



Advancing God's Kingdom by Preparing Competent Christian
Leaders for Spirit-Empowered Life and Ministry

CP5211 Group Dynamics and Counselling

3 credits. Prerequisites: none.

👤 On Campus 'A' Live-Stream

February 13-17, 2023
Module W3
Monday-Friday/9 AM-4 PM

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Please note: This course includes reading and preparation work before the module.

Course Goals

Course Description

This course is an introduction to the theory and practice of group counselling. Different theoretical models of group counselling will be reviewed, including the role of the group leader. Counselling techniques, interventions, and strategies to navigate the common pitfalls and challenges of group counselling will be reviewed. Stages of normal group development and ethics related to leading groups will also be reviewed. Exploration of how the psychology of groups can be applied to understanding churches and small groups, particularly conflicts, will be included in the course. To facilitate learning, students will have the opportunity to participate in, and lead, an experiential group during the module portion of the course. Students will thus be able to experience first-hand the group processes reviewed in the course material.

The course will be delivered via readings, classroom lectures, videos demonstrations of group counselling, focused discussion, one test, and participation in an experiential group. The final component of the course is a major written assignment (see description later in this syllabus).

Relationship to Horizon's Mission

Consistent with Horizon's mission to advance God's kingdom, it is the instructor's hope that through participation in the course, students will be more personally and professionally prepared to lead and facilitate various types of groups in a variety of settings (including counselling centres and churches), with a variety of clients. It is also hoped that by engaging in the course, students will be better equipped to address psychological difficulties as Christians, lay helpers, and/or mental health professionals.

Course Competencies and Learning Outcomes

As a result of participating in class and completing this course, students will:

1. Be familiar with the theory and principles of group counselling.
2. Know group techniques and their application in different types of groups.
3. Understand the roles of the group leader and members in different types of groups (e.g., education, task, discussion, growth or experiential, counselling and therapy, support, self-help).
4. Have first-hand experience as a group member and possible group leader.
5. Understand how group processes and conflicts apply to churches and small groups.
6. Understand the ethical and legal issues related to working with groups.
7. Understand the issues to consider in developing a group, including its purpose, selection criteria and methods, member needs and roles, and leader approaches and skills.

Course Work

Required Textbook

Jacobs, E., Schimmel, C. Masson, R., and Harvill, R. *Group Counseling: Strategies and Skills*. 8th edition. Boston, MA: Cengage, 2016. ISBN: 9781305087309.

Other Required Readings

These required readings (and any additional readings) will be posted on Populi and available to students prior to the module.

Hook, J., and Hook, J. "The Health Cycle: A Christian Model for Group Therapy." *Journal of Psychology and Christianity* 29.4 (2010) 308-316.

Kidwell, J., and Wade, N. "Christian-Accommodative Group Interventions to Promote Forgiveness for Transgressions." In E. Worthington, E. Johnson, J. Hook, & J. Aten (Eds.), *Evidence-Based Practices in Christian Counseling and Psychotherapy*, 255-276. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2013.

O'Rourke, C. "Listening for the Sacred: Addressing Spiritual Issues in the Group Treatment of Adults with Mental Illness." *Smith College Studies in Social Work* 67.2 (1997) 177-196.

Sisney, V., and Shewmaker, K. "Group Psychotherapy in a Church Setting." *Pastoral Psychology* 15.6 (1964) 36-40.

****While students have the benefit of accessing their textbooks online through the [Digital Theological Library](#), they will not have access to the Digital Theological Library upon graduation. Therefore, we encourage students to purchase select textbooks to build their personal library. For your convenience, Horizon has partnered with Kennedy's Parable to provide textbooks.**

Supplemental Readings & Textbooks (optional; not required)

These supplemental readings and textbooks are listed here because they may be of interest to the student. They are not required readings and they may not be referenced in class or elsewhere in the course.

Corey, M., Corey G., and Corey, C. *Groups: Process and Practice*. 10th edition. Boston, MA: Cengage, 2018.

Corey, G. *Theory and Practice of Group Counseling*. 8th edition. Boston, MA: Cengage, 2023.

Cox, C. and Wright, C. "Group Psychotherapy in a Church Program." *Journal of Religion and Mental Health* 6.4 (1967) 326-337.

Yalom, I., and Leszcz, M. *The Theory and Practice of Group Psychotherapy*. 6th edition. Basic Books, 2020.

Course Assignments and Activities

Pre-Module and Module Requirements:

1. Class Participation, Preparation, Group Discussion (20%).

Students are expected to attend all days of the module and actively participate in class activities and group discussions. Students are required to complete the readings assigned by the professor, as they form the basis for additional learning and classroom discussion.

Pre-module reading: Students are required to read the main textbook (i.e., Jacobs et al., 2016) prior to the commencement of the module.

- **Due date:** February 12, 2023

Module readings: Students are required to read the additional readings assigned by the professor during the module. These will be distributed directly to students by the professor.

- **Due date:** February 13-17, 2023.

2. Reflection Journal (20% - pass/fail).

Students will submit a daily journal (250 words/day) reflecting on their group experience for each day of the module. Content of the journals should focus on personal evaluation and reflection of group processes/dynamics, content, therapeutic forces, and spiritual integration.

- **Assignment length:** 250 words/day (5 days total)
- **Due date:** February 13-17, 2023.

3. Participation in Group and Leading a Group (non graded).

During the module and with student consent, students will participate as members in an in-class experiential group, and have the opportunity to lead/facilitate the group. Students are expected to participate within their comfort level and according to the guidelines set out in the informed

consent document (see appendix, below). Participation in the experiential group is not mandatory, but those students who elect *not* to do the experiential group must engage in an alternative and parallel group experience arranged by the student and approved by the professor.

Post-Module Requirements:

4. *Test (25%).*

Students will complete a test on content from the class lectures and readings. The test will be administered on Populi and can be completed anytime after the completion of the module, by the due date specified. Instructions for taking the test will be provided to students during the module.

- **Due date:** On or before March 6, 2023.

5. *Major Paper/Project (35%).*

Students will construct/develop a group program which is applicable to the context of their anticipated or current ministry. Students must provide a thorough description of the context of their ministry and the purpose of the proposed group. A brief literature review (three to five pages) should establish the need/potential helpfulness of the proposed group. Specific details should be provided (e.g., a description of the type of group, purpose of the group, intended members, content, session plans, pre-screening and enrollment processes, if any), for the purpose of practical application in ministry or counselling. This assignment can be presented as a group handbook which could feasibly be used by others who may want to carry out the group in other ministry contexts. Papers/projects should be 3000-5000 words, or equivalent.

- **Assignment length:** 3000-5000 words
- **Due date:** April 3, 2023.

Estimate of Time Investment (individual time investments may vary)

Classroom time	30 hrs	N/A	Assignment Weighting
1. Class Participation, Preparation, Group Discussion	43 hrs	Feb 12; Feb 13-17	20%
2. Reflection Journal	4 hrs	Feb 17	20%
3. Participation in Group and Leading a Group	In class	N/A	N/A
4. Test	5 hrs	Mar 6	25%
5. Major Paper/Project	50 hrs	Apr 3	35%
Total =	~130 hrs		

Course Schedule

Date	Topic	Readings
February 13	Introduction to Groups Stages of Group Development Purpose of Groups	Jacobs et al. Ch 1-3

	Christian Reflection & Class Discussion EXPERIENTIAL GROUP (1-4 PM)	Sisney & Shewmaker (1964)
February 14	Planning Getting Started Basic Group Leader Skills Christian Reflection & Class Discussion EXPERIENTIAL GROUP (1-4 PM)	Jacobs et al. Ch 4-6 O'Rourke (1997)
February 15	Focus Cutting Off and Drawing Out Rounds and Dyads Christian Reflection & Class Discussion EXPERIENTIAL GROUP (1-4 PM)	Jacobs et al. Ch 7-9 Hook & Hook (2010)
February 16	Exercises Leading the Middle Stage of a Group CHAPEL – 10:50-12:20 PM EXPERIENTIAL GROUP (1-4 PM)	Jacobs et al. Ch 10-12
February 17	Counselling and Therapy in Groups Closing a Group Dealing with Problem Situations Christian Reflection & Discussion EXPERIENTIAL GROUP (1-4 PM)	Jacobs et al. Ch 14-16 Kidwell & Wade (2013)

Academic Policies

General Guidelines for the Submission of Written Work

Formatting Papers

- Papers should be typed, double-spaced and follow the appropriate formatting guidelines (e.g. 1 inch margins).
- Follow the [Horizon Format Guide](#) consistently.
- The length of papers should fall within +/- 10% of the stated length. Papers that fall outside the length guidelines may not be graded and will receive a grade reduction.

Failure to follow these guidelines warrants a grade reduction.

Submitting Your Assignments

Assignments should be submitted via [Populi](https://support.populiweb.com/hc/en-us/articles/223792507-How-to-submit-work-for-assignments). The resource at this link <https://support.populiweb.com/hc/en-us/articles/223792507-How-to-submit-work-for-assignments> explains how to submit assignments on Populi (the link to the video is also available on the info tab of the Populi course page).

Late Assignments and Extensions

All assignments are due when stated by the professor or, if not specified, within 8 weeks after the first day of class. Please contact the professor well in advance if you would like to request an adjustment to any of your due dates. A late penalty will be assessed for all overdue assignments: 1-3 days late, penalty of 10%; 4-6 days late, penalty of 20%. After six days late, an assignment receives a grade of 0.

Grading

Grade	Percentage	GPA	Descriptor
A+	97-100%	4	Exceptional
A	93-96%	4	Excellent
A-	90-92%	3.7	Excellent
B+	87-89%	3.3	Good
B	83-86%	3.0	Good
B-	80-82%	2.7	Good
C+	77-79%	2.3	Satisfactory
C	73-76%	2.0	Satisfactory
C-	70-72%	1.7	Satisfactory
D+	67-79%	1.3	Minimal Pass
D	63-66%	1.0	Minimal Pass
D-	60-62%	0.7	Minimal Pass
F	<60%	0	Failure

Academic Honesty

Horizon uses the University of Saskatchewan definition of plagiarism described as “the presentation of the work or idea of another in such a way as to give others the impression that it is the work or idea of the presenter. Adequate attribution is required. What is essential is that another person have no doubt which words or research results are the student’s and which are drawn from other sources” (Office of the University Secretary, 2012). Students are expected to give due recognition to sources from which all substantial phrases, sentences or even ideas are drawn. Note also that you may not submit work done in one course to satisfy the requirements of another course (unless both instructors agree beforehand to accept such work). See [here](#) for examples of plagiarism and further guidelines in the Seminary [Student Handbook](#).

Disability Services Information

If you would benefit from learning accommodations due to pre-existing physical or mental health conditions or learning disabilities, contact the Academic or Student Life departments at the beginning of the course. Horizon will work to meet your learning and/or physical needs where possible. If any conditions arise during the course that you wish to disclose, please contact us as

soon as possible. In all cases you will need to provide current [documentation](#) of the disability or condition you wish to disclose. Horizon takes appropriate care to ensure confidentiality about any such disclosures. For more information, contact Bob Williamson, Dean of Students, at bwilliamson@horizon.edu; Jessie Lysholm, Associate Dean of Students, at jlysholm@horizon.edu; or Leanne Bellamy, Academic Coach, at lbellamy@horizon.edu.

Class Attendance

Students should attend all classes in order to facilitate competency development. Students are expected to be present through the delivery method that they registered for, either on campus or through live-streaming with their camera on. A student must be present for the full duration of a class period in order to be registered as present for the class. In the case of illness or other unforeseen circumstances, students may miss one day of a module course or three days of class in a term or semester course without academic penalty. Students who are absent for more than the number of classes stated above will automatically fail the course. Students wishing to be exempted from this policy due to extenuating circumstances may make an academic appeal, where they will need to document and verify those circumstances. Students who miss a class are responsible to get missed notes or handouts from another student, rather than from the professor.

Live-Streaming Etiquette

Students taking the course through live-streaming are required to indicate this during their course registration. While live-streaming access is available for on-campus students who are unable to attend class due to illness, on-campus students are expected to attend class in person following the class attendance policy.

If attending class online via live-stream, in order to be marked present for class, you must keep your camera on and stay present and attentive throughout the class session, extending the gift of full engagement. Access your class with a computer (preferably) or tablet, not a cell phone. Arrive to class on time, and dress as you would if you were attending class on campus. Join the class from a quiet space with minimal background noise, and mute your microphone until you wish to speak to the class.

Use of Technology

Horizon encourages the use of electronic devices in the classroom to enhance learning. Careful consideration must be given to privacy issues, copyrighted materials, and the general care and concern for others. Please respect the following classroom policies:

- Please use online access for course learning only. This is a matter of respect for the instructor's teaching, your own learning, and fellow students who may be distracted by other uses.
- Students should secure permission from the instructor to record any teaching material. This includes PowerPoint slides, white board illustrations, notes, and any form of audio or video.
- Student feedback is a valuable input for course improvements. Please resolve any classroom grievance about the instructor or course with the instructor personally, through the Horizon College and Seminary grievance procedures, or the Populi-based course evaluations. It is inappropriate to air classroom grievances on a social media platform.

- When instructors use recording mechanisms in the classroom, recorded materials will be used for the sole purpose of instruction and cannot be released to any social media outlet without the written consent of the students whose images have been recorded.
- In general, it is not acceptable to share photographs or videos of students in the classroom setting without permission from those whose images appear in such media.

Appendix

Information about the Experiential Group - Please Review Prior to Module

Group Purpose:

The focus of the in-class experiential group will be exploration of personal and collective issues related to working as a leader in ministry. The goal is increased awareness of one's own vulnerabilities and strengths as they apply to ministry, to enable better preparation and readiness for work as a ministry leader. Group participation will involve self-reflection, feedback and information-sharing, discussion and problem-solving, and perhaps group leading or facilitation.

Benefits and Risks:

Participating in an experiential group in class has risks, particularly related to introducing dual relationships among students and the instructor. Since the anticipated benefits from such an experience are viewed as important enough to warrant the potential risks, the group experience is purposefully included as a component of the course. To help reduce and offset any risks, students must review the information below and provide written, informed consent before participating.

Although the following list outlines the main anticipated benefits and potential risks of participating in the experiential group, other benefits and risks are possible. When considering participation in the experiential group, individual students should be mindful of their own unique potential risks and benefits that may not be included in the list below, and give (or withhold) consent with this in mind.

Anticipated Benefits:

- Valuable, firsthand experience as a group participant.
- A greater ability to identify with the experiences of clients at different stages of group development.
- Experience in leading and facilitating a "real-life" group.
- Potential therapeutic value from learnings achieved in the group applied to real-life concerns.

Potential Risks:

- Added stress from working with a real-life concern
- Increased insight about personal deficits and struggles
- Triggering of negative emotions related to the content discussed in the group

- Relationships between students and the instructor may be negatively influenced by the introduction of dual relationships.

Guidelines for Group Members:

- Personal counselling. Group members are encouraged to access personal counselling outside of the experiential group, if needed. Should any issues arise during the experiential group that require individual counselling (e.g., triggering of strong negative emotions), the group member will be advised to address this outside the group. Group members are expected to initiate contact with a personal counselor and attend to their personal needs in this way.
- Confidentiality. Group members must uphold the confidentiality of their fellow members by not discussing observations of other members or other members' contributions outside the group. A good, general rule is: "What is said in group, stays in group".
- Personal information of others. While participating in the group, members do not share personal information about other members gained outside the group, or discuss personal information of mutually known others outside the group.
- Relationship conflicts outside of group. Should the group experience introduce relationship conflicts among group members and/or the instructor outside the group, it is the responsibility of all parties to address these conflicts outside of group in a timely and appropriate manner.
- Feel free to share, and not to share. Group members are expected to share personal information only within their own comfort level.
- Feel free to lead, and not to lead. Group members will be invited to lead or co-facilitate the group at various times throughout the module. Again, group members should participate in this component according to their own comfort level.
- Staying focused on the group purpose. When participating as a group member and leader, each member is expected to stay appropriately focused on the group's purpose established at the beginning of the group.
- Non-evaluative. The experiential group is a non-evaluative aspect of the course. Members will not be judged or graded on their participation as group members or leaders.

Students have the right to decline the group experiential component of the course, but must complete additional assignments to substitute for this experience. Substitute assignments will be discussed and determined on a student-by-student basis, to the satisfaction of the instructor.