



MHS 6509
Group Counseling Theories & Practices
84366 900
Fall 2026

Instructor Name

Dr. Serene Hasan

University Course Description

An experiential study of group structure, group dynamics, methodology, and leadership models applicable to counseling clients in school and community settings. Includes skill building through supervised practice.

Course Requisites

Prerequisite(s):

MHS 6400 Minimum Grade: C

Corequisite(s):

Course Format

This in-person class consists of face-to-face lessons which address learning goals through experiential activities, lectures, discussions, and readings.

Student Learning Outcomes

By the end of the course, you will know, understand, and/or demonstrate competency in the following CACREP areas:

Group Counseling and Group Work:

1. theoretical foundations of group counseling and group work
2. dynamics associated with group process and development
3. therapeutic factors of group work and how they contribute to group effectiveness
4. characteristics and functions of effective group leaders
5. approaches to group formation, including recruiting, screening, and selecting members
6. application of technology related to group counseling and group work
7. types of groups, settings, and other considerations that affect conducting groups
8. culturally sustaining and developmentally responsive strategies for designing and facilitating groups
9. ethical and legal considerations relative to the delivery of group counseling and group work across service delivery modalities
10. direct experiences in which counseling students participate as group members in a small group activity, approved by the program, for a minimum of 10 clock hours over the course of one academic term

Course Objectives

You will:

1. **Examine** the theoretical foundations of group counseling and group work. (CACREP 3.F.1)
2. **Analyze** dynamics associated with group process and development. (CACREP 3.F.2)
3. **Evaluate** therapeutic factors of group work and how they contribute to group effectiveness. (CACREP 3.F.3)
4. **Identify** characteristics and functions of effective group leaders. (CACREP 3.F.4)
5. **Apply** approaches to group formation, including recruiting, screening, and selecting members. (CACREP 3.F.5)
6. **Utilize** technology related to group counseling and group work. (CACREP 3.F.6)

7. **Compare** types of groups, settings, and other considerations that affect conducting groups. (**CACREP 3.F.7**)
8. **Develop** culturally sustaining and developmentally responsive strategies for designing and facilitating groups. (**CACREP 3.F.8**)
9. **Apply** ethical and legal considerations related to the delivery of group counseling and group work across service delivery modalities. (**CACREP 3.F.9**)
10. **Participate** in a direct experiential small-group activity as a group member to develop awareness of group processes and member experiences. (**CACREP 3.F.10**)

Required Texts and/or Readings and Course Materials

Gladding, S. T., & Ivers, N. N. (2026). *Groups: A counseling specialty* (9th ed.). Pearson. Digital format

Coogan, T. (2022). *Group counseling leadership skills for school counselors*. Cognella Academic Publishing.

How to Succeed in this Course

I recommend the following strategies to optimize your performance in this course:

1. Read the syllabus and Canvas items (e.g., announcements, modules, etc.) carefully, and refer to them throughout the course.
2. Be sure to check the Student Handbook and your Plan of Study for additional information/ requirements, when planning for each semester.
3. Plan for class, in advance, to avoid procrastination (i.e., waiting until “the last minute” to complete an assignment).
4. Take notes on key concepts and terms when reading the textbook and attending class.
5. Block off time in a calendar or planner to complete your coursework, and treat those blocks of time like appointments.
6. Consider all class materials and activities as required, unless otherwise indicated. Information from them may appear in quizzes, exams, written assignments, etc.
7. Use spell check and grammar-check functions before submitting assignments.
8. Pay attention to any emails from the instructor or any announcements posted in Canvas--this requires regularly checking email and Canvas.
9. Read assignment descriptions, rubrics, and any supplemental documents provided for an assignment BEFORE completing the assignment. Ask any questions and consult the professor as soon as possible to allow time for feedback and edits.

10. Use rubric headings and terminology to ensure you cover all required areas and provide clear organization for your assignments.
11. Use APA formatting, unless otherwise noted. Keep in mind font, font size, accessibility in both digital and print formats, etc.
12. Take accountability by actively participating, engaging in self-reflection, and setting appropriate SMART goals for yourself.
13. Embrace opportunities for growth, recognizing that learning often involves some discomfort when challenging oneself. At the same time, advocate for yourself by asking questions, seeking support, or discussing accommodations when needed to support your learning.

Grading Scale

Grading Scale (%)			
90-100	A	74-76	C
90-93	A-	70-73	C-
87-89	B+	67-69	D+
84-86	B	64-66	D
80-83	B-	60-63	D-
77-79	C+	0-59	F

Grade Categories and Weights

Graded Assignments	
Weekly Quizzes	15%
Final Exam	15%
Group Leadership Presentation	30%
Group Manual	40%
Total	100%

Member participation in an experiential group (P/F). CACREP requires that students participate in small group activity as a group member for a minimum of 10 clock hours over the course of one academic semester. This group will be an experiential process group aimed at personal reflection and growth. All students in class are required to participate to meet CACREP standards. This assignment will be graded on a Pass/Fail basis. **To earn credit for MHS 6509, students must “pass” this assignment.**

Instructor Feedback Policy & Grade Dissemination

You can view your grades and read feedback on assignments in Canvas. Please track your grade throughout the semester and request additional feedback and support, if needed, before the end of the semester. Please be sure to submit assignments wherever requested (e.g., Canvas, CampusFolio, PackBack).

Major Topics and Course Schedule

Reminder: This schedule shows overarching class topics and major assignment due dates. You are responsible for reviewing the weekly class outlines on Canvas for required readings and class preparation activities.

Course Schedule		
Date	Class Focus	Assignments Due
Week 1: 8/26	Course Orientation Groups Ch. 1 + School Ch. 1	Readings, Wkly Quiz
Week 2: 9/2	Groups Ch. 2 + Ch. 3	Readings, Wkly Quiz
Week 3: 9/9	Groups Ch. 4 + School Ch. 3	Readings, Wkly Quiz
Week 4: 9/16	Groups Ch. 5 + School Ch. 4	Readings, Wkly Quiz
Week 5: 9/23	Groups Ch. 6	Readings, Wkly Quiz, Group Leadership Presentations
Week 6: 9/30	Groups Ch. 7	Readings, Wkly Quiz, Group Leadership Presentations
Week 7: 10/7	Groups Ch. 8 + School Ch. 8	Readings, Wkly Quiz, Group Leadership Presentations
Week 8: 10/14	Groups Ch. 9 + School Ch. 6	Readings, Wkly Quiz, Group Leadership Presentations
Week 9: 10/21	Groups Ch. 11	Readings, Wkly Quiz
Week 10: 10/28	Groups Ch. 12 + Ch. 13	Readings Wkly Quiz, Group Leadership Presentations

Course Schedule		
Week 11: 11/4	Groups Ch. 16 + School Ch. 5	Readings, Wkly Quiz, Group Leadership Presentations
Week 12: 11/11	No Class - Veterans Day	
Week 13: 11/18	Groups Ch. 17	Readings, Wkly Quiz, Group Leadership Presentations
Week 14: 11/25	Groups Ch. 18	Readings, Wkly Quiz, Group Leadership Presentations
Week 15: 12/2	Integrative case studies/selected materials	Readings, Wkly Quiz, Group Manual
Final Exam Week December 5-10		

**Course calendar is tentative. The instructor reserves the right to alter to address class needs. Students will be notified of any changes.*

USF Core Syllabus Policies

USF has a set of central policies related to student recording class sessions, academic integrity and grievances, student accessibility services, academic disruption, religious observances, academic continuity, food insecurity, pregnancy and related conditions, and sexual harassment that **apply to all courses at USF**. Be sure to review these online:

<https://www.usf.edu/provost/faculty-success/resources-policies-forms/core-syllabus-policy-statements.aspx>

Student Recordings

Florida Statute 1004.097 Free Expression on Campus

Students may, without prior notice, record video or audio of a class lecture for a class in which the student is enrolled for their own personal, educational use (USF Policy 10-048). A class lecture is defined as a formal or methodical oral presentation as part of a university course intended to present information or teach enrolled students about a particular subject. Recording class activities other than class lectures, including but not limited to lab sessions, student presentations (whether individually or part of a group), class discussion, clinical presentations such as patient history, academic exercises

involving student participation, test or examination administrations, field trips, private conversations between students in the class or between a student and the faculty member is prohibited. Recordings may not be used as a substitute for class participation and class attendance and may not be published or shared without the written consent of the faculty member. Failure to adhere to these requirements may constitute a violation of the USF Student Conduct Code.

Course Policies: Grades

First Day Attendance Policy:

To confirm your presence in the course and successfully meet the first day attendance policy, you must attend class and complete both the "Get to Know You" Sheet and Academic Integrity course. Students who don't complete the first day activity run the risk of being dropped from the course.

Late Work Policy:

You are responsible for submitting assignments on or before due dates. If you are concerned about your ability to consistently complete quality work as described in the schedule, please make an appointment with me to discuss how to support your learning in our course. Barring extenuating circumstances, late assignments will incur a reduction of a letter grade for every day late, up to three days. Assignments more than three days late will not be accepted.

Medical Excuses and Family Emergencies:

To be approved for an extension on an assignment due to medical issues or family emergencies, students must send an email to the professor to request an assignment extension. For medical issues, students are required to submit documentation from a licensed healthcare professional attesting that the student was or will be unable to complete coursework during a specific time for medical reasons. For family emergencies, students are required to upload documentation verifying the family emergency. Approval of an extension is at the discretion of the professor.

Extra Credit Policy:

There are no pre-determined extra credit opportunities.

Final Examinations Policy:

All final exams are to be scheduled in **accordance with the University's final examination policy**.

Grades of "Incomplete"

An Incomplete grade ("I") is exceptional and granted at the instructor's discretion only when students are unable to complete course requirements due to illness or other circumstances beyond their control. The course instructor and student must complete and

sign the "I" Grade Contract Form that describes the work to be completed, the date it is due, and the grade the student would earn factoring in a zero for all incomplete assignments. The due date can be negotiated and extended by student/instructor as long as it does not exceed two semesters for undergraduate courses and one semester for graduate courses from the original date grades were due for that course. An "I" grade not cleared within the two semesters for undergraduate courses and one semester for graduate courses (including summer semester) will revert to the grade noted on the contract.

Campus Free Expression

It is fundamental to the University of South Florida's mission to support an environment where divergent ideas, theories, and philosophies can be openly exchanged and critically evaluated. Consistent with these principles, this course may involve discussion of ideas that you find uncomfortable, disagreeable, or even offensive.

In the instructional setting, ideas are intended to be presented in an objective manner and not as an endorsement of what you should personally believe. "Objective" means that the idea(s) presented can be tested by critical peer review and rigorous debate, and that the idea(s) is supported by credible research.

In this course you may be asked to engage with complex ideas and to demonstrate an understanding of the ideas. Understanding and engaging with an idea does not require you to believe it or to agree with it.

Course Policies: Technology and Media

Canvas

This course is offered via USF's learning management system (LMS), Canvas. If you need help learning how to perform various tasks related to this course or other courses being offered in Canvas, please consult the [Canvas Student Guides](#). You may also contact USF's IT department at (813) 974-1222 or help@usf.edu.

Laptop/Tablet Use

Laptops/tablets may be used to take notes and during designated activities determined by the instructor. Laptops/tablets are only to be used for academic class purposes and not to be used to surf the internet, communicate with others, etc.

Phone Use

Phones are not to be used in class for non-academic purposes, like surfing the internet, communicating with others, etc.

Minimum Technical Skills & Requirements:

In order to complete any courses online at USF, you will need to be able to demonstrate proficiency at basic computer skills, maintain reliable internet access, and meet the computer system requirements listed at USF's IT's Remote Resources website. Additional skills may be required if virtual reality (VR) headsets are used, which training would be provided for in class.

Course Policies: Student Expectations

Health and Wellness

Your health is a priority at the University of South Florida. We encourage members of our community to look out for each other and to reach out for help if someone is in need. If you or someone you know is in distress, please make a referral at www.usf.edu/sos so that the Student Outreach & Support can contact and provide helpful resources to the student in distress. A 24-hour licensed mental healthcare professional, offered through the counseling center, is available by phone at 813-974-2831, option 3. Please remember that asking for help is a sign of strength. In case of emergency, please dial 9-1-1.

Title IX Policy

USF is committed to fostering a safe and respectful learning environment, free from sex discrimination and sexual harassment, in accordance with Title IX and USF Policy 0-004. If a student shares an experience of sexual harassment, sexual assault, stalking, or relationship violence with a USF employee (including faculty), that employee will notify the Title IX Office. This allows the Title IX Office to send the student an email with information about support resources and options—if it is safe to do so. Students are not required to respond to this email. The Title IX Office is a private resource. Information is shared only on a need-to-know basis to provide students with support measures. To speak to a confidential resource, students may contact USF Center for Victim Advocacy at 813-974-5757. Confidential resources do not notify the Title IX Office unless the student requests it. For more information about Title IX, available resources, or to make a report, please visit www.usf.edu/title-ix.

Course Hero / Chegg Policy

The USF Policy on Academic Integrity specifies that students may not use websites that enable cheating, such as by uploading or downloading material for this purpose. This does apply specifically to Chegg.com and CourseHero.com – almost any use of these websites (including uploading proprietary materials) constitutes a violation of the academic integrity policy.

Professionalism Policy

Per university policy and classroom etiquette; mobile phones, iPods, etc. must be silenced during all classroom and lab lectures. Those not heeding this rule will be asked to leave the classroom/lab immediately so as to not disrupt the learning environment. Please arrive on time for all class meetings. Students who habitually disturb the class by talking, arriving late, etc., and have been warned may suffer a reduction in their final class grade.

Turnitin.com

In this course, turnitin.com may be utilized. Turnitin is an automated system which instructors may use to quickly and easily compare each student's assignment with billions of web sites, as well as an enormous database of student papers that grows with each submission. Accordingly, you may be expected to submit all assignments in both hard copy and electronic format. After the assignment is processed, as instructor I receive a report from turnitin.com that states if and how another author's work was used in the assignment. For a more detailed look at this process visit <http://www.turnitin.com>.

Netiquette Guidelines

- Act professionally in the way you communicate. Treat your instructors and peers with respect, the same way you would do in a face-to-face environment. Respect other people's ideas and be constructive when explaining your views about points you may not agree with.
- Be sensitive. Be respectful and sensitive when sharing your ideas and opinions. There will be people in your class with different linguistic backgrounds, political and religious beliefs or other general differences.
- Proofread and check spelling. Doing this before sending an email or posting a thread on a discussion board will allow you to make sure your

message is clear and thoughtful. Avoid the use of all capital letters, it can be perceived as if you are shouting, and it is more difficult to read.

- Keep your communications focused and stay on topic. Complete your ideas before changing the subject. By keeping the message on focus you allow the readers to easily get your idea or answers they are looking for.
- Be clear with your message. Avoid using humor or sarcasm. Since people can't see your expressions or hear your tone of voice, meaning can be misinterpreted.

Email and Discussion Board Guidelines

- Use the subject line effectively by using a meaningful line of what your email or discussion is about.
- Keep your emails and postings related to the course content. You should not post anything personal on a discussion board unless it is requested by the instructor.
- Any personal, course or confidential issues should be directly communicated to the instructor via email. The discussion boards are public spaces; therefore, any issues should not be posted there.

End of Semester Student Evaluations

All classes at USF make use of an online system for students to provide feedback to the University regarding the course. These surveys will be made available at the end of the semester, and the University will notify you by email when the response window opens. Your participation is highly encouraged and valued.

Food and Drink Policy (for in-campus sessions only).

Please adhere to the firm policy of no beverages (other than bottled/capped water), food, tobacco products, or like items in the classroom. Your understanding of the necessity for this policy and cooperation will be greatly appreciated. This policy will be strictly enforced.

Learning Support and Campus Offices

Academic Accommodations

Students with disabilities are responsible for registering with Student Accessibility Services (SAS) in order to receive academic accommodations. For additional

information about academic accommodations and resources, you can visit the SAS website.

[SAS website for the Tampa campus and Sarasota-Manatee Teachout site.](#)

[SAS website for the St. Pete campus.](#)

Academic Support Services

The USF Office of Student Success coordinates and promotes university-wide efforts to enhance undergraduate and graduate student success. For a comprehensive list of academic support services available to all USF students, please visit the [Office of Student Success website.](#)

Canvas Technical Support

If you have technical difficulties in Canvas, you can find access to the Canvas guides and video resources in the “Canvas Help” page on the homepage of your Canvas course. You can also contact the help desk by calling 813-974-1222 in Tampa or emailing help@usf.edu.

[USF IT Services](#)

Center for Victim Advocacy

The [Center for Victim Advocacy](#) empowers survivors of crime, violence, or abuse by promoting the restoration of decision making, by advocating for their rights, and by offering support and resources. Contact information is available online.

Counseling Center

The Counseling Center promotes the wellbeing of the campus community by providing culturally sensitive counseling, consultation, prevention, and training that enhances student academic and personal success. Contact information is available online.

[Counseling Center website for the Tampa campus and Sarasota-Manatee Teachout site.](#)

[Counseling Center website for the St. Pete campus.](#)

Tutoring

The Tutoring Hub offers free tutoring in several subjects to USF undergraduates. Appointments are recommended, but not required. For more information, email asctampa@usf.edu.

[Tutoring website for the Tampa campus and Sarasota-Manatee Teachout site.](#)

[Tutoring website for the St. Pete campus.](#)

Writing Studio

The Writing Studio is a free resource for USF undergraduate and graduate students. At the Writing Studio, a trained writing consultant will work individually with you, at any point in the writing process from brainstorming to editing. Appointments are recommended, but not required. For more information or to make an appointment, email: writingstudio@usf.edu.

[Writing studio website for the Tampa campus and Sarasota-Manatee Teachout Site.](#)

[Writing studio website for the St. Pete campus.](#)

Student Ombuds Office

Florida Statute 1006.51 and Florida Board of Governors Regulation 6.011 require that all public institutions provide ombuds services to students. The Student Ombuds Office at USF is a confidential, impartial, informal, and independent resource for students experiencing challenges related to the university. Ombuds can help students safely explore options, clarify processes, and consider next steps. [Learn more or make an appointment at usf.edu/student-ombuds.](https://usf.edu/student-ombuds)