



**THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT ARLINGTON**

**School of Social Work**

**Semester/Year:** Spring 2016

**Course Title:** Group Dynamics and Social Work Practice

**Course Prefix/Number/Section:** SOCW 6312-001

**Instructor Name:** Bruce Bower, MSW, LCSW

**Faculty Position:** Assistant Professor in Practice

**Faculty Profile:** N/A

**Office Number:** 201A

**Phone Number:** N/A

**Email Address:** bower@uta.edu

**Office Hours:** Mon 2:00 to 5:00 PM; Thur. 9:00 AM to noon

**Day and Time of Class (if applicable):** Thursday, from 7:00 to 9:50 PM

**Location:** SWCA 219

Equipment: A laptop computer with wireless capability or equivalent is required for all SSW classes.  
Blackboard: <https://elearn.uta.edu/webapps/login/>

**A. Catalog Course Description/Special Requirements (Prerequisites/Out of Class Meetings):**

Examines contemporary social-psychological concepts and small group research, with a view to testing their applicability to practice propositions and operational principles, in work with both task and personality satisfaction groups. Prerequisite: SOCW 6325; SOCW 6326 or concurrent enrollment; or SOCW 6336 or concurrent enrollment. **B. Measurable Student Learning Outcomes:**

**EPAS core competencies and related advanced practice behaviors addressed in this course:**

**Educational Policy 2.1.1—Identify as a professional social worker and conduct oneself accordingly.**

1. Advanced social workers in DPMH practice active self -reflection and continue to address personal bias and stereotypes to build knowledge and dispel myths regarding mental health and mental illness.
2. Advanced social workers in DPMH develop an action plan for continued growth including use of continuing education, supervision, and consultation.

**Educational Policy 2.1.2—Apply social work ethical principles to guide professional practice.**

1. Advanced social workers in DPMH implement an effective decision-making strategy for deciphering ethical dilemmas in mental health treatment.

**Educational Policy 2.1.3—Apply critical thinking to inform and communicate professional judgments.**

1. Advanced social workers in DPMH evaluate, select and implement appropriate assessment and treatment approaches to the unique characteristics and needs of diverse clients.

**Educational Policy 2.1.4—Engage diversity and difference in practice.**

1. Advanced social workers in DPMH understand and can apply the relevant cultural, class, gender, race, age, disability, and other diversity issues that influence the prognosis and treatment of persons with severe and persistent mental illness and substance use disorders, persons with other mental health issues, and persons with psychiatric disabilities, and their families and communities. They can relate social work perspectives, the evidence base, and related theories to practice with these groups.

**Educational Policy 2.1.6—Engage in research-informed practice and practice-informed research.**

1. Advanced social workers in DPMH use advanced strategies to search, appraise, and select for application the most up to date evidence and evolving practice guidelines in the assessment and intervention with influence persons with severe and persistent mental illness and substance use disorders, persons with other mental health issues, and persons with psychiatric disabilities, and their families and communities.

**Educational Policy 2.1.10(a)–(d)—Engage, assess, intervene, and evaluate with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.**

**Educational Policy 2.1.10(a)—Engagement**

1. Advanced social workers in CAP utilize basic social work skills in working with organizations and communities that foster collaborations.
2. Advanced social workers in DPMHSA use strategies to establish a sense of safety for a collaborative therapeutic relationship.
3. They know how mental health concerns and mental illness influence the development of the helping relationship.
4. Advanced social workers in Children and Families effectively use interpersonal skills to engage children and families in a collaborative therapeutic relationship.

**Educational Policy 2.1.10(b)—Assessment**

1. Advanced in CAP use existing or develop community assessments in choosing or developing appropriate intervention strategies.
2. Advanced social workers in DPMHSA will be able to describe the structure of the DSM IV and conduct an assessment using the DSM criteria and structure.
3. Advanced social workers in Children and Families use multidimensional bio-psycho-social-spiritual assessment tools.
4. They assess clients' readiness for change and coping strategies.

**Educational Policy 2.1.10(c)—Intervention**

1. Advanced social workers in CAP implement community intervention strategies to achieve organizational goals, enhance client capacities, resolve problems, and advocate for clients.
2. Advanced social workers in DPMHSA describe causes (empirically validated and theoretical), advanced assessment methods, and the most effective treatments for a variety of disorders: Mood, anxiety, cognitive, substance abuse, sexual, eating, psychotic disorders for adolescents, adults, and older adults.
3. Advanced social workers in DPMHSA recognize the impact of illness phase-specific and treatment-phase-specific transitions and stressful life events throughout the individual's and family's life course; identify issues

related to losses, stressors, changes, and transitions over their life cycle in designing theoretically based interventions and treatment.

4. Advanced social workers in Children and Families describe causes (empirically validated and theoretical), advanced assessment methods, and the most effective interventions treatments for a variety of problems that effect children and families.
5. Advanced social workers in Children and Families recognize the impact of stressful life events (losses, stressors, changes, and transitions) throughout the individual's and family's life course.
6. Advanced social workers in Children and Families demonstrate the use of appropriate clinical techniques for a range of presenting concerns identified in the assessment, including crisis intervention strategies as needed.

#### **Educational Policy 2.1.10(d)—Evaluation**

1. Social workers critically analyze, monitor, and evaluate interventions.
2. Advanced social workers in CAP evaluate programs and use professional judgment to improve and enhance program outcomes.
3. Advanced social workers in children and families contribute to the theoretical knowledge base in the area of children and families through practice-based research, and use evaluation of the process and/or outcomes to develop best practices with children and families.
4. Advanced social workers in DPMHSA contribute to the theoretical knowledge base in the area of mental health and mental illness through practice-based research, and use evaluation of the process and/or outcomes to develop best practices.

#### **Upon completion of this course, the participant will be able to:**

1. Demonstrate knowledge and skill in social group work practice, including the ability to identify, evaluate and apply small group theory and research findings to the analysis of groups. Selected theoretical and empirical orientations can be related to ways in which (1) individuals affect group process, (2) group affects individual behaviors, (3) group influences group processes, and (4) the interactional effect of group and individual exchanges on the group process, and on individual change. EPAS 2.1.6, 2.1.10
2. Complete multidimensional, biopsychosocial assessments with client systems and groups, taking into account client strengths, diversity and social justice. EPAS 2.1.10 a-b
3. Develop and apply appropriate, evidence-informed, empowerment-based intervention plans. EPAS 2.1.10 c-d
4. Critically analyze theoretical models of practice to challenge societal oppression and discrimination, as well as for decision-making in practice, including demonstration of an understanding of race, gender, sexual orientation, ability, culture, and other client characteristics, in conducting culturally sensitive, competent, and ethical social work practice. EPAS 2.1.1, 2.1.2, 2.1.3, 2.1.4
5. Demonstrate the ability to evaluate practice activities by use of outcome and process techniques, using the results to modify practice. EPAS 2.1.10 e
6. Develop the ability to translate theoretical and empirical knowledge into practice principles and techniques for understanding, analyzing and implementing systematic planned change in groups, and through groups. EPAS 2.1.10
7. Acquire through simulations and role-playing, a beginning competence in group leadership skills, and experience how role in groups affects individual status, learning to use feedback in group communication and communicate with clarity in receiving and giving feedback. EPAS 2.1.10

#### **C. Required Text(s) and Other Course Materials:**

Toseland, R. W. & Rivas, R. F. (2012). An introduction to group work practice (7th ed.) Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon.

*Clinical Evidence* and *Best Practice* e-databases: The developing evidentiary base on group interventions contained in the Central Library e-databases *Clinical Evidence* and *Best Practice* will serve as another set of required “texts” in this course.

Online and instructional handout materials and readings as assigned (See Blackboard).

**D. Additional Recommended Text(s) and Other Course Materials: N/A**

**E. Major Course Assignments & Examinations:**

The assignment requirements for this course are divided into two parts:

1) Exams, a midterm and final;

The exams are discrete in that they only cover the material from the preceding weeks. They will be posted on Blackboard for a limited time, and then closed. If you do not complete the exams in time, you will receive whatever grade you earn for the questions completed.

2) Group experience and journal pages;

This course has a strong experiential component. At the beginning of the semester you will be divided into three smaller groups. These smaller groups will meet for twelve (12) sessions during the semester, all on the same day as the class, one from 5:00 to 5:50 PM, the second from 6:00 to 6:50 PM, and the third from 9:00 to 9:50 PM. The place will be determined during the first class. Please note also, that for those weeks where you will be attending the experiential group, the lectures will only be two hours in length; the total time spent in classroom activities will remain three hours each week. I will make every effort to accommodate your schedules as much as possible. The times throughout the semester are listed in the course outline.

You will receive a handout consisting on the group rules, and a group contract. You will need to submit the signed copy before the start of the group sessions.

The journal pages are to consist of your own impressions of the experience and need to include the following information:

- The date of the session
- A brief synopsis of what was discussed
- The stage(s) the group appeared to be in
- In one sentence, the overall theme of the session
- Your overall impressions of the session

**Dates are as follows:**

Midterm exam: March 11 @ 11:58 PM

Final exam: May 06 @ 11:58 PM

Journal pages:

- Feb 04
- Feb 11
- Feb 18
- Feb 25
- Mar 03
- Mar 10
- Mar 24
- Mar 31
- Apr 07
- Apr 14

Apr 21  
Apr 28

## F. Grading Policy

All journal entries must be grammatically correct using APA style. **Course grades will be determined by your performance in the following areas:**

Midterm exam	20%
Final exam	20%
Journal pages: 12 @ 5% each	60%
Total:	100%

Final grades are as listed in the University catalog:

90 – 100%	=	A (4.0)
80 – 89 %	=	B (3.0)
70 – 79%	=	C (2.0)
60 – 69 %	=	D (1.0)
59 or below	=	F (0.0)

**Note: At course completion grades cannot be reported by email. Official grades will be posted by the University in MyMav on the date for posting. Exams and assignments are retained by the instructor.**

Students are expected to keep track of their performance throughout the semester and seek guidance from available sources (including the instructor) if their performance drops below satisfactory levels; see "Student Support Services," below.

## G. Make-Up Exam or Assignment Policy:

There will be no make-up assignments for this course. *No Incomplete grades will be given in this class.*

## H. Attendance Policy:

At The University of Texas at Arlington, taking attendance is not required. Rather, each faculty member is free to develop his or her own methods of evaluating students' academic performance, which includes establishing course-specific policies on attendance. As the instructor of this section, I expect that you attend class and participate in class discussion, in particular during the group experience sessions. During the lectures a sign-in sheet will be circulated, and your participation will be evaluated on that basis; it is only possible to participate if you are in class. Participation in the group experience sessions will be based on the journal pages submitted the following week.

## I. Course Schedule:

<u>Date</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Readings</u>
January 21 (Week 1)	Introductions	None
January 28 (Week 2)	Group work and Group Types Defined [Group session #1]	Toseland and Rivas, Ch. 1
February 04 (Week 3)	History of Group Work In Social Work [Group session #2]	Toseland and Rivas, Ch. 2
February 11 (Week 4)	Introduction to Group Dynamics [Group session #3]	Toseland and Rivas, Ch. 3
February 18 (Week 5)	Group Leadership [Group session #4]	Toseland and Rivas, Ch. 4
February 25 (Week 6)	Group Leadership and Diversity [Group session #5]	Toseland and Rivas, Ch. 5
March 03	Planning the Group [Group session #6]	Toseland and Rivas, Ch. 6 (Week 7)
March 10 (Week 8)	Beginning the Group [Group session #7]	Toseland and Rivas, Ch. 7
March 24 (Week 9)	Assessing for Group [Group session #8]	Toseland and Rivas, Ch. 8
March 31 (Week 10)	Treatment Groups I [Group session #9]	Toseland and Rivas, Ch. 9
April 07 (Week 11)	Treatment Groups II [Group session #10]	Toseland and Rivas, Ch. 10
April 14 (Week 12)	Task Groups I [Group session #11]	Toseland and Rivas, Ch. 11
April 21 (Week 13)	Task Groups II [Group session #12]	Toseland and Rivas, Ch. 12
April 28 (Week 14)	Group Termination	Toseland and Rivas, Ch. 13
May 05 (Week 15)	Outcome Evaluation	Toseland and Rivas, Ch. 14

As the instructor for this course, I reserve the right to adjust this schedule in any way that serves the educational needs of the students enrolled in this course.

#### **J. Expectations for Out-of-Class Study:**

Beyond the time required to attend each class meeting, students enrolled in this course should expect to spend at least an additional three hours (for each hour of class or lecture per week) of their own time in course-related activities, including reading required materials, completing assignments, preparing for assignments and exams, and reviewing online content, etc.

#### **K. Grade Grievance Policy:**

See BSW Program Manual at: [https://www.uta.edu/ssw/\\_documents/bsw/bsw-program-manual.pdf](https://www.uta.edu/ssw/_documents/bsw/bsw-program-manual.pdf)

Or MSW Program Manual at: [http://www.uta.edu/ssw/\\_documents/msw/msw-program-manual.pdf](http://www.uta.edu/ssw/_documents/msw/msw-program-manual.pdf)

#### **L. Student Support Services:**

UT Arlington provides a variety of resources and programs designed to help students develop academic skills, deal with personal situations, and better understand concepts and information related to their courses. Resources include tutoring, major-based learning centers, developmental education, advising and mentoring, personal counseling, and federally funded programs. For individualized referrals and writing support, students may visit the Office of Advising and Student Success located on the third floor of Building A of the School of Social Work Complex or contact the Administrative Assistant at 817-272-3647. Also, the Maverick Resource Hotline may be contacted at

817-272-6107, or send a message to [resources@uta.edu](mailto:resources@uta.edu), or view the information at [www.uta.edu/resources](http://www.uta.edu/resources).

The UT Arlington School of Social Work community is committed to and cares about all of our students. If you or someone you know feels overwhelmed, hopeless, depressed, and/or is thinking about dying by suicide or harming self or someone else, supportive services are available. For immediate, 24-hour help call 1-800-273-TALK or visit <http://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org/> for a live chat. For campus resources, contact Counseling and Psychological Services (817-272-3671 or visit <http://www.uta.edu/caps/index.php>) or UT Arlington Psychiatric Services (817-272-2771 or visit <https://www.uta.edu/caps/services/psychiatric.php>) for more information or to schedule an appointment. You can be seen by a counselor on a walk-in basis every day, Monday through Friday, from 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM in Ransom Hall, Suite 303. Getting help is a smart and courageous thing to do - for yourself and for those who care about you.

#### **M. Librarian to Contact:**

The Social Sciences/Social Work Resource Librarian is John Dillard. His office is in the campus Central Library. He may also be contacted via E-mail: [dillard@uta.edu](mailto:dillard@uta.edu) or by Cell phone: (817) 6758962. Below are some commonly used resources needed by students in online or technology supported courses: <http://www.uta.edu/library/services/distance.php> The following is a list, with links, of commonly used library resources:

Library Home Page..... <http://www.uta.edu/library>  
Subject Guides..... <http://libguides.uta.edu>  
Subject Librarians..... <http://www-test.uta.edu/library/help/subject-librarians.php>  
Database List..... <http://www-test.uta.edu/library/databases/index.php>  
Course Reserves..... <http://pulse.uta.edu/vwebv/enterCourseReserve.do>  
Library Catalog..... <http://discover.uta.edu/>  
E-Journals..... <http://utalink.uta.edu:9003/UTAlink/az>

Library Tutorials ..... <http://www.uta.edu/library/help/tutorials.php>  
Connecting from Off- Campus.. <http://libguides.uta.edu/offcampus>  
Ask a Librarian..... <http://ask.uta.edu>

#### **N. Emergency Exit Procedures:**

Should we experience an emergency event that requires us to vacate the building, students should exit the room and move toward the nearest exits, which are the stairwells located at either end of the adjacent hallway. When exiting the building during an emergency, one should never take an elevator but should use the stairwells. Faculty members and instructional staff will assist students in selecting the safest route for evacuation and will make arrangements to assist individuals with disabilities.

#### **O. Drop Policy:**

Students may drop or swap (adding and dropping a class concurrently) classes through self-service in MyMav from the beginning of the registration period through the late registration period. After the late registration period, students must see their academic advisor to drop a class or withdraw. Undeclared students must see an advisor in the University Advising Center. Drops can continue through a point two-thirds of the way through the term or session. It is the student's responsibility to officially withdraw if they do not plan to attend after registering. **Students will not be automatically dropped for non-attendance.** Repayment of certain types of financial aid administered through the University may be required as the result of dropping classes or withdrawing. For more information, contact the Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships (<http://wweb.uta.edu/aaofao/>).

#### **P. Disability Accommodations:**

UT Arlington is on record as being committed to both the spirit and letter of all federal equal opportunity legislation, including *The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)*, *The Americans with Disabilities Amendments Act (ADAAA)*, and *Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act*. All instructors at UT Arlington are required by law to provide “reasonable accommodations” to students with disabilities, so as not to discriminate on the basis of disability. Students are responsible for providing the instructor with official notification in the form of a letter certified by the **Office for Students with Disabilities (OSD)**. Students experiencing a range of conditions (Physical, Learning, Chronic Health, Mental Health, and Sensory) that may cause diminished academic performance or other barriers to learning may seek services and/or accommodations by contacting: **The Office for Students with Disabilities, (OSD)** [www.uta.edu/disability](http://www.uta.edu/disability) or calling 817-272-3364. **Counseling and Psychological Services, (CAPS)** [www.uta.edu/caps/](http://www.uta.edu/caps/) or calling 817-272-3671. Only those students who have officially documented a need for an accommodation will have their request honored. Information regarding diagnostic criteria and policies for obtaining disability-based academic accommodations can be found at [www.uta.edu/disability](http://www.uta.edu/disability) or by calling the Office for Students with Disabilities at (817) 272-3364.

#### **Q. Title IX:**

The University of Texas at Arlington does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, age, gender, sexual orientation, disabilities, genetic information, and/or veteran status in its educational programs or activities it operates. For more information, visit [uta.edu/eos](http://uta.edu/eos). For information regarding Title IX, visit [www.uta.edu/titleIX](http://www.uta.edu/titleIX).

#### **R. Academic Integrity**

Students enrolled all UT Arlington courses are expected to adhere to the UT Arlington Honor Code:  
*I pledge, on my honor, to uphold UT Arlington's tradition of academic integrity, a tradition that values hard work and honest effort in the pursuit of academic excellence.*  
*I promise that I will submit only work that I personally create or contribute to group collaborations, and I will appropriately reference any work from other sources. I will follow the highest standards of integrity and uphold the spirit of the Honor Code.*

UT Arlington faculty members may employ the Honor Code as they see fit in their courses, including (but not limited to) having students acknowledge the honor code as part of an examination or requiring students to incorporate the honor code into any work submitted. Per UT System *Regents' Rule* 50101, §2.2, suspected violations of university's standards for academic integrity (including the Honor Code) will be referred to the Office of Student Conduct. Violators will be disciplined in accordance with University policy, which may result in the student's suspension or expulsion from the University.

#### **S. Electronic Communication:**

UT Arlington has adopted MavMail as its official means to communicate with students about important deadlines and events, as well as to transact university-related business regarding financial aid, tuition, grades, graduation, etc. All students are assigned a MavMail account and are responsible for checking the inbox regularly. There is no additional charge to students for using this account, which remains active even after graduation. Information about activating and using MavMail is available at <http://www.uta.edu/oit/cs/email/mavmail.php>.

#### **T. Student Feedback Survey:**

UT Arlington has adopted MavMail as its official means to communicate with students about important deadlines and events, as well as to transact university-related business regarding financial aid, tuition, grades, graduation, etc. All students are assigned a MavMail account and are responsible for checking the inbox regularly. There is no additional charge to students for using this account, which remains active even after graduation. Information about activating and using MavMail is available at <http://www.uta.edu/oit/cs/email/mavmail.php>.

#### **U. Final Review Week:**

This ONLY applies to courses administering a major or final examination scheduled in the week and locations designated for final examinations following last classes. A period of five class days prior to the first day of final examinations in the long sessions shall be designated as Final Review Week. The purpose of this week is to allow students sufficient time to prepare for final examinations. During this week, there shall be no scheduled activities such as required field trips or performances; and no instructor shall assign any themes, research problems or exercises of similar scope that have a completion date during or following this week *unless specified in the class syllabus*. During Final Review Week, an instructor shall not give any examinations constituting 10% or more of the final grade, except makeup tests and laboratory examinations. In addition, no instructor shall give any portion of the final examination during Final Review Week. During this week, classes are held as scheduled. In addition, instructors are not required to limit content to topics that have been previously covered; they may introduce new concepts as appropriate.