

**SOCIAL WORK 361: Groups and Families**

**3 credits**

**Spring 2022**

**Monday 6 PM to 8:50 PM**

**North Hall 241**

**Instructor:** Kate Kipp, MSSW, APSW

**Office:** Main campus: Science Building, B343  
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**Office Hours:** Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays: 10 AM to 2 PM\*  
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**Email:** [kkipp@uwsp.edu](mailto:kkipp@uwsp.edu)

**Course Pre-Requisites:** Sociology 261, Sociology 101 and acceptance to the social work program.

**Required Text:**

Toseland, R. & Rivas, R. (2017). *An Introduction to Group Work Practice*, 8<sup>th</sup> Edition.  
Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

**Web Site:** NASW Code of Ethics

<https://www.socialworkers.org/About/Ethics/Code-of-Ethics/Code-of-Ethics-English>

**Community (including Student) Rights & Responsibilities Website:**

[https://www.uwsp.edu/dos/Documents/2015\\_Aug\\_Community%20Rights%20and%20Responsibilities%20Web.pdf](https://www.uwsp.edu/dos/Documents/2015_Aug_Community%20Rights%20and%20Responsibilities%20Web.pdf)

**I. Course Description**

This course is designed to help students learn the basic issues and key concepts associated with the group process and how to apply these concepts as group facilitators working with a variety of group types. Basic theories of social work practice with groups will be explored, and students will learn to develop a group and prepare for all phases of group work practice. Throughout this course, emphasis will be placed on social work ethics and values, as well as how elements of diversity impact social work practice.

**II. CSWE Core Competencies & Practice Behaviors Taught in this Course**

The following table contains the competencies and practice behaviors developed by the Council of Social Work Education (CWSE). When we intentionally teach and employ the competencies and behaviors through lecture, discussion, independent and group projects, research, and practice; we are becoming ethical, skilled, and empowering social workers. The competence and behaviors we will address as a class are in the table below. The table below does NOT contain all CWSW practice behaviors, only those applicable to our coursework.

<b>Competencies Addressed</b>	<b>Practice Behaviors Addressed</b>	<b>Content Area(s)</b>
Competency 1: Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior	• Make ethical decisions by applying the standards of the NASW Code of Ethics, relevant laws and regulations, models	Weeks 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10

	<p>for ethical decision-making, ethical conduct of research, and additional codes of ethics as appropriate to context;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• use reflection and self-regulation to manage personal values and maintain professionalism in practice situations;</li> <li>• demonstrate professional demeanor in behavior; appearance; and oral, written, and electronic communication; and</li> <li>• use technology ethically and appropriately to facilitate practice outcomes.</li> </ul>	<p>Project: SGOP* GP** EGP</p>
Competency 2: Engage Diversity and Difference in Practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Apply and communicate understanding of the importance of diversity and difference in shaping life experiences in practice at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels;</li> <li>• present themselves as learners and engage clients and constituencies as experts of their own experiences; and</li> <li>• apply self-awareness and self-regulation to manage the influence of personal biases and values in working with diverse clients and constituencies.</li> </ul>	Week 3
Competency 3: Advance Human Rights and Social, Economic, and Environmental Justice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Apply an understanding of social, economic, and environmental justice to advocate for human rights at the individual and system levels; and</li> <li>• engage in practices that advance social, economic, and environmental justice.</li> </ul>	
Competency 4: Engage in Practice-informed Research and Research-informed Practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use practice experience and theory to inform scientific inquiry and research;</li> <li>• apply critical thinking to engage in analysis of quantitative and qualitative research methods and research findings; and</li> <li>• use and translate research evidence to inform and improve practice, policy, and service delivery.</li> </ul>	<p>Week 9</p> <p>Project: GP</p>
Competency 5: Engage in Policy Practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify social policy at the local, state, and federal level that impacts well-being, service delivery, and access to social services;</li> <li>• assess how social welfare and economic policies impact the delivery of and access to social services; and</li> <li>• apply critical thinking to analyze, formulate, and advocate for policies that advance human rights and social, economic, and environmental justice.</li> </ul>	
Competency 6: Engage with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks to engage with clients and constituencies; and</li> <li>• use empathy, reflection, and interpersonal skills to effectively engage diverse clients and constituencies.</li> </ul>	<p>Weeks 1, 4, 5, 10, 11, 12</p> <p>Project: GP EGP</p>
Competency 7: Assess Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collect and organize data, and apply critical thinking to interpret information from clients and constituencies;</li> <li>• apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks in the analysis of assessment data from clients and constituencies; and</li> <li>• select appropriate intervention strategies based on the assessment, research knowledge, and values and preferences of clients and constituencies.</li> </ul>	<p>Weeks 2, 6, 11, 13</p> <p>Project: GP TGOP</p>

Competency 8: Intervene with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Critically choose and implement interventions to achieve practice goals and enhance capacities of clients and constituencies;</li> <li>• apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks in interventions with clients and constituencies;</li> <li>• use inter-professional collaboration as appropriate to achieve beneficial practice outcomes; and</li> <li>• negotiate, mediate, and advocate with and on behalf of diverse clients and constituencies;</li> </ul>	Weeks 2, 3, 7, 14  Project: TGOP GP EGP
Competency 9: Evaluate Practice with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Select and use appropriate methods for evaluation of outcomes;</li> <li>• apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks in the evaluation of outcomes;</li> <li>• critically analyze, monitor, and evaluate intervention and program processes and outcomes; and</li> <li>• apply evaluation findings to improve practice effectiveness at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels</li> </ul>	Weeks 8, 9, 15  Project: GP EGP
* Task Group Observation Project (SGOP) **Group Curriculum Project (GP) % Experiential Group Papers (EGP)		
Source: Council on Social Work Education <a href="https://www.cswe.org/getattachment/Accreditation/Accreditation-Process/2015-EPAS/2015EPAS_Web_FINAL.pdf.aspx">https://www.cswe.org/getattachment/Accreditation/Accreditation-Process/2015-EPAS/2015EPAS_Web_FINAL.pdf.aspx</a>		

### **III. Course Content**

#### **Class Format:**

The course format will include lecture, class discussion and group facilitation exercised. Students will work in small groups to assess and critically analyze presented information. Students will be required to apply existing knowledge, integrate new concepts and to critically think.

#### **Course Requirements:**

- |    |                               |            |
|----|-------------------------------|------------|
| 1. | Film Response Discussion      | 25 points  |
| 2. | Attendance and participation  | 160 points |
| 3. | Task Group Observation Papers | 150 points |
| 4. | Experiential Group Papers     | 100 points |
| 5. | Final Exam                    | 100 points |

#### **Attendance & Participation:**

Students are expected to attend all days the class is scheduled to meet. The instructor will also take attendance at the beginning of each class.

Excused absences are limited to documentable illnesses, personal or family emergency, or religious observation during class hours.

For any absence, a student is required to:

- Notify the instructor PRIOR to class. If this is impossible, a student must email the instructor as soon as possible to explain what happened.
- Read all readings and review the PowerPoint for the missed class.
- Students must take initiative to ask questions to understand class content for the missed class.

For any unexcused absence, a student will not receive attendance points (20 points) for the missed class. Students who arrive to class late will receive partial attendance points.

**Course Assignments:**

There are five graded assignments in this course. There is a final exam.

**Grading Scale:**

A	=	94-100	significantly above requirements
A-	=	91-93	
B+	=	88-90	
B	=	84-87	above basic requirements
B-	=	81-83	
C+	=	78-80	
C	=	74-77	meets basic requirements
C-	=	71-73	
D+	=	68-70	
D	=	60-67	below requirements
F	=	59 and below	No credit

**Course Assignments:**

- Work will be graded on the depth of the content, consideration of social work principles, **development of ideas**, spelling and grammar.
- Professional language will be used.
- All references must appear in a reference list at the end of the paper. APA style must be used to cite within paper.
- **Assignments are due on time.**

**Confidentiality:**

We will respect the stories, concerns, comments and questions shared in the classroom by not taking them out of the classroom. We will maintain a professional standard of confidentiality in our classroom.

**Ground Rules for Class Participation:**

We will foster a learning atmosphere where each person is valued and is safe to communicate freely. We will communicate in a constructive and thoughtful manner which is free of harassment and threat. We will commit to work through conflicts should any occur, without blame or intimidation. We will set additional rules and expectations as a class.

**IV. Course Policies**

**Support for Students Requiring ADA Accommodations**

UWSP and this instructor support a student's need to request academic accommodations due to disabilities. Please inform me during the first week of semester of any special accommodations a student believes will be needed for meeting class expectations. A copy of the Accommodation Request Form from the Disability and

Assistive Technology Center must be given to the instructor within the first two week of the semester so that any needed accommodations can be made. Accommodations will not be made without a completed Accommodation Request Form. Additional information can be gathered from the Center: <https://www.uwsp.edu/disability/Pages/faculty/accomodations.aspx>

### **Attendance Policy**

Again, this course is professional training for which the student has committed the student to attend. Students are expected to attend all days the class is scheduled to meet.

Excused absences are limited to documentable illnesses, personal or family emergency, or religious observation during class hours.

For any unexcused absence, a student will not receive attendance points for the missed class.

### **Assignment Policy for Late Papers and Incompletes:**

Students are expected to complete course work by the date and time that it is due. The instructor will check the Dropbox to determine that if work was submitted the required due date/time. The instructor will NOT grade late work that is submitted to Canvas unless an alternate due date has been negotiated. Students are responsible to contact the instructor to negotiate an alternate date. The instructor will determine if an alternate due date is appropriate. **Students who send an email seeking an extension for an assignment due the same day are unlikely to receive an extension.**

An incomplete may be given only when the student has been in full attendance, has demonstrated satisfactory work (C level work or better), and can furnish evidence to the instructor the work cannot be completed due to illness or other reasonable circumstances beyond the student's control.

### **Plagiarism:**

It is a requirement that all work *not* original will be properly referenced. Students MUST CITE ANY AND ALL work which is not of a student's creation. Plagiarism will result in disciplinary action and will not be tolerated. Academic honesty is a foundation principle for personal and academic development. All University policies regarding academic honesty apply to this course. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, cheating or copying, plagiarism (claiming credit for the words or works of another from any type of source such as print, Internet or electronic database, or failing to cite the source), fabricating information or citations, facilitating acts of academic dishonesty by others, having unauthorized possession of examinations, submitting work of another person or work previously used without informing the instructor, or tampering with the academic work of other students.

### **Confidentiality:**

We will respect the stories, concerns, comments and questions shared in the classroom by not taking them out of the classroom. We will maintain a professional standard of confidentiality in our classroom. Our classroom is a safe place for learning, inquiring, and expression.

### **Professional Communication**

Students will utilize professional writing skills when communicating with the instructor by email. Professional communication via email includes: an email with a greeting and closing, spell check, and grammar review.

Students who send emails that are received between 8 AM and 4:30 PM, Monday through Friday, can expect a response by the close of the following business day. The instructor will not check emails after 4:30 PM on weekdays or during the weekend.

## V. Course Outline

<p>Week 1 01/24/2022</p>	<p><u>We will explore:</u> Introduction to the course Review syllabus &amp; review class expectations</p> <p>Introduction to Group Work <u>Readings:</u> Chapter 1</p>
<p>Asynchronous portion of Week 1</p>	<p><b><i>About Men: A Portrait of a Men’s Support Group by Maja Bugge (2013)</i></b></p> <p><u>Recorded Content:</u> Historical and theoretical developments</p> <p><u>Readings:</u> Chapter 2</p>
<p>Week 2 01/31/2022</p>	<p><u>We will explore:</u> Understanding Group Dynamics <b><i>About Men: A Portrait of a Men’s Support Group graded discussion on 01/31/2022</i></b></p> <p><u>Readings:</u> Chapter 3</p>
<p>Asynchronous portion of Week 2</p>	<p><u>Recorded Content:</u> Understanding Group Dynamics</p> <p>Experiential Group Exercise (1:7)</p> <p><u>Readings</u> Chapter 3</p>
<p>Week 3 02/07/2022</p>	<p><u>We will explore:</u> Leadership</p> <p><u>Readings:</u> Chapter 4</p>
<p>Asynchronous portion of Week 3</p>	<p><u>Recorded Content:</u> Leadership and Inclusivity</p> <p>Experiential Group (2:7)</p> <p><u>Readings:</u> Chapter 5</p>
<p>Week 4 02/14/2022</p>	<p><u>We will explore:</u> Planning the group</p> <p><u>Readings:</u></p>

	Chapter 6
Asynchronous portion of Week 3	<u>Recorded Content:</u> The group begins Experiential Group Exercises (3:7)  <u>Readings:</u> Chapter 7
Week 5 02/21/2022	<u>We will explore:</u> The group begins  <u>Readings:</u> Chapter 8
Asynchronous portion of Week 5	<u>Recorded Content:</u> Assessment Treatment Group: Foundation Methods  Experiential Group Exercises (4:7)  <u>Readings:</u> Chapter 9
Week 6 02/28/2022	<u>We will explore:</u> Assessment Treatment Groups: Foundation Methods Treatment Groups: Specialized Methods  <u>Readings:</u> Chapter 10
Asynchronous portion of Week 6	<u>Recorded Content:</u> Treatment Groups: Specialized Methods  Experiential Group Exercises (5:7)  <u>Readings:</u> Chapter 11
Week 7 03/07/2022	<u>We will explore:</u> Ending the group's work  <u>Readings:</u> Chapter 12

Asynchronous portion of Week 7	<u>Recorded Content:</u> Task Group: Foundation Methods  Experiential Group Exercises (6:7)  <u>Readings:</u> Chapter 13
Week 8 03/14/2022	<u>We will explore:</u> Evaluation  <u>Readings:</u> Chapter 14 <b>Experiential Group Exercise Papers due: 12/10/2021</b>
Asynchronous portion of Week 8	<u>Recorded Content:</u> Wrap up course content  Wrap up Experiential Group Exercises (7:7)
<b>Final Exam</b>	Exam will open Wednesday, March 16, 2022, and close at 11:59 PM on Friday, March 18, 2022.

## VII. Course Projects

### A: Film Response Discussion (25 points)

To ensure we all have a basic understanding of the function and process of groups, you will be required to watch a documentary and write a response/reflection paper on the content of the film. Please watch the following documentary: *About Men: A Portrait of a Men's Support Group* by Maja Bugge (2013).

You will need to receive access to the documentary by finding our university. You are not required to set up an account, you may skip the account set up and watch the film. The film is seventy-one minutes long. The link to Kanopy is:

<https://uwsp.kanopy.com/>

After watching the film, write two discussions questions. Questions to consider include:

- What did you like/not like about the leadership of the group?
- Level of formality/style of relating to group members
- Interventions/approaches observed
- Boundary or ethical concerns
- Level of inclusivity

On Monday, January 31, 2021, you will be placed in your group. Each person in the group will take a turn to ask their questions and facilitate a short group discussion based on the questions. You will complete a self and group assessment of your discussion. The assessment will be GRADED (25 points).

The goal of this assignment is to understand and reflect on your current level of group skills.

## **B: Task Group Observation & Analysis Papers** **50 points each/150 points for all three papers**

**Attend THREE different open (task group) meetings of interest to you.** Make sure it is appropriate for you to attend the meeting. If you are uncertain, call/email ahead to confirm new members/visitors are welcome. When you call, present yourself professionally. Indicate this is for a class assignment. Indicate you will be writing a paper about the group process and NOT about the specific information shared in the group.

Inform the group of your purpose for being there, if needed. Again, disclose that you will write a paper on the process of the group and NOT about the specific information shared in the group. Feel free to participate if appropriate.

Meetings cannot include meetings you facilitate or attend as a current participant. Meetings may be in person or online. Meetings can be synchronous or previously recorded.

Write a two to three paper about this experience. **Please include each of the meeting's agendas.**

Your paper should contain:

- Your preparation for the task group
- A description of the group, including:
  - purpose and type of the group
  - diversity within the group and how it was attended to
- A discussion of the group dynamics observed, including:
  - Communication
  - Cohesion
  - Social control
  - Group culture
- Impact of new members on the group (you are a new member)
- A discussion of the leadership of the group, including:
  - level of formality/style of relating to group members
  - interventions/approaches observed
  - your assessment of the leader's skill in using the interventions/approaches
- A response to each of the following questions:
  - How did you feel as an attendee at the meeting?
  - What aspects of the meeting did you like?
  - What suggestions for improvement would you make?

**You will attend three different meetings and write three papers using the aforementioned criteria.**

## **C. Experiential Group Exercise Papers: Papers I, II 50 points each**

Beginning in Week I, you will be placed in a group with six other students. You and your group mates will practice utilizing your group facilitation skills over the course of seven weeks. You will be assigned one week to facilitate, and you will be a participant in the remaining six weeks. **I will provide you the curriculum for the group. You will receive the content one week prior to your facilitation week.**

### Facilitation Paper (50 points)

After you facilitate your week, you will then write an Experiential Group Exercise Paper. Your paper should be three to four full pages and should answer the following questions:

- Pre-group planning: How did you prepare for the facilitation?
  - Think about your facilitation for the Film Response Discussion—what skills have you developed since then? What improved? What is still challenging?
- What group skills and techniques (listening, linking, etc.) did you use successfully and/or unsuccessfully.
- Describe your leadership style and how it did (or did not) work with the group dynamics.
- Discuss focus, time management, and significance in facilitation.
- Discuss your management of potential conflict or difficult members.
- Reflect on the overall experience—what was harder than you anticipated? What was easier? What did you encounter that you were not expecting?

### Participation Paper (50 points)

Reflect on a several weeks when you were a group participant. Write a two to three full page paper answering the following questions:

- How did you contribute to the group's work?
- What made it easy or difficult to participate?
- What group dynamics impacted your participation in the group.
- How did the facilitator's leadership style impact the group?
- What can you take from this experience to be a better facilitator? Or help clients prepare for a group experience?