Module: WORKING in and with GROUPS, TEAMS and ORGANISATIONS (15 GTO)

Module Originator: Mark Doel
Level: 5
Module Length: 30 hours contact; 90 hours study = 120 hours total
Credits: 12
Year of Validation: 2003
School of Origin: Social Work and RNIB Rehabilitation Studies
Route of Validation: BSc (Hons) Social Work

Synopsis
The module introduces students to basic principles of groupwork as applied both to service user groups and working in teams. This is set in the broader organisational context of practice.

Rationale
Social workers are not independent clinicians. They must form effective partnerships not just with service users but also with colleagues and other professionals.

Research indicates that service users find groups empowering and that this is an effective method of working with problems of living. Effective teamwork depends on a knowledge of group processes. Effective practice is associated with an ability to understand the organisational context of practice.

Aims
• To teach basic groupwork principles and practice so that students will be able to facilitate groupwork and play a more participative part in social work and multi-professional teams.
• To help students to learn about organisational theory and practice.

Learning outcomes
By the end of the module the student will be able to:
• Describe the factors which influence group processes in service user groups.
• Critically analyse the factors which help and hinder group formation.
• Describe issues of power and anti-oppression in groupwork.
• Identify strategies to facilitate team working.
• Demonstrate an understanding of organisational influences of practice.

Indicative content
Unit 1: Starting a group
A consideration of the factors which need to be considered when creating a group with service users. An introduction to different models of groupwork. An understanding of 'the offer of service' and the initial stages of group formation, including groundrules and group agreements.

Unit 2: Working with a group
Getting to grips with interactional techniques in groups, group processes, and potential obstacles to group functioning.

Unit 3: Empowering groupwork: endings, evaluation and recording
Understanding the group in its broader context. Working to achieve the best from sessional and group endings. Involving group members with evaluation and recording group processes and outcomes.

Unit 4: Teams and teamwork
Roles in teams and issues which influence effective teamwork. Different models of teamwork; issues for multidisciplinary teams.

Unit 5: Organisational context of social work practice
The impact of sector (statutory, voluntary, private, etc.) on practice; different models of organisational structure; change in organisations and the relationship between bureaucracies and professions.

Teaching and learning strategy
Each Unit will be introduced by a lecture to the full group. This lecture will set the scene for the workshops which follow.

Most of the learning will take place in smaller groups using problem-based learning. Students will be presented with a variety of scenarios and work together to decide how they would develop strategies which would best lead to empowering group and teamwork practices. The small groupwork will also require students to begin to record their findings, which will provide the springboard for their module assessment.

A wide range of teaching and learning methods will be used:

- rehearsal
- individual, pairs, trios and small group exercises, guided by handouts
- full group exercises
- enquiry-based exercises
- questionnaires
- formal inputs
- graphic presentations and triggers
- handouts and other reading materials

The students' learning in the classroom will be reinforced by a period of guided study outside the class, helping students to structure their reading, learning and reflection. This period of guided study will provide a preparation and time for the work on the assessed component of the module.
Assessment

Approximately 1,000 words of the student's assignment will have been written as part of a structured portfolio of learning completed during the course of the class-based work. The remaining 1,000 words will be linked to the student's work during the period of guided study described earlier and will build on the portfolio.

Reading List

*Book you are advised to Purchase:*


*Essential reading:*


*Recommended reading:*


*Background reading:*


*Groupwork journal* (Whiting and Birch) offers a wide variety of articles on various aspects of groupwork practice.

Teaching Team

Mark Doel (co-ordinator); Winfield Belgrave; Robert Dolton; Kumlaish Kumari.
Pre-requisites: None
Co-requisites: None
Exclusions: No compensation is possible.