatum: Parts I and V

Assignments Due:
Journal
Schedule initial contacts with school personnel

SESSIONS 3 & 4: GROUP WORK AS A RESPONSE TO THE PROBLEM
January 23; January 30

Topics:
- Identity development
- Using activities to meet objectives
- Working with racially heterogeneous groups
- Impact of racial and gender differences between worker and group members
- What is “antiracism”?
- Preparing to initiate community contacts to recruit participants
Readings: Malekoff: Chapters 4, 6, 7, and 11
Tatum: Parts II, III, and IV


Assignment Due: Journals
Recruiting begins

SESSIONS 5 & 6: GROUP WORK WITH ADOLESCENTS
February 6; February 13

Topics:
- Adolescent development, risk, and opportunity
- Constructive use of the peer group
- Worker’s use of self with adolescents
- Objectives for the weekend workshop
- The use of play and other activities

Readings:
Malekoff: Chapters 1, 2, 3, 9

Assignments Due: Journals

SESSION 7: COMPARING MODELS OF INTERRACIAL DIALOGUE
February 20

Readings:

Assignment Due: Journal

SESSIONS 8 - 13: DEVELOPING THE MODEL AND PLANNING THE PROGRAM
February 27 – April 10
Students will use abbreviated class time and time outside class to:

- plan the weekend programs with the input of the participants and chaperones who have by now been recruited
- develop teams among themselves
- assign and carry out the tasks of preparing for the program
- meet with participants and chaperones to prepare them for the program

Readings (due Session 8):

Malekoff, Chapters 5, 8, and 10


Assignments Due:  Journals each week
                     Midterm Week 9

CAMP WEEKEND: APRIL 13 - 15

SESSIONS 14 & 15: DEBRIEFING THE EXPERIENCE
                  EVALUATING THE WEEKEND WITH PARTICIPANTS
                  OVERALL EVALUATION OF THE PROGRAM

April 17; April 24

Students will have follow-up meetings with the participants and their chaperones to gather data with which they will evaluate the outcome of the program.

No additional readings

Assignments Due: Journals

SESSION 16: EVALUATING THE COURSE
            ENDING THE CLASS AS A WORKING GROUP

May 1

Students will evaluate the class, and will plan and carry out the ending process of this class as a group.
Assignment due: Final paper

Note: Modifications in the above schedule may be made based on the needs of the class and at the instructor's discretion.

IX. DESCRIPTIVE MATERIAL REGARDING ASSIGNMENTS

A. Class Attendance and Prepared Participation (25 points)
Students are expected to attend class, arrive for class on time, and stay throughout the sessions. Absences or late arrivals will result in a lowered grade. Active and regular participation in class discussion and exercises, reading assigned materials, and being prepared to discuss the subject content in an informed manner is essential to earn the attendance and participation points for each class. Students are expected to demonstrate professional comportment with both classmates and instructor at all times.

Full participation in the leadership of the weekend will be a major portion of this grade.

B. Journal (30 points; 2 points each)
Students are expected to begin a journal about their experiences in the course, starting after the first class session. The first entry should address what the student hopes to learn, and what worries or concerns him/her most about participating in this course. Entries should log personal experiences (thoughts and feelings), at the end of each day the course meets (except for the last day of class). Each entry is to consist of 1-2 typewritten pages. Journals are to be handed in each day of class.

C. Midterm Exam (20 points)
This will be a multiple-choice and short answer exam, focusing on the core concepts in the readings which have been assigned to that date.

D. Final Paper (25 points)
For the final paper students will evaluate the outcome of the workshop and summarize what they have learned in the course, describing their progress in relation to each of the objectives of the course and their plans for further growth in these areas. The paper should be ten pages.

X. ATTENDANCE POLICY

Students are expected to attend all scheduled classes. Those students unable to attend a scheduled class session are responsible for notifying the instructor in advance by phone or by note explaining the need for absence. Twenty percent (20%) or more of the scheduled class sessions is considered excessive absence and may result in a lower grade.
XI. **FINAL EXAMINATION POLICY**

There will be no final examination.

XII. **LATE PAPER POLICY**

All assignments are due during the class session indicated on the syllabus. Assignments turned in late without prior permission from the professor will be graded down. No assignments will be accepted and graded after the last class session of the term.

XIII. **POLICY FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**

Aurora University will provide reasonable accommodations for students with a diagnosed and verified learning disability, physical disability, or psychological disability. In order to be entitled to such accommodations, the student must present a diagnostic report that is acceptable to the University. A diagnostic report indicating a learning disability must be prepared by a qualified psycho-educational practitioner and be based on standardized, reliable, and valid testing instruments. The report must include testing of intellectual ability and achievement, a specific diagnosis, and recommended accommodations based on the diagnosis. Students with physical or psychological disabilities will need documentation from an appropriate medical, psychological, or psychiatric practitioner, indicating diagnosis, impact of the disability and/or treatment plan on major life activities, expected duration of the condition and/or treatment, and recommendations for accommodations. Documentation for students with learning disabilities must be recent, having been prepared within the past three years. Documentation for students with psychological disabilities must have been prepared within the past six months.

**Statement for Students with Special Needs:**

Individuals who have any situation / condition, either permanent or temporary, which might affect their ability to perform in class or access course materials are encouraged to inform the professor at the beginning of the term. Adaptations of teaching methods, class materials, or testing may be made as needed to provide equitable participation.

Students seeking accommodations for documented disabilities should contact the Disabilities Services Coordinator, in the AU Learning Center at 630-844-5520. Students expecting to receive accommodations who do not first go through the Learning Center will not be granted accommodations by the faculty. Students who may not be able to provide documentation of a disability, but who have special needs, are still encouraged to contact the Learning Center to see what forms of academic support might be available and to learn how to obtain the appropriate documentation.
XIV. BIBLIOGRAPHY


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