M: Course Objectives / Learning Outcomes

Overarching Objective:

By the end of the course, successful students gain knowledge of foundational group theory and acquire interpersonal, team-work and leadership skills that allow them to work effectively in groups.

Knowledge:

By the end of the course, successful students are able to:
1) Describe elements of effective groups
2) explain a variety of group development models
3) describe different types of power and their effects on groups
4) articulate potential and actual sources of conflicts in groups
5) describe a variety of group assessment tools
6) describe the elements and strategies of effective leadership.

Skills:

By the end of the course, successful students are able to:
1) use theory, models and basic group concepts to discuss the nature and effects of group dynamics
2) discern and respond to relational, task and individual needs in a group
3) employ a variety of group process skills, including structured decision-making and problem-solving tools
4) articulate a personal code of ethics for working in groups
5) demonstrate foundational skills for managing conflict in groups
6) diagnose and suggest effective remedies for group dysfunction.

Attitudes:

By the end of the course, successful students gain appreciation for:
1) the dynamic complexity of group participation
2) their personal impact on group dynamics
3) the value of working effectively in groups.

N: Course Content:
1) What is a group?
   characteristics
   kinds of groups
   benefits and disadvantages of working in groups

2) What are some theoretical approaches to the study of group work?
   models of group communication
   systems theory
   uncertainty reduction theory
   symbolic convergence theory
   social exchange theory

3) What are the elements of an effective group?
   individual and relational satisfaction
   clarity of goals and procedures
   goal accomplishment
   interaction process

4) What is the influence of self in groups?
   communication style
   assessment of preferences and challenges in group modalities

5) How do groups grow and develop?
   models of development
   group development phase and levels of group functioning
   communication at different group phases

6) What roles do people take in groups?
        roles as functions in a group system
                task functions
                relational functions
                hindering functions

7) How can one improve group effectiveness?
        decision-making processes
        tools for facilitating group process
                brainstorming
                creative decision making in groups
                - delphi, nominal group, syntectics techniques
        problem-solving tools

8) What role does power play in group dynamics?
        kinds of power
        use and misuse of power in groups
        balancing power for optimum group functioning

9) What ethical standards facilitate group work?
        definitions and terms
        ethical considerations in group work
        standards for ethical group work

10) How does conflict manifest itself in groups?
        definitions, terms and assumptions
        sources of conflict in groups