

Vanguard University  
School for Professional Studies  
Degree Program

**“GROUP DYNAMICS”**  
PSYD 434

Student Guide

4/09  
DS 01/10

## **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

Group Dynamics explores the various stages of groups, including pre-group assessment and screening of group members, group development, the initial stage, the transition stage, the working stage, and the final stage of groups. Students will be introduced to different types of groups. Ethical and multicultural issues as they apply to groups are examined. This Course incorporates experiential learning processes where students learn about group processes via group exercises in class. Each student will attend one group meeting of an ongoing secular group in the community and one group meeting of an ongoing Christian group in the community.

## **CATALOG DESCRIPTION**

Group Dynamics introduces students to various types of groups used in clinical settings and to the theoretical orientations commonly utilized in group practice. The stages of group work, leadership skills, and work with special populations are explored. Students are introduced to ethical issues, and multicultural issues that apply to group work.

### **Vanguard University of Southern California Educational Targets and Goals:**

#### **Intellectual Engagement:**

- To expose students to the different types of therapeutic groups and the different stages of group process by assigned reading, lecture, live observation of groups and participation in experiential exercises in class
- To expose students to the potential benefits and risks of group participation by assigned reading, lecture, live observation of groups and participation in experiential exercises in class
- To develop and demonstrate self-evaluation skills, writing skills, and critical thinking skills by completing written learning assessments
- To encourage the student's integration of theoretical and experiential learning by in class experiential exercises and completing written workbook responses

#### **Spiritual Formation:**

- To help students address issues of integration of psychology and Christian faith as they relate to secular group dynamic models.
- To explore the role and purpose of community life and participation in spiritual formation in class discussion
- Compare and contrast secular and Christian groups by attending meetings of each type in class discussion and written paper

#### **Sociocultural Responsiveness:**

- To foster increased competency in working with clients from diverse cultures by increasing student awareness and sensitivity to issues related to cultural diversity
- Participate in class discussion and exercises to increase awareness of individual and cultural diversity as well as areas of cultural encapsulation
- Articulate a growing understanding of the relationship between culture and the provision of counseling and how these issues can be effectively addressed within therapeutic groups

- Gain experience in exploring relevant cultural issues by conducting an interview with someone from a culture that is different from that of the student

**Professional Excellence:**

- To assist students in gaining the skills needed to lead a variety of groups.
- Gain exposure to community resources and group dynamics by attending two support groups
- Gain experience in clinical recording by preparing written reports of interview and group attendance assignments
- Practice counseling skills by completing responses to clinical vignettes in workbook
- Practice group participation and leadership skills in class exercises

**Responsible Stewardship:**

- To help students learn to use their talents, especially leadership skills, to assist others in need by utilizing group processes
- To demonstrate reflection on how best to use talents in written responses in workbook assignment

## TEXTS AND MATERIALS

**Required texts:**

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

Corey, G., Corey, M.S. & Haynes, R. (2006). *Groups in action: Evolution and challenges*. Thompson Brooks/Cole Publishing: Belmont, CA.

(Consists of workbook and DVD which are packaged together)

## STUDENT EVALUATION

Students in this course will be evaluated by the College's 4.0 grading system. You should refer to the Student Handbook for further details on the grading system.

The following criteria will be used in determining the student's grade:

<u>Assignment/Grading</u>	<u>Points</u>	<u>Date Due</u>
Multicultural Interview and Paper	150 points	Week 2
Participation and Reaction Paper Secular Group	125 points	Week 3
Participation and Reaction Paper Christian Group	125 points	Week 4
Process Analysis of Group Participation	100 points	Week 5
Groups in Action Workbook	300 points	Week 5
Attendance and Participation	200 points	Weeks 1-5
<b>TOTAL POINTS:</b>	1000 points	

## STUDENT EVALUATION

<u>Percentages</u>	<u>Points</u>	<u>Grade</u>	<u>Significance</u>	<u>GPA</u>
93-100%	930-1000	A	Exceptional	4.00
90-92.9%	900-929	A-		3.67
87-89.9%	870-899	B+		3.33
83-86.9%	830-869	B	Above Average	3.00
80-82.9%	800-829	B-		2.67
77-79.9%	770-799	C+		2.33
73-76.9%	730-769	C	Average	2.00
70-72.9%	700-729	C-		1.67
67-69.9%	670-699	D+		1.33
63-66.9%	630-669	D	Below Average	1.00
60-62.9%	600-629	D-		0.67
00-59.9%	000-599	F	Failure	0.00

## DESCRIPTION OF ASSIGNMENTS

**General Guidelines:** Papers are to be typed and to follow APA Guidelines. Papers require a title page, which, while numbered, is not to be counted in determining the length of the paper. They do not require an abstract. Because the papers involve expression of personal reactions and opinions, they may be written in the first person. They do not require additional references beyond the class texts. If additional references are used, they should be cited in the text and listed on a Reference Page.

**All papers should reflect and integrate your understanding of relevant concepts from assigned reading, class lecture, and discussion. Where appropriate, incorporate terms from the reading into your papers.** Papers will be graded on both content and quality of writing.

### **Multicultural Interview and Paper**

Length: 3 pages of content – This paper involves interviewing someone who comes from a cultural background different from your own, similar to an interview a counselor might conduct in doing a pre-group screening. The goals of this assignment include learning about another culture, having the experience of interviewing someone (unknown to you) about their culture, and reflecting on how their cultural background would impact their utilization of group counseling. It also involves reflecting on how your own cultural background might impact your work as a group counselor. A part of this assignment is to experience the normal anxiety that accompanies interviewing someone you don't know, so while it is ok to interview a "friend of a friend", don't interview someone with whom you have an established "comfort level".

This assignment is designed to give you practice in active listening skills, so there is no set list of questions to ask. Instead you will learn about the person you interview utilizing active listening skills such as encouraging, clarifying, restating, reflecting, summarizing, and validating. You will attempt to communicate genuineness, accurate empathy, and unconditional positive regard. You may begin by asking the person you interview to share with you about their experiences growing up in their culture. As appropriate, you may explore in what ways their culture is similar to/different from how they perceive the dominant culture in the U.S. What has been their experience in assimilation and in retaining their original cultural identity? Where do people normally seek help when they are experiencing problems? How is professional counseling viewed in their culture? Describe any insights you gain into the significance of your own cultural background on your preparation to work with others. This paper should summarize the interview from the perspectives of both content and process.

### **Guidelines for Group Attendance**

Two of the assignments for this class involve attending self-help groups in the community. The professor for this class will provide information about possible meetings. In selecting a meeting, students should be aware of the difference between "open" and "closed" meetings. Open meetings are, as the name implies, open to the public and designed to provide information to the public regarding the problem being addressed. Closed meetings are limited to those who identify as seeking help with the

problem being addressed. So, while anyone is welcome to attend an open meeting of Alcoholics Anonymous, only those who identify as having a problem with alcohol should attend a closed meeting. In either case, students should realize that for the purposes of this assignment, they are guests at the meeting. It would be inappropriate to do anything that would negatively impact the meeting such as taking notes or giving advice to the group members. The general guideline is that only those who identify as having the problem should share at a meeting (i.e. only share at an AA meeting if you identify as an alcoholic).

### **Participation and Reaction Paper (Secular Group):**

Length: 2 pages - Each student must attend one meeting of a self-help group (such as Alcoholics Anonymous, Overeaters Anonymous, Divorce Recovery Group, Bereavement Group, Single Parents Group, etc.). In your reaction paper, clearly identify the type of group you attended, date and location of the group, and what occurred in the group. Integrate terms from your reading of the text to describe your observations regarding group dynamics, group leadership, and the stage at which the group appears to be functioning. Discuss any dynamics you observe that may have been due to cultural influences from various members of the group. Your attendance must coincide with the five (5) weeks of this Group Dynamics Course.

### **Participation and Reaction Paper (Christian Group):**

Length: 2 pages - Each student must attend one meeting of a self-help group (such as Alcoholics Anonymous, Overeaters Anonymous, Divorce Recovery Group, Bereavement Group, Single Parents Group, etc.). In your reaction paper, clearly identify the type of group you attended, date and location of the group, what occurred in the group. Integrate terms from your reading of the text to describe your observations regarding group dynamics, group leadership, and the stage at which the group appears to be functioning. Discuss any dynamics you observe that may have been due to cultural influences from various members of the group. **Compare and contrast your attendance at the Christian oriented group with your experience of the secular oriented group.** Your attendance must coincide with the five (5) weeks of this Group Dynamics Course.

### **Process Analysis of Group Participation**

Length: 2 pages – Each student will integrate their academic and personal experience with group dynamics in a written paper. Apply your readings in group process to an analysis of your own experience in groups. Students may focus on their participation in group exercises during this class, but are also encouraged to consider your participation in other groups (i.e. work, church, community groups). Areas to consider may include your group leadership skills and style of leadership, your qualities as a group member, how you develop trust within a group, resistances you are aware of, etc. How has this course impacted the way you view and understand the groups in which you regularly participate?

**Groups in Action Workbook and DVD:**

**The DVD contains two programs: Evolution of a Group and Challenges Facing Group Leaders. FOR THIS CLASS, WE WILL BE DEALING WITH THE FIRST PROGRAM ONLY (EVOLUTION OF A GROUP). ALL ASSIGNMENTS REFER TO THE FIRST PROGRAM.**

It is recommended that the first time you view the DVD you view it in its entirety, approximately 2 hours. Then go back and view each section as outlined in the logistics chart, being sure to stop when the icon comes on the screen so you can read and complete the related sections in the student workbook. **Responses must be clear and legible.**

The purpose of the workbook is to gain group experience by putting yourself in the position of the group leader as well as that of the group members and articulating your response throughout the group. Complete all checklists and questions where you are given lines to write a response.

**\*The following special instructions apply to completing the workbook.**

For the Group Leadership Skills Checklist (pages 9 – 11)

- You do not need to write out answers.

For Questions for Discussion and Reflection (pages 15, 39, 57, and 75)

- Choose one of the questions and write a one-paragraph response.

**\*\*The completed workbook is due at the beginning of class on Week 5. (At the discretion of the professor, parts 1-3 of the workbook may be due on week 3.) Grading will be based on completeness of responses, including insight into client dynamics and understanding of the concept being addressed in the question.**

**Grading Policy:** Student grades are determined using the above formula. Papers **MUST** be typewritten (computers available on campus) and **MUST** be turned in on time. The **Groups in Action** Workbook is to be handwritten, and must be clear and legible to be graded. If a student anticipates an absence, arrangements must be made to send the assignment to the professor via e-mail, or by leaving the paper in the instructor's box. **SPS policy is that no late work is accepted. If, due to exceptional circumstances, a professor agrees to accept a late assignment, late points will be deducted as determined by the professor**

**Assignments Due by Week:****Week 1:****Groups: Process and Practice**

Read Introduction and Chapters 1, 2, and 3

**Groups in Action**

Read Pages 1-15

**Written work**

Complete Self-Inventory on page 16 of the workbook

**Week 2:****Groups: Process and Practice**

Read Chapters 4 and 5

**Groups in Action**

Watch entire first program: Evolution of a Group (2 hours)

Complete responses for Segments 1 and 2

**Written work**

Multicultural Interview Paper

**Week 3:****Groups: Process and Practice**

Read Chapter 6

**Groups in Action DVD and Workbook**

Review relevant portions of DVD and complete responses for Segment 3

**Written work**

Secular Group Reaction Paper

**Please note that the professor may collect Segments 1-3 of the workbook at this point.**

**Week 4:****Groups: Process and Practice**

Read Chapters 7 and 8

**Groups in Action DVD and Workbook**

Review relevant portions of DVD and complete responses for Segment 4

**Written work**

Christian Group Reaction Paper

**Week 5:****Groups: Process and Practice**

Read Chapters 9, 10, 11, and 12

**Groups in Action DVD and Workbook**

Review relevant portions of DVD and complete responses for Segment 5

**Written work**

Completed workbook due

Process Analysis of Group Participation due

**LOGISTICS CHART**

Hour	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Week 5
1	<b>Introduction to Group Dynamics:</b> Group Dynamics Perspectives and Course Overview	<b>Discussion:</b> Multicultural Papers  <b>Introduction to Group Dynamics:</b> Ethical and Professional Issues in Group Practice	<b>Discussion:</b> Papers on Secular Group Visit	<b>Discussion:</b> Papers on Christian Group Visit	<b>Stages of Groups:</b> Final Stage
2	<b>Introduction to Group Dynamics:</b> Different Types of Groups and Group Counseling Theoretical Orientations	<b>Leadership Issues for Groups:</b> Characteristics of Leaders Leadership Skills	<b>Stages of Groups:</b> Initial Stage Group Processes	<b>Stages of Groups:</b> Experiential Exercises on Group Transition Stage	<b>Stages of Groups:</b> Experiential Exercises on the Final Stage of Groups
3	<b>Introduction to Group Dynamics:</b> Multicultural Contexts for Groups	<b>Stages of Groups:</b> Pre-group Screening and Forming a Group Group Goals	<b>Stages of Groups:</b> Experiential Exercises on Initial Stage Group Processes	<b>Stages of Groups:</b> Working Stage	<b>Specific Groups:</b> Children Adolescents Adults Older Adults
4	<b>Introduction to Group Dynamics:</b> Explanation of how to use DVD and view 1/2 of first segment	<b>Stages of Groups:</b> Experiential Exercises on Beginning a Group	<b>Stages of Groups:</b> Transition Stage	<b>Stages of Groups:</b> Experiential Exercises on Working Stage of a Group	<b>Discussion:</b> Process Analysis of Group Participation Paper <b>Course Evaluation</b>

**WEEK ONE****TOPICS:*****Introduction to Group Dynamics***

*Overview of course expectations and assignments*

*Introduction to Different Types of Groups*

*Group Theoretical Orientations*

*A Multicultural Perspective on Group Work*

*Groups in Action Workbook Introduction*

**ASSIGNMENTS:**

Read ***Groups: Process and Practice***, Introduction, Chapters 1, 2, and 3

Read ***Groups in Action***: Read pages 1-16 and complete Self-Inventory on page 16 of the workbook

## LECTURE OUTLINE

### **I. INTRODUCTION TO GROUP DYNAMICS**

#### **1. Different Types of Groups**

- a. *Task Groups*
  
- b. *Psychoeducational Groups*
  
- c. *Counseling Groups*
  
- d. *Psychotherapy Groups*
  
- e. *Brief Groups*
  
- f. *Growth Group*
  
- g. *Support Groups*

**INTRODUCTION TO GROUP DYNAMICS****2. Theoretical Orientations**

- a. *Psychoanalytic Approach to Groups*
- b. *Adlerian Group Counseling*
- c. *Psychodrama*
- d. *Existential Approach to Groups*
- e. *Person-Centered Approach to Groups*
- f. *Gestalt Group Therapy*
- g. *Behavioral Group Therapy*
- h. *Cognitive-Behavioral Group Therapy*
- i. *Reality Therapy in Groups*

**3. Common factors to all therapeutic groups (Yalom)**

### **III. INTRODUCTION TO GROUP DYNAMICS**

#### **1. MULTICULTURAL ISSUES**

### **IV. INTRODUCTION TO GROUP DYNAMICS** *Introduction to the Groups in Action DVD*

**WEEK TWO**

**TOPICS:**

- Discussion: Multicultural Interview and Paper***
- Ethical and Professional Issues in Group Practice***
- Characteristics of Leaders***
- Leadership Skills***
- Stages of Groups***
  - Pre-group Screening*
  - Forming a Group*
  - Experiential Exercises*

**ASSIGNMENTS:**

Read ***Groups: Process and Practice***,  
Chapters 4 – Forming a Group and  
Chapter 5 – Initial Stage of a Group.

**View the entire first program of the Groups in Action  
DVD: Evolution of a Group (2 hours)**

Read and complete ***Groups in Action: Segments 1 and 2  
of workbook***

**Paper Due: Multicultural Interview and Paper**

## LECTURE OUTLINE

### **I. DISCUSSION**

- 1. *Multicultural Papers***
- 2. *Becoming a diversity competent counselor***

### **II. ETHICAL ISSUES (Chapter 3, which students read for week 1)**

- 1. *Ethical issues in group membership***
  - a. *Informed consent***
  - b. *Involuntary membership***
  - c. *Freedom to withdraw from group***
  - d. *Psychological risks***
- 2. *Confidentiality***
- 3. *Use and abuse of group techniques***
- 4. *The role of the leader's values***
- 5. *Diversity issues***
- 6. *Technology***
- 7. *Competence and training***
- 8. *Guidelines***

**III LEADERSHIP ISSUES FOR GROUPS (Chapter 2, which students read for week 1)**

**1. Characteristics of an Effective Leader**

**2. Leadership Skills**

### **III. STAGES OF GROUP WORK**

#### ***Overview of group stages***

- ***Pregroup***
- ***Initial***
- ***Transition***
- ***Working***
- ***Final***

### **IV. STAGES OF GROUP WORK**

#### ***Forming a Group***

#### ***Experiential Exercises on Beginning a Group***

**WEEK THREE****TOPICS:*****Discussion – Secular Group Experience  
Stages of Groups****Initial Stage Group Processes**Experiential Exercises on Initial Stage Group  
Processes**The Transition Stage***ASSIGNMENTS:**

Read ***Groups: Process and Practice***,  
Chapters 6 – Transition Stage of a Group

View Segment 3 (Transition stage) of the ***Groups in Action***  
DVD, stopping when icons appear to reflect and respond to  
the questions.

Read Segment 3 of the workbook and respond to all  
questions

Print or write legibly.

**At discretion of professor, parts 1-3 of the workbook  
may be due week 3.**

Reaction **Paper Due:**

Experience of a Group Process (Secular Group)

## LECTURE OUTLINE

### ***I. Discussion***

***Discussion of Papers – Secular group experience***

### ***II. STAGES OF GROUP WORK***

***1. Initial Stage Group Processes***

***2. Experiential Exercises on Initial Stage Group Processes***

### ***III. Stages of Groups***

#### ***1. Transition Stage***

**WEEK FOUR****TOPICS:*****Discussion – Christian Group Experience  
Stages of Groups***

*Experiential Exercises on Group: Transition Stage  
Working Stage Group Processes  
Experiential Exercises on Working Stage Group  
Processes*

**ASSIGNMENTS:**

Read ***Groups: Process and Practice***,  
Chapters 7 – Working Stage of a Group  
Read Chapter 8 – Final Stage of a Group

View Segment 4 of the ***Groups in Action DVD***, stopping  
when icons appear to reflect and respond to the questions.  
Read segment 4 of the workbook and respond to all  
questions  
Print or write legibly.

**Reaction Paper Due:**

Experience of a Group Process (Christian Orientation  
Group):

## LECTURE OUTLINE

### ***I. Discussion:***

***Discussion of papers – Christian group experience.***

### ***II. Stages of Groups***

***Experiential Exercises on Group: Transition Stage***

### ***III. Stages of Groups***

***Working Stage Processes***

***Experiential Exercises on the Working Stage of a group***

**WEEK FIVE****TOPICS:*****Stages of Groups****The Final Stage**Experiential Exercises on Final Stage Group**Processes****Special Groups:****Children**Adolescents**Adults**Elderly***ASSIGNMENTS:**Read ***Groups: Process and Practice***,

Read Chapters 9, 10, 11, and 12

Chapter 9 – Groups for Children

Chapter 10 – Groups for Adolescents

Chapter 11 – Groups for Adults

Chapter 12 – Groups for Older Adults

View Part 5 of the ***Groups in Action DVD***, stopping when icons appear to reflect and respond to the questions.Read ***Groups in Action:***

Part 5: The Ending Stage

Answer all the questions for Part 5 in your workbook.

Print or write legibly.

**Student Workbook: Groups in Action (First Program: Evolution of a Group) Due****\*Workbook must be completed and turned into the instructor during this final class period for evaluation.****Process Analysis of Group Participation Due**

## LECTURE OUTLINE

### ***I. Stages of Groups***

#### ***1. Final Stage***

#### ***2. Experiential Exercises on the Ending Stage of Groups***

## ***II. Specific Groups***

### ***1. Children***

### ***2. Adolescents***

### ***3. Adults***

### ***4. Older Adults***