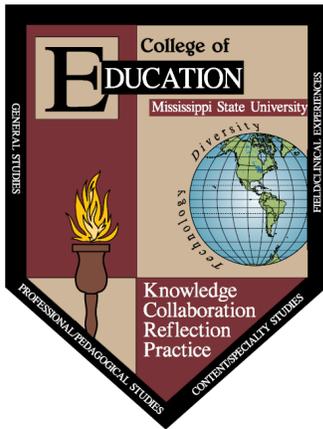


**MISSISSIPPI STATE UNIVERSITY  
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION**

**DEPARTMENT of COUNSELING and EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY  
COURSE SYLLABUS**

<b>Course Prefix &amp; Number:</b>	COE 8043
<b>Course Title:</b>	Group Techniques & Procedures
<b>Credit Hours:</b>	Three (3) semester hours
<b>Type of Course:</b>	Lecture/Lab
<b>Catalog Description:</b>	Prerequisite: 8013 (Counseling Skills) and 8023 (Counseling Theory). Lecture and lab. Group counseling theory, dynamics, processes, and leadership functions.

**College of Education Conceptual Framework:**



The faculty in the College of Education at Mississippi State University are committed to assuring the success of students and graduates by providing superior learning opportunities that are continually improved as society, schools, and technology change. The organizing theme for the conceptual framework for the College of Education at Mississippi State University is educational professionals - dedicated to continual improvement of all students' educational experiences. The beliefs that guide program development are as follows:

1. **KNOWLEDGE** - Educational professionals must have a deep understanding of the organizing concepts, processes, and attitudes that comprise their chosen disciplinary knowledge base, the pedagogical knowledge base, and the pedagogical content knowledge base. They must also know how to complement these knowledge bases with the appropriate use of technology.
2. **COLLABORATION** - Educational professionals must continually seek opportunities to work together, learn from one another, forge partnerships, and assume positions of responsibility.
3. **REFLECTION** - Educational professionals must be willing to assess their own strengths and weaknesses through reflection. They must also possess the skills, behaviors, and attitudes necessary to learn, change, and grow as life-long learners.
4. **PRACTICE** - Educational professionals must have a rich repertoire of research-based strategies for instruction, assessment, and the use of technologies. They must be able to focus that array of skills on promoting authentic learning by all students or clients, while exhibiting an appreciation and commitment to the value and role of diversity.

This course is designed to assist students in learning concepts and skills for working with groups. Students will learn concepts of group development and group dynamics via cognitive and experiential learning. Opportunities to acquire group membership and leadership skills will be provided through participation in a laboratory group. (Knowledge, Collaboration, Reflection, Practice)

### **Course Objectives:**

At the conclusion of the course, the student should be able to demonstrate attainment of the following course objectives:

1. Student will understand different types of groups, their functions and purposes, as well as considerations involved in the implementation of groups. (CFPOs #2, 4, 8; CACREP II. G. 6a; InTASC 4)
2. Student will understand stages of group development and identify such stages and indicators of transition. (CFPO #4; CACREP II. G. 6a; InTASC 4)
3. Student will demonstrate group leadership styles and approaches, including characteristics of various types of group leaders and leadership styles; and acquire personal skills to an effective group participant. (CFPOs #4, 5, 12; CACREP II. G. 6a 6b, 6e; InTASC 4, 5)
4. Student will demonstrate knowledge of group dynamic variables such as leadership, membership, goals, norms, process, and communication. (CFPOs #1, 2; CACREP II. G. 6a, 6b, and 6d; InTASC 4, 5)
5. Student will implement strategies, techniques, and approaches to group work. (CFPO #8; CACREP II. G. 6e; InTASC 4, 5)
6. Student will understand theoretical orientations to group work and implement a personal approach firmly grounded in theory. (CFPO #4; CACREP II. G. 6a 6c; InTASC 4, 5)
7. Student will become familiar with issues and research related to group work. (CFPO #8; CACREP II. G. 6a, 6c; InTASC 4, 5)
8. Student will understand ethical and legal issues related to group work. (CFPO #12; CACREP II. G. 6d; InTASC 9)
9. Student will understand the issues involved in diversity of gender, racial, ethnic, religious, and sexual orientation of group members. (CFPO #3; CACREP II. G. 6a, 6c; InTASC 1-3)
10. Student will understand the helping relationship and practice consultation within the group work framework. (CFPO #8; CACREP II. G. 5f; 9, 10)

**NOTE:** Mississippi State University's College of Education is accredited by NCATE. As a non-teaching graduate program, the School Counseling program is part of the College of Education's **Advanced Program-General**. The *Conceptual Framework Program Outcomes (CFPOs)* referenced in this syllabus are part of this Advanced Program-General model.

### **Topics covered in course: (45 clock hours)**

Weekly Written Group Progress Reports (Reflection after each group meeting) (10 hours)  
Reflective Summary (10 hours)  
Group Proposal (Signature Assignment) (15 hours)  
Theory Presentation & Activity (10 hours)  
Midterm Exam

## Final Exam

### **Texts:**

Corey, M. S., Corey, G., & Corey, C. (2010). *Groups: Process and practice* (8th ed.). Belmont, CA: Brooks/Cole.

Additional readings may be required. In addition, see the bibliography for recommended readings.

### **Recommended Text(s):**

Barlow, C. A., Blyth, J. A., & Edmonda, M. (1999). *A handbook of interactive exercises for groups* (2nd ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Allyn & Bacon.

Brigman G., & Earley, B. (2001) *Group counseling for school counselors* (2nd ed.) Portland, ME: J. Weston Walch.

### **Methods of Instruction:**

Lecture, discussion, small group activities, experiential learning activities, role playing, guest speakers, and presentations will be integral components of instruction.

### Readings:

Students are expected to read all chapter assignments and additional assigned readings prior to class and be prepared to discuss topics on scheduled dates. Students should have (3) topics regarding the assigned readings written down to discuss in class. Active participation in all activities is expected (i.e., small group discussion, class-wide discussion, and presentations).

### **Student Activities:**

#### Guidelines for Weekly Progress Reports:

A weekly analysis of the group's progress developed by a group member is an important technique for enhancing group communication, enriching a group experience, and providing insights into one's own perceptions and behavior in groups. The report is not a simple chronicle of events and situations that occur in your group. Instead of summarizing what happened, focus your writing on your own feelings and thoughts as you experienced them in group. You may have thoughts and feelings regarding other people in the group, the leader, yourself, or the group in general. You should write about these. Please understand that your level of self-disclosure is up to you. You do not need to disclose personal details about your life if you choose not to. The emphasis should be on how you make sense of what is happening in group in relation to: (a) what you're learning about yourself that has implications about your future effectiveness as a group leader; and (b) what you're reading about group development (about what happens that facilitates a group's movement from being a room of individuals to being a group). Also, closely

observe the group leader. What skills are he/she using that is effective/ineffective? What behaviors will you try to exhibit as a group leader?

Examples for further details:

1. After each group session, write in your log, addressing the points noted below. Write freely and informally.
2. The length of each entry is entirely your decision. Some people mull over reactions and understandings and ideas for several pages each time, writing as they think; others find that shorter commentaries and reflections suffice, especially until insights become clearer and information synthesizes for them.
3. You are to **submit your log by the date/time noted on syllabus via email at [cjustice@colled.msstate.edu](mailto:cjustice@colled.msstate.edu)**. This will allow the instructor time to read your log, make comments if necessary, and respond to you in class before the next group meeting. As noted in the syllabus, your log will not be graded for specific content or style. If your log presents a summary of what happened in group but does not include *your reactions* and/or does not include your analysis of *how events and member behaviors influence the group*, you will be asked to rewrite it before you receive your points.

General Guidelines:

1. Write in your log as soon as you can following each group experience.
2. Focus on your own thoughts and feelings, rather than on those of other people.
3. Try to make the log an extension of the group experience rather than a summary. It should be an exercise in understanding group process (not content).
4. Try to analyze what occurred in your group in relation to what you're reading in class. For example, relate how the group's discussion of ground rules helped you and others start to feel more comfortable.
5. The log will be read by your instructor. (Parts of the log may be discussed with your group leader to assist in the group leader's development). Treat your log as you would any professional material that is highly confidential in nature. If handwritten or typed, keep it in a notebook or file folder marked "confidential" with the following information on the cover: Your name and phone number, your instructor's name, and the group leader's name.

Include the Following:

1. Your thoughts and feelings about what you are experiencing in group.
2. Your awareness about your own behavior in a group and how your behavior affects others. Think about how this relates to your effectiveness as a future group leader. As noted previously, your level of self-disclosure is up to you. For example, you may write that you realized that you became nervous when you believed member C was on the hot spot. This led you to try to rescue him, which made you feel better. You understand that seeing people struggle is hard for you because of some things that went on in your family when you were younger (you don't need to explain that this was because you wished someone had rescued your mother when your father yelled at her). You also see that you rescuing him was about you, and that this may have actually stopped him from exploring what he needs. Discuss how your tendency to rescue might help/hinder your work as a group leader.

3. Your awareness of other people's behavior in a group, and how their behavior affects you (How did you feel, respond, behave? Did anything get triggered in you?). As noted earlier, you do not need to say that member D discussed the death of his mother. Instead, you may choose to note that member D's issues triggered your own sense of grief (and you may or may not say over what). Examine how this might influence your effectiveness as a group leader.
4. Your understanding about group life and group process. For example, what was the level of interaction (intellectual, feeling oriented)? Is the group moving or stuck? Are there sub-groups? What is the emotional climate? This is important to review after each session. Discuss this in relation to what we read and discuss in class.
5. Issues about groups that you wish to resolve; things you want to work on; and, how you plan to act on these issues and desires.
6. What skills is the group leader using? What is working and what is not? What behaviors will you try to mimic as a group leader?

Following are some examples of the kind of material that is helpful to write:

*Excerpt A:* When member A said we weren't really strangers, it hit me that's exactly what I felt in group--like I was alone, separate, a stranger. I know most people here from around school, but this is different. It seems that most of us, including me, are not sure how much to disclose about ourselves. The lack of structure and direction makes me uncomfortable. I was glad when the leader asked us some specific questions about our personal goals for the group. When member D asked me about something I said, I was nervous about talking about myself but I think this made me feel like she cared about me. That increased my comfort which in turn allowed me to begin to disclose a little bit more about my family history. After that, several other members began to share little bits about their family. The leader made comments that got us to see some of our commonalities (other than being students). Interestingly, I realized that I wasn't feeling so much like a stranger anymore and that this was true for other people also. I think this was really important if we are to become a group rather than a circle of individuals. The group leader is doing a really good job at connecting peoples' comments. She encourages further discussion by doing this and even draws in the quieter group members by asking them what they think about the issue. I hope to be as effective as she is when working with the quieter members. I know that I don't like putting people on the spot, so this is something that I will need to work on to be an effective group member.

*Excerpt B:* Our group seems to be stuck in the initial stage. Everyone is being very nice and polite. I found myself wanting to tell member F that I thought he was being phony--that his smile didn't match his body language, but I was afraid that other people would think I'm mean. Part of me was waiting for our leader to comment on stuff like this but I guess that it's my responsibility to take a risk and speak up. In fact, that fits with my personal goal to learn to use "I statements" to express myself. I have a feeling that we're all waiting for someone else to be the first person to share anything that might be perceived negatively and this reluctance is contributing to us being stuck. As a leader, I'll need to be aware of my own tendency to want to avoid negativity.

*Excerpt C:* Member X surprised me by commenting on how he finds himself reacting when I smile at the same time as I'm talking about stressful events in my life. It made me really uncomfortable. I know that what he said is true but found myself getting defensive. I wonder if when I'm leading groups if I'll have trouble appropriately challenging group members. I also

wonder how often I give mixed messages. These are both things that I'll need to become more aware of. In terms of the group's progress, I think that although member X's statements made me and others feel uncomfortable, he brought some good honesty into the group. I felt very supported by the leader who was effective in drawing out what I was feeling and thinking. She helped me express my concerns about people liking me to the very members I was afraid don't like me. This opened up a good discussion with others in the group. We began to get glimpses of each other's true thoughts/feelings.

*Excerpt D:* I winced as member C suggested that member D was being defensive. It was obvious that D felt a great deal of pain when she was talking. I felt the need to rescue her and spoke up on her behalf. Other members who had been starting to share information seemed to shut down. They avoided eye contact, shifted in their chairs, and were much quieter than in previous sessions. When the leader commented on these behaviors, the discussion shifted to issues related to our roles in the group. What became clear for me is that some members are competing for talk time. I'm not sure if that's about control or not. The leader seemed to use a lot of reflection of feelings and paraphrases today. Almost all of us were complaining about one thing or another. What was interesting for me today is that although this discussion was uncomfortable for many of us, it seemed to lead to a greater level of trust. This was the first time when our leader was challenged by a member. The leader's non-defensive reaction was great for me to see. She accepted what the member said and asked him what he would like to see happen differently. This in turn led to other members speaking up about what they wanted from the group. This was helpful for me to see—there was no yelling or major conflicts but at the same time the primary focus of our time today was not on issues related to specific tasks. It moved us out of our comfort zone and I began to understand that without this, we'd never really help each other.

Guidelines for Reflective Summary: (4-5 typed, double-spaced pages of text):

Review your weekly logs. Think about your group experience. Apply your readings about group process to an analysis of your own experience in group and your group's progress through the stages. Do not give a report of events, but do write about key group process themes in a way that demonstrates your understanding of the readings. Write on both your personal learning and on the group process aspects of your group sessions by addressing the following:

What did you learn about yourself through this process? Focus on the qualities about yourself that might either enhance or detract from your effectiveness as a group leader. Discuss the characteristics that applied to your group and discuss how your group did or did not fit the characteristics described in your readings. For example, what factors contributed to your group becoming a working and productive group or to your group getting stuck? How was trust generated within a group? What prevented this from occurring? Concretely, what did the group teach you about being a group member? About group leadership? About how groups function or don't function? About the stages of group and the techniques associated with different stages? Since you will be writing this before the last session, discuss what you think is important for your group members to do during this last session. Why do you think this will be helpful in facilitating a sense of closure? What have you learned about groups this semester that you can apply to the types of groups that you'll lead at some time in the future?

Signature Assignment: Guidelines for Group Proposal:

Listed below are topic areas which should be addressed when proposing the formation of a group. Where there is overlap, a specific point needs to be made only once. (The proposal may be presented in a modified outline format.) Try to limit your proposal to 6-8 pages (typed and double-spaced). You are to use a **minimum of 6 references. Three of these must be articles published in national journals. A minimum of 1-2 of these should be research studies** relevant to the type of group you are proposing (e.g., a study on the effectiveness of using a psychoeducational group format to help adolescents learn to control their anger). You are to cite sources/references in the paper and include a reference list using APA-style. Feel free to attach appendices.

*Introduction:* Include a brief statement explaining why the group proposed is important and how it will be useful. You are to note social trends, neglected issues, and/or research as part of your explanation (e.g., the prevalence of alcohol-related accidents involving college students as a reason to have a group address this issue). Remember to cite your references.

*Population and Concerns:* The specific population who will be served by the group and how members will be served (e.g., why group rather than individual work and what members can gain by participating in group). Describe the population in some depth including relevant cultural (e.g., gender, race/ethnicity, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, etc.) and developmental issues.

*Group Theories:* What theory or theories will be used to guide this group? What are the basic assumptions of the theory and how do these explain how clients make changes? Cite sources. Using the theory, explain your understanding of your specific population's concerns and identify goals for improvement. Be sure to discuss your overall goals for your proposed group.

*Leadership:* According to your theoretical framework, what personal characteristics will be important for leaders working with the population and concerns described above? What training and/or supervision should leaders have? What functions will the leaders fulfill? What are some typical techniques they will use to fulfill them? If you propose that there be coleaders, explain why. Discuss these issues in terms of your proposed group (e.g., leaders will need to have completed course work in substance abuse as well as a strong working knowledge of issues related to adolescent offenders).

*Membership:* Address each of the questions asked. Present information that relates directly to your proposed group (do not simply restate information from the texts). Cite references that support your statements (e.g., According to Smith (2009), it is important to discuss medical histories and current medical conditions of individuals with eating disorder to determine if they are in any physical danger....).

1. Will the group be an open or closed group and why?
2. How will members be recruited?\*
3. What are the optimal and acceptable number of group members (and why)?
4. Where will the group meet, how often, and how long will each session be?
5. How will potential members be screened and selected for group membership?\*
6. What type of information will be gathered on members prior to entering the group?
7. How will this information be used? (e.g., What types of questions might potential members be asked? How would leaders determine that a potential member is likely to benefit from, and contribute to the group?)

8. In what ways will the group be homogeneous and/or heterogeneous?
9. How will members be oriented or prepared for group experience? Include a discussion of members' rights and responsibilities.\*
10. What risks are involved in participating in the group?\*

*Evaluation:* How will termination and follow-up appraisals be performed to evaluate the effectiveness of the group? What provisions will be made for members who do not progress or who are harmed as a result of the group experience?\*

*Ethics:* Review the *Professional Standards for the Training of Group Workers* (ASGW, 2000) at [http://www.asgw.org/training\\_standards.htm](http://www.asgw.org/training_standards.htm). The questions marked with an \* are closely related to these guidelines. Evaluate the extent to which your proposal has covered the guidelines. Address here any guidelines that were not covered in other sections.

The paper will be evaluated on the following criteria: (1) content substance of information presented, including how directly your information relates to your proposed group (versus presenting information about groups in general); (2) clarity of writing and organization of information (note that lack of clarity and organization may influence the instructor's perception of the content substance); (3) inclusion of appropriate references; (4) proper use of APA style for headings, citations, and references. Use headings to organize your paper and to ensure that you have addressed all required points.

#### Guidelines for Theory Presentation and Activity:

You will develop and present a relevant exercise for a group based on a specific theory (or an example of how a group worker would apply a specific theory to a group setting). Depending on the number of people in the class, you may be assigned to work with one or two classmates. The instructor will be available to meet with you prior to your presentation for planning purposes. Each individual or pair of presenters will prepare a brief handout for the class, summarizing the key points and the activity.

Your presentation should include:

##### 1. Introduction (5-10 minutes – please stay within the time requirements)

A brief overview of the key assumptions of a specified theory as these relate to group work. Be sure to include application with diverse clientele in your presentation. You may reference the required textbook or the recommended readings. Do not, however, simply repeat what's in these books. You need to include other sources that present a more in-depth review of the key assumptions as these relate to group work. (Note: If using Power Point, do not read slides word for word—points will be deducted from your total.)

##### 2. Exercise (15-20 minutes – please stay within the time requirements)

Use an exercise to illustrate the application of the theory to group work. Describe the group/setting for which the exercise is intended (e.g., demographics of the group members, the purpose of the group). Be as specific as possible so the class members can “get into character” for the demonstration of the exercise (e.g., they can role-play being college R.A.'s, children of parents who are divorced, adults who are grieving the loss of a loved one, etc.)

Discuss the goal(s) and objectives of the exercise and at what point in the group process (e.g., initial stage, working stage) and in the session (e.g., opening, middle, closing) the exercise should most appropriately be used. Include research findings that support the effectiveness of this type of exercise in helping these types of group members address their concerns or meet the goals of the group. Demonstrate the exercise.

Prepare a brief handout that includes: (a) a written abstract (APA style) of the presentation, (b) summarization of key points, (c) description of the group and the activity, and (d) reference/resource list. Remember to cite your sources/references in the body of the handout and on all appendices. Please bring sufficient copies of your handout for all class members. Your presentation will be evaluated on the following:

1. Substance of information presented -- You are expected to go beyond the textbook.
2. Organization and clarity of material
3. Facilitation of the activity
4. Participation by all group members
5. Time requirements

### **Honor Code:**

Mississippi State University has an approved Honor Code that applies to all students. The code is as follows:

**"As a Mississippi State University student I will conduct myself with honor and integrity at all times. I will not lie, cheat, or steal, nor will I accept the actions of those who do."**

Upon accepting admission to Mississippi State University, a student immediately assumes a commitment to uphold the Student Honor Code, to accept responsibility for learning, and to follow the philosophy and rules of the Student Honor Code. Students will be required to state their commitment on examinations, research papers, and other academic work. Ignorance of the rules does not exclude any member of the MSU community from the requirements or the processes of the Student Honor Code. For additional information please visit:  
<http://www.honorcode.msstate.edu>

### **Technology:**

Technology will be used when students email their group reflections and during the group sessions (Video tape).

### **Diversity:**

Mississippi State University does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, disability, or veteran status. Mississippi State University conforms to Title IX of the education amendments of 1972, section 503. The department of counseling and educational psychology encourages the recruitment, acceptance, and enrollment of minority students of the region and beyond. Efforts are made to ensure that programs are diverse in terms of age, gender,

ethnicity, race, sexual orientation, religion, socioeconomic status and disability. Members of minority groups are strongly encouraged to seek admission in the department.

**Disability:**

In accordance with University policy, Students with disabilities requiring accommodations to meet the expectations of this course are encouraged to bring this to the attention of the instructor and should register with the Office of Student Support Services as soon as possible. The Office of Student Support Services and Disability Support Services is located in 01 Montgomery Hall. The phone number is (662-325-3335) and their web address is <http://www.sss.msstate.edu/>

**Field Component:**

N/A

**Evaluation of student progress:**

Grading Point Scale

- 6 pts. Weekly Written Group Progress Reports (Reflection after each group meeting)
- 14 pts. Reflective Summary
- 25 pts. Group Proposal (Signature Assignment)
- 10 pts. Theory Presentation & Activity
- 50 pts. Midterm Exam
- 50 pts. Final Exam
- 155 total points

A = 145-155    B = 135-144    C = 128-134    D = 120-127    F = below 120