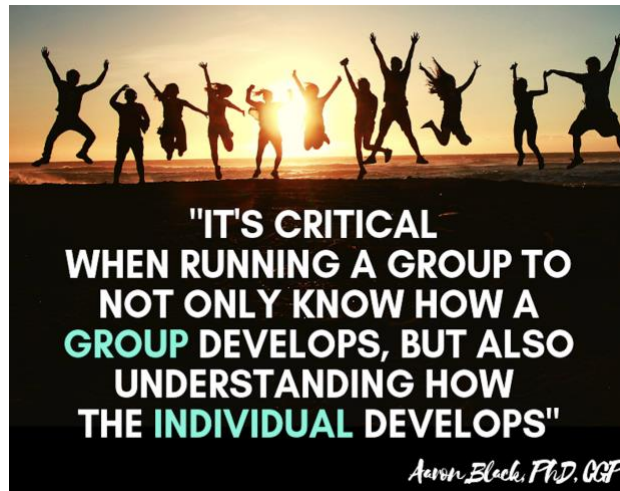


SOCW 4333: Social Work Group Practice

Fall 2026



Instructor Information

Instructor:

Ericka Freeman, LCSW-S
Associate Professor in Practice
Director of Field

Office:

College of Arts and Sciences (CAS) 152B

Telephone Number: 817-774-8420 (voice and text)

Email Address (preferred method of communication): efreeman@uttyler.edu

In-Person Office Hours:

Tuesdays and Thursdays 11 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. and 2 - 3 p.m.

Other hours available by appointment only.

Virtual Office Hours via Zoom: By appointment only. Please email me directly and we can schedule a time that works best for you (unless I am teaching a class or attending a faculty meeting)!

Course Information

Section Information:

SOCW 4333-001

Time and Place of Class Meetings:

Tuesdays and Thursdays 3:30 – 4:50 p.m.,

Online course material, which compliments the capstone assignment, may be accessed at any time and should be completed according to the due dates listed in this syllabus.

Description of Course Content: This course examines a broad range of groups, with emphasis on group theory, the nature and uses of therapeutic and task groups, including: group development, dynamics, facilitation skills, group assessments and outcome evaluation.

Prerequisite: Acceptance into the UT Tyler BSW program.

Course Overview: The purpose of this course is to teach students the basics of social work group practice by helping them build competencies, demonstrate simulated practice behaviors, and apply critical thinking. Students will utilize the steps in the generalist intervention model when working with clients at a micro and mezzo level.

Student Learning Outcomes for SOCW 4333:

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to demonstrate the following beginning generalist knowledge and skills for planning, facilitating, assessing, and evaluating social work groups in accordance with professional ethics, applicable laws, evidence-informed practice, and the person-in-environment perspective:

1. **History and Professional Use of Groups.** Describe the historical, philosophical, institutional and methodological development of social work group practice and explain the professional roles of social workers who facilitate groups.
2. **Ethical and Professional Conduct.** Apply the NASW Code of Ethics, relevant laws, ethical decision-making processes, professional communication, supervision, consultation, self-reflection and constructive feedback to simulated group-practice situations.
3. **Critical Thinking and Communication.** Apply critical thinking, logic, scientific inquiry and professional judgment when gathering, interpreting, and communicating information relevant to group practice.
4. **Person-In-Environment and Group Member Differences.** Analyze how individual, interpersonal, community, economic, cultural and geographic factors may influence group development, participation, communication and outcomes. Demonstrate professional self-awareness, cultural humility and respect for differences and adherence to ethical standards when working with group members.
5. **Group Types and Treatment Options.** Differentiate group types according to their purpose, goals, membership, facilitator roles, developmental processes, and intended outcomes. Explain when group work may be an appropriate treatment or service option based on client needs, professional judgment, available evidence and organizational resources.
6. **Group Planning, Assessment, Intervention and Evaluation.** Demonstrate beginning skills in selecting and preparing group members; collecting and interpreting assessment information; establishing rapport, expectations, and group norms; developing goals and desired outcomes; and facilitating group work while evaluating both individual and group progress.

Required Course Material

No need to lug around a heavy and expensive textbook for this course! All your brain food will be served upon Canvas via Open Education Resources (OER), UT Tyler Library E-Books, or through a delightful mix of podcasts, articles, and videos whipped up by the instructor.

Course Reading Expectations

Dive into those reading assignments before class—they're your ticket to lively discussions! Feel free to bring all your burning questions and quirky comments to the lecture. Your curiosity and insights are the secret recipe for the instructor to gauge if you're flipping through those pages outside of class.

Descriptions of Assignments:

Participation and In-Class Group Simulation Activities (20% Final Grade)

On a number of occasions throughout the semester, we will practice group skills and techniques in class as simulated exercises. Students are expected to engage fully as part of their class participation and participation grade. The goals of these exercises are for you, the future practitioner, to become increasingly comfortable with yourself, to improve your skills and to learn from others.

PLEASE NOTE: Each student is allowed up to two (2) absences without grade reduction penalty. Each absence after the second (2nd) absence will result in a 10-point reduction in participation grade per absence. (e.g. absence #3 = 90, absence #4=80, etc.) In addition, it is important for students to come to class prepared to take part in class . Participation grades will reflect accordingly.

Students who miss more than 50% of the scheduled in-person class dates will not pass the class.

Scaffolding a Group (20% Final Grade)

In this multi-phased assignment, students, in their assigned groups, are to submit, throughout the semester, plans of action for their Group Experience Demonstration, which will serve as the capstone assignment for this course. Plans of action due dates are listed in the syllabus' Course Schedule section. Only one (1) plan of action per group per due date should be submitted.

Students will choose a group leader who will upload the plan of action to Canvas. Full instructions for each plan of action can be found in Canvas under the "Assignments" tab or by selecting it under the "Demonstrate" portion of the module in which it is due.

Group Experience Demonstration (30%): At the beginning of the semester, students will be divided into smaller groups. Each group will contain 6-7 members. Each group will demonstrate a group session of their choice that follows the plans of action submitted in their *Scaffolding a Group* assignments. Students have the option of demonstrating the session live and in person or demonstrating this through a videoed group session that will be shown to the class. Groups should plan on meeting outside of class to work on this assignment. Students may choose to meet via Zoom, Face Time or in-person. Group memberships are listed in Canvas. This assignment is due on the last day of class, during finals week, in lieu of a final exam. Additional Instructions for this assignment can be found in Canvas under the "Assignment" tab.

Community Agency Exploration (30%):

Students are to partner with a community agency(ies) that offers either task group or treatment group opportunities for the clients they serve. Group opportunities may be in person or remote, via an interactive video platform; however, the student must attend the entire opportunity to get credit. Agency options include BUT ARE NOT LIMITED TO:

- Breckenridge Village,
- East Texas Crisis Center,
- East Texas Human Needs Network,
- Camp V,
- Alzheimer's Alliance
- NAMI
- Social Worx Advocacy Agency
- Various support groups in the community

Activities for group work may include, but are not limited to:

- preparing topics (as visitor speakers) and co-facilitating a session with our group facilitators.
- attending a group as a shadow participant.
- coordinating activities
- assisting with outreach events in the community.
- attending a board meeting.
- touring the agency's facility and learning more about the services they provide

Students must participate in at least two (2) group-centered activities with a community agency. Any hours accrued during participation will count toward the required 40 volunteer hours for the Social Work Professional Program.

Following each exploration experience, students will submit a brief journal reflection of their impression of the experience. Each reflection should include the following information:

- the date of the experience;
- a brief synopsis of what occurred;
- If attending a group, what was overall theme of session? If not attending a group, what role did (or could) group work play? and,
- your overall impressions of the experience.

Journal pages should be 1-2 pages in length and use correct grammar, demonstrating professional and succinct writing skills. Additional Instructions for this assignment can be found in Canvas under the "Assignment" tab.

Grading Information

Grading:

Assignment	%
In-Class Group Simulation Exercises	20
Scaffolding (5 @ 4% each)	20
Group Experience Demonstration	30
Community Agency Exploration	30
Total	100

A = 90 and Above
B = 80 - 89.9
C = 70 - 79.9
D = 60 - 69.9
F = Below 60

A grade of incomplete will not be given for this class.

Late Assignments:

Late assignments are strongly discouraged. There will be 10 points (total) deducted for each late assignment. No assignment will be accepted after 5 days following the due date.*

*The Group Experience Demonstration is NOT available for late submission.

It is the student's responsibility to ensure that work is completed on time and submitted correctly.

AI Usage in SOCW 4333

We are going to promote the responsible use of AI as a learning tool for social work students and future practitioners, while keeping academic and professional integrity intact. Think of it as trying to ride a unicycle on a tightrope!

For each assignment or in class activity, the instructor will clearly outline the level of AI involvement allowed, which could range from "no AI at all" to "bring our AI to school day." When you do use AI, make sure to give it a shout-out, provide links to all the AI references and include your original work.

You'll need to stick to these guidelines and be ready to chat about how AI contributed. This policy is here to boost your proficiency in critical thinking and hone those vital social work skills. Remember, the aim is for everyone to learn and level up their skills. For more information, see UT Tyler's AI Statement in the "University Policies and Information" link at bottom of this syllabus.

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 9 hours per week of their own time in course-related activities, including reading required materials, completing assignments, preparing for quizzes, etc.

Attendance:

Engaged and timely participation in all assignments constitutes "attendance" for purposes of this course. Students cannot engage or participate if they are not physically present in class; therefore, attendance will be taken each course meeting unless otherwise announced by the instructor.

Stay off your cell phones or other electronic devices unless instructed to do so as part of an in-class assignment. As much as we want to believe we can "multitask" our attention is compromised when we do more than one brain activity at a time!

Course Schedule

Please see the course schedule below for due date reminders of each specific assignment. Assignments are due on a Sunday at 11:59 p.m., following the end of a module.



There is NO class and NO assigned material November 23 -27, 2026 as this is Thanksgiving Break!

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. Any changes will be communicated in a timely manner through UT Tyler email and announcement(s) in Canvas.

Module	Class Dates	Module Material	Assignments Due/ Due Date
Getting Started	8/25 and 8/27	Syllabus, Review semester ahead and Group memberships	
1: Group Work History and Overview	9/1 and 9/3	Readings: Social Work, Sociometry ch 2 Social Work with Groups, ch 1 Video: "The Uses of Groups in Social Work"	
2: Group Types and Psychology of Groups	9/8 and 9/10	Readings: Intro to Social Work Groups, ch 1 Problem Solving in Groups, ch 4 Videos: "Types of Groups in the context of SW" "Theories in Social Group Work"	Scaffolding Plan 1 due Sunday, 9/13/26.
3: Group Dynamics	9/15 and 9/17 9/22 and 9/24	Reading: Handbook of SW w/Groups, ch 2 pp 9 – 20 Video: "How to Run a Process Group"	
4: Group Development and SW Roles	9/29 and 10/1	Readings: Handbook of SW w/ Groups, ch 2 pp 20-21; Small Group Com, ch 2 "Tuckman Model" Video: "ASWB Exam Guide: Group Dynamics & Development"	Scaffolding Plan 2 due Sunday, 10/4/26.
5: Beginning the Group	10/6 and	Reading: ISAGW pp 6- 10	Community Agency Journal #1 due Sunday, 10/11/26

- Pre Work	10/8	Social Work with Groups, "Structuring" pp 82 - 84. Video: "10 Principles of Social Group Work"	
6: Beginning a Group	10/13 and 10/15	Readings: IASWG pp 10 - 11 Small Group Communication, ch 13 Video: "Group Therapy Session: What its really like"	Scaffolding Plan 3 due Sunday, 10/18/26.
7: Logistics and Conflicts	10/20 and 10/22	Readings: Small Group Communication, ch 14 Problem Solving in Groups, ch 24 Video: "Group Therapy Facilitation Techniques: Resistance"	
8: Assessing the Group	10/27 and 10/29	Reading: Handbook of Social Work Groups, ch 2 pp. 21 -23 "Measuring" Video: "Group Counseling Notes (Are they the same as individual notes)"	Scaffolding Plan 4 due Sunday, 11/1/26.
9: Intervention - From Start to Termination	11/3 and 11/5 11/10 and 11/2	Readings: ISAGW, pp 12 - 15 Social Work with Groups, ch 4 Videos: "Task Roles & Maintenance Roles in Groups" "Group Counseling Strategies and Skills"	Scaffolding Plan 5 due Sunday, 11/15/26.
10: Demonstrating Learning Outcomes	11/17 and 11/19 12/1 and 12/3		Community Agency Journal #2 due Sunday, 11/22/26 Group Experience Demonstrations

University Policies and Information

For all updated UT Tyler student policies and information for the 2026 - 2027 Academic Year, please visit:

<https://uttyler.instructure.com/courses/55275/pages/university-policies-and-information>