SWRK3002
Social Work Theory & Practice 4
Course Outline

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Consultation hours: By appointment via email

Semester: Semester 2 - 2009
Unit Weighting: 20

Teaching Methods
Experience Based Learning
Workshop

Brief Course Description
In this course students examine social work practice within the organisational environment. Students also develop knowledge and skills in groupwork and in turn focus specifically on working in groups in organisational settings. The focus of this course is on the broader environment in which client interventions are informed and occur.
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This course outline will not be altered after the second week of the term except under extenuating circumstances with Head of School approval. Students will be notified in advance of the change.

Contact Hours
Workshop for 6 hours per week for the full term.

Learning Materials/Texts
These will be provided during the course via class handouts and Blackboard postings. Students are encouraged to identify and collect materials appropriate to their identified learning needs.

Course Objectives
At the completion of the course students will be able to:
1. Demonstrate skills in analysing, critiquing and evaluating events, content, and processes involving groups in different practice contexts, including therapeutic, community, workplace, and organisational contexts.
2. Demonstrate an understanding of the history, development, and theory of social groupwork.
3. Demonstrate assessment, facilitation, and evaluation of different elements of group functioning, dynamics and processes, including assessment, planning, contracting, conflict and problem solving, and termination/closure.
4. Describe and analyse the various aspects of organisational environments and processes from different theoretical perspectives.
5. Describe, analyse and critique dynamics, culture, and change processes in organisations.
6. Describe knowledge and skills relevant to practice in organisational context and dealing with organisational issues.
7. Demonstrate skills in self and peer assessment and in receiving and providing feedback.
8. Demonstrate understanding of and engagement in contemporary debates in social work practice and administration.

Course Content
1. The history and development of social groupwork
2. Different types, nature and contexts of groups (families, therapeutic groups, teams, and communities)
3. Dynamics and processes in group and organisational contexts
4. Conflict and problem solving
5. Skills for working with groups (assessment, facilitation, evaluation)
6. The impact of organisational context on the practice of social work
7. Understanding, analysing and linking organisational environment, goals, structure, and culture
8. Types of organisational change, associated management strategies and processes, and responses to change
9. Linking fieldwork experience to work in groups and organisations
10. Social workers managing and coping in the organisational context
Assumed Knowledge
Completed first and second year social work.
Completed SWRK3001 and SWRK3003.

Workshop Timetable

SWRK3002
SOCIAL WORK THEORY & PRACTICE 4
Enquiries: School of Humanities and Social Science
Semester 2 - 2009
Workshop Tuesday 9:00 - 12:00 [W203, W218, W219] Report firstly to Room: W301A
and Workshop Tuesday 13:00 - 16:00 [W202, W203, W238] Report firstly to Room: W301A

IMPORTANT UNIVERSITY INFORMATION

Academic integrity
Academic integrity, honesty, and a respect for knowledge, truth and ethical practices are fundamental to the business of the University. These principles are at the core of all academic endeavour in teaching, learning and research. Dishonest practices contravene academic values, compromise the integrity of research and devalue the quality of learning. To preserve the quality of learning for the individual and others, the University may impose severe sanctions on activities that undermine academic integrity. There are two major categories of academic dishonesty:

Academic fraud is a form of academic dishonesty that involves making a false representation to gain an unjust advantage. Without limiting the generality of this definition, it can include:

a) falsification of data;
b) using a substitute person to undertake, in full or part, an examination or other assessment item;
c) reusing one's own work, or part thereof, that has been submitted previously and counted towards another course (without permission);
d) making contact or colluding with another person, contrary to instructions, during an examination or other assessment item;
e) bringing material or device(s) into an examination or other assessment item other than such as may be specified for that assessment item; and
f) making use of computer software or other material and device(s) during an examination or other assessment item other than such as may be specified for that assessment item.
g) contract cheating or having another writer compete for tender to produce an essay or assignment and then submitting the work as one's own.

Plagiarism is the presentation of the thoughts or works of another as one's own. University policy prohibits students plagiarising any material under any circumstances. Without limiting the generality of this definition, it may include:
a) copying or paraphrasing material from any source without due acknowledgment;

b) using another person’s ideas without due acknowledgment;

c) collusion or working with others without permission, and presenting the resulting work as though it were completed independently.

**Turnitin** is an electronic text matching system. During assessing any assessment item the University may -

- Reproduce this assessment item and provide a copy to another member of the University; and/or
- Communicate a copy of this assessment item to a text matching service (which may then retain a copy of the item on its database for the purpose of future checking).
- Submit the assessment item to other forms of plagiarism checking.

**Marks and grades released during term**

All marks and grades released during term are indicative only until formally approved by the Head of School.

**Special circumstances affecting assessment items**

*Extension of Time for Assessment Items, Deferred Assessment and Special Consideration for Assessment Items or Formal Written Examinations* items must be submitted by the due date in the Course Outline unless the Course Coordinator approves an extension. Unapproved late submissions will be penalised in line with the University policy specified in **Late Penalty** above.

Requests for **Extensions of Time** must be lodged no later than the due date of the item. This applies to students:

- applying for an extension of time for submission of an assessment item on the basis of medical, compassionate, hardship/trauma or unavoidable commitment; or
- whose attendance at or performance in an assessment item or formal written examination has been or will be affected by medical, compassionate, hardship/trauma or unavoidable commitment.

Students must report the circumstances, with supporting documentation, as outlined in the Special Circumstances Affecting Assessment Items Procedure at: [http://www.newcastle.edu.au/policylibrary/000641.html](http://www.newcastle.edu.au/policylibrary/000641.html)

**Note:** different procedures apply for minor and major assessment tasks.

**Students should be aware of the following important deadlines:**

- Special Consideration Requests must be lodged no later than 3 working days after the due date of submission or examination.
- Rescheduling Exam requests must be received no later than 10 working days prior the first date of the examination period.

*Late applications may not be accepted.* Students who cannot meet the above deadlines due to extenuating circumstances should speak firstly to their Program Officer or their Program Executive if studying in Singapore.
Students with a disability or chronic illness

University is committed to providing a range of support services for students with a disability or chronic illness. If you have a disability or chronic illness which you feel may impact on your studies please feel free to discuss your support needs with your lecturer or course coordinator.

Disability Support may also be provided by the Student Support Service (Disability). Students must be registered to receive this type of support. To register contact the Disability Liaison Officer on 02 4921 5766, email at: student-disability@newcastle.edu.au. As some forms of support can take a few weeks to implement it is extremely important that you discuss your needs with your lecturer, course coordinator or Student Support Service staff at the beginning of each semester. For more information on confidentiality and documentation visit the Student Support Service (Disability) website: www.newcastle.edu.au/services/disability.

Changing your enrolment

Students enrolled after the census dates listed in the link below are liable for the full cost of their student contribution or fees for that term.

http://www.newcastle.edu.au/study/fees/censusdates.html

Students may withdraw from a course without academic penalty on or before the last day of term. Any withdrawal from a course after the last day of term will result in a fail grade.

Students cannot enrol in a new course after the second week of term, except under exceptional circumstances. Any application to add a course after the second week of term must be on the appropriate form, and should be discussed with staff in the Student Hubs or with your Program Executive at PSB if you are a Singapore student.

To check or change your enrolment online go to myHub: https://myhub.newcastle.edu.au

Essential Online Information for Students

Information on Class and Exam Timetables, Tutorial Online Registration, Learning Support, Campus Maps, Careers information, Counselling, the Health Service and a range of free Student Support Services is available @ http://www.newcastle.edu.au/currentstudents/index.html
Student information and contacts

Various services are offered by the Student Support Unit:
www.newcastle.edu.au/service/studentsupport/

The Student Hubs are a one-stop shop for the delivery of student related services and are the first point of contact for students studying in Australia. Student Hubs are located at:

**Callagahan Campus**
Shortland Hub: Level 3, Shortland Building
Hunter Hub: Level 2, Student Services Centre

**City Precinct**
City Hub & Information Common, University House

**Central Coast Campus (Ourimbah)**
Student Hub: Opposite the Main Cafeteria

**Port Macquarie students**
contact your program officer or
EnquiryCentre@newcastle.edu.au
Phone 4921 5000

**Singapore students**
contact your PSB Program Executive

Other contact information

**Faculty Websites**
www.newcastle.edu.au/faculty/business-law/
www.newcastle.edu.au/faculty/education-arts/
www.newcastle.edu.au/faculty/engineering/
www.newcastle.edu.au/faculty/health/
www.newcastle.edu.au/faculty/science-it/

**Rules Governing Undergraduate Academic Awards**
www.newcastle.edu.au/policylibrary/000311.html

**Rules Governing Postgraduate Academic Awards**

**Rules Governing Professional Doctorate Awards**
www.newcastle.edu.au/policylibrary/000580.html

**General enquiries**
Callaghan, City and Port Macquarie
Phone: 02 4921 5000
Email:
EnquiryCentre@newcastle.edu.au

Ourimbah
Phone: 02 4348 4030
Email:
EnquiryCentre@newcastle.edu.au

The Dean of Students
Deputy Dean of Students (Ourimbah)
Phone: 02 4921 5806;
Fax: 02 4921 7151
Email:
resolutionprecinct@newcastle.edu.au
Written Assignment Presentation and Submission Details

Students are required to submit assessment items by the due date. Late assignments will be subject to the penalties described below.

Hard copy submission:

- **Type your assignments**: All work must be typewritten in 11 or 12 point black font. Leave a wide margin for marker’s comments, use 1.5 or double spacing, and include page numbers.

- **Word length**: The word limit of all assessment items should be strictly followed – 10% above or below is acceptable, otherwise penalties may apply.

- **Proof read your work** because spelling, grammatical and referencing mistakes will be penalised.

- **Staple the pages** of your assignment together (do not use pins or paper clips).

- **University Assessment Item Coversheet**: All assignments must be submitted with the University coversheet available at: [http://www.newcastle.edu.au/study/forms/](http://www.newcastle.edu.au/study/forms/)

- **By arrangement with the relevant lecturer, assignments may be submitted at any Student Hub located at**:
  - Level 3, Shortland Union, Callaghan
  - Level 2, Student Services Centre, Callaghan
  - Ground Floor, University House, City
  - Opposite Café Central, Ourimbah

- **Date-stamping assignments**: All students must date-stamp their own assignments using the machine provided at each Student Hub. If mailing an assignment, this should be address to the relevant School. Mailed assignments are accepted from the date posted, confirmed by a Post Office date-stamp; they are also date-stamped upon receipt by Schools.

*NB: Not all of these services may apply to the Port Macquarie Campus.*

- **Do not fax or email assignments**: Only hard copies of assignments will be considered for assessment. Inability to physically submit a hard copy of an assignment by the deadline due to other commitments or distance from campus is an unacceptable excuse.

- **Keep a copy of all assignments**: It is the student’s responsibility to produce a copy of their work if the assignment goes astray after submission. Students are advised to keep updated back-ups in electronic and hard copy formats.

Online copy submission to Turnitin

In addition to hard copy submission, students are required to submit an electronic version of written assignments to Turnitin via the course Blackboard website available @ [www.blackboard.newcastle.edu.au/](http://www.blackboard.newcastle.edu.au/)

Prior to final submission, all students have the opportunity to submit one draft of their assignment to Turnitin to self-check their referencing. Assignments will not be marked until both hard copy and online versions have been submitted. Marks may be deducted for late submission of either version.

Details of the assessment items are in the final section of this Course Outline.
Penalties for Late Assignments

Assignments submitted after the due date, without an approved extension of time will be penalised by the reduction of 5% of the possible maximum mark for the assessment item for each day or part day that the item is late. Weekends count as one day in determining the penalty. Assessment items submitted more than ten days after the due date will be awarded zero marks.


Refer - ‘Rules Governing the Administration of Assessment Items - Rule 000113’ available @ http://www.newcastle.edu.au/policylibrary/000113.html (section 18)

No Assignment Re-submission

Students who have failed an assignment are not permitted to revise and resubmit it in this course. However, students are always welcome to contact the Course Lecturer to make a consultation time to receive individual feedback on their assignments.

Return of Assignments

Students can collect assignments from a nominated Student Hub during office hours. Students will be informed during class which Hub to go to and the earliest date that assignments will be available for collection. Students must present their student identification card to collect their assignment.


Re-marks & Moderations

A student may only request a re-mark of an assessment item before the final result - in the course to which the assessment item contributes - has been posted. If a final result in the course has been posted, the student must apply under ‘Procedures for Appeal Against a Final Result’ (Refer - http://www.newcastle.edu.au/study/forms/).

Students concerned at the mark given for an assessment item should first discuss the matter with the Course Coordinator. If subsequently requesting a re-mark, students should be aware that as a result of a re-mark the original mark may be increased or reduced. The case for a re-mark should be outlined in writing and submitted to the Course Coordinator, who determines whether a re-mark should be granted, taking into consideration all of the following:

1. whether the student had discussed the matter with the Course Coordinator
2. the case put forward by the student for a re-mark
3. the weighting of the assessment item and its potential impact on the student's final mark or grade
4. the time required to undertake the re-mark
5. the number of original markers, that is,
   a) whether there was a single marker, or
   b) if there was more than one marker whether there was agreement or disagreement on the marks awarded.
A re-mark may also be initiated at the request of the Course Coordinator, the Head of School, the School Assessment Committee, the Faculty Progress and Appeals Committee or the Pro Vice-Chancellor. Re-marks may be undertaken by:

1. the original marker; or
2. an alternate internal marker; or
3. an alternate external marker (usually as a consequence of a grievance procedure).

Moderation may be applied when there is a major discrepancy (or perceived discrepancy) between:

1. the content of the course as against the content or nature of the assessment item(s)
2. the content or nature of the assessment item(s) as against those set out in the Course Outline
3. the marks given by a particular examiner and those given by another in the same course
4. the results in a particular course and the results in other courses undertaken by the same students.

For further detail on this University policy refer - ‘Re-marks and Moderations - Procedure 000769’ available @ http://www.newcastle.edu.au/policylibrary/000769.html

Preferred Referencing Style

In this course, it is recommended that you use the use the Harvard or APA in-text referencing system for referencing sources of information used in assignments. Inadequate or incorrect reference to the work of others may be viewed as plagiarism and result in reduced marks or failure.

An in-text citation names the author of the source, gives the date of publication, and for a direct quote includes a page number, in parentheses. At the end of the paper, a list of references provides publication information about the source; the list is alphabetised by authors' last names (or by titles for works without authors). For further information on referencing and general study skills refer - ‘Infoskills’ available @ www.newcastle.edu.au/services/library/tutorials/infoskills/index.html

Student Representatives

Student Representatives are a major channel of communication between students and the School. Contact details of Student Representatives can be found on School websites.

Refer - ‘Information for Student Representatives on Committees’ available @ http://www.newcastle.edu.au/service/committees/student_reps/index.html

Student Communication

Students should discuss any course related matters with their Lecturer or Course Coordinator in the first instance and then the relevant Discipline or Program Convenor. If this proves unsatisfactory, they should then contact the Head of School if required. Contact details can be found on the School website.

Studentmail and Blackboard

Refer - www.blackboard.newcastle.edu.au/

This course uses Blackboard and studentmail to contact students, so you are advised to keep your email accounts within the quota to ensure you receive essential messages. To receive an expedited response to queries, post questions on the Blackboard discussion forum if there is one, or if emailing staff directly use the course code in the subject line of your email. Students are advised to check their studentmail and the course Blackboard site on a weekly basis.
Assessment

**Essential Criteria in Assessment**

This course contains a compulsory group work component that must be satisfactorily completed in order for a student to receive a pass mark or better for the course. Students need to participate in small group work in order to satisfactorily complete this course.

**Group Work, Peer and/or Self-Assessment**


The assessment in this course involves group work. Both individual assignments and the group task are designed to contribute to your future practice. Social work practice involves working collaboratively with others including peers, clients, and community members. It also involves being open to having your practice evaluated by others and having a capacity to evaluate your own practice. The group task will therefore include assessment criteria that reflect these practice realities.

The group task will assist students to achieve a number of the course objectives. This includes the negotiation of differences of opinion within the group and taking a range of group task and maintenance roles.

Group tasks are graded as **satisfactory or unsatisfactory**. The specific criteria for determining the grade on each task will be discussed in class and provided in written form as part of the task. All group members will obtain the same result, unless a case is made to the course coordinator to exclude one or more group members from the final result. Such cases will be reviewed by the course coordinator in consultation with the Social Work Discipline Convenor. Groups or individuals with an unsatisfactory grade will be required to submit additional work to a satisfactory standard.

Groups are expected to work cooperatively in deciding how to approach the task and how work will be distributed and managed between group members. Some time will be spent in the first group meeting discussing group expectations and negotiating a group contract. Group members are to take responsibility for developing strategies for managing group processes and addressing any conflict that may arise in the group. The lecturer will be available to assist groups during the group meetings scheduled in class times and also during consultation times to discuss any concerns in relation to the content or processes entailed in the group task. Feedback will be provided on group performance.
Grading Guide

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade/Value</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fail (FF)</td>
<td>An unacceptable effort, including non-completion. The student has not understood the basic principles of the subject matter and/or has been unable to express their understanding in a comprehensible way. Deficient in terms of answering the question, research, referencing and correct presentation (spelling, grammar etc). May include extensive plagiarism.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pass (P)</td>
<td>The work demonstrates a reasonable attempt to answer the question, shows some grasp of the basic principles of the subject matter and a basic knowledge of the required readings, is comprehensible, accurate and adequately referenced.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Credit (C)</td>
<td>The work demonstrates a clear understanding of the question, a capacity to integrate research into the discussion, and a critical appreciation of a range of different theoretical perspectives. A deficiency in any of the above may be compensated by evidence of independent thought. The work is coherent and accurate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distinction (D)</td>
<td>Evidence of substantial additional reading and/or research, and evidence of the ability to generalise from the theoretical content to develop an argument in an informed and original manner. The work is well organised, clearly expressed and shows a capacity for critical analysis.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High Distinction (HD)</td>
<td>All of the above, plus a thorough understanding of the subject matter based on substantial additional reading and/or research. The work shows a high level of independent thought, presents informed and insightful discussion of the topic, particularly the theoretical issues involved, and demonstrates a well-developed capacity for critical analysis.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Assignments

**Assessment Items – Value and Due Dates**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Grade/Value</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Individual Assignment 1</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>18 September 2009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual Assignment 2</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>9 November 2009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group task</td>
<td>Satisfactory/ unsatisfactory</td>
<td>Various (see task outline)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Presentation 20 October 2009</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Individual Assignment 1: Organisational Change

Due: 18 September 2009 (Week 8)
Length: 3,000-3,500 words
Weighting: 50%

Organisations develop a life of their own and face continual challenges to remain relevant and useful to their target group. Social workers need to keep a critical perspective to ensure that the organisations in which they are employed address equality and social justice issues in providing a quality service to their clients.

Choose an organisation that you became familiar with in one of your field placements. Assume that you are a social worker employed as a team leader in the organisation and that you have decided that something about this organisation needs to change!

Note: Whilst you will use the real organisation as the basis for your organisational change proposal, it is recognised that you do not have all the finer details about the organisation. You may fabricate some of this information about the organisation as required for the assignment. As such, the organisation is, to some degree, fictitious. You should not reveal the name of the organisation, but should describe it in general terms only (eg. “a non-government organisation, providing a range of services to children and families”).

Management in the organisation has called for submissions from staff on aspects of the organisation that need to be changed, in order to:

- Improve the conditions for workers in the organisation, and / or
- Achieve a higher quality and/or more efficient service to clients.

Your submission needs to be succinct while covering all relevant points. Remember that it is likely to be read by a wide audience of managers and other staff from different professional backgrounds (in terms of roles and qualifications). The submission needs to be presented in an accessible format and you need to be careful with density of information (eg. over-explaining concepts) and use of terminology and jargon. The quality of the submission can easily determine whether or not your proposed idea is given any further consideration after the submission is read. The points about content in the next section can be used as sub headings in the submission.

Content and assessment – see next page …
You are to prepare a submission for management outlining your change proposal. You should draw on theory and literature to inform your submission and illustrate your discussion with specific examples. The submission should include:

- **Proposal summary:** an overview/synopsis of the proposed change and the reasons for the proposal.
- **Background:**
  - Description of existing systems, structure, culture, etc in the organisation that relate to the proposed change (e.g. that hinder service provision, impede staff achieving outcomes, or alter the stated purpose of the organisation) and some hypotheses as to how they came to be that way.
  - Overview of theory and knowledge of organisations that informs the proposal.
- **Proposal detail:**
  - *The change:* Description of what the proposed change would look like, e.g. in terms of practices, procedures, etc.
  - *The change process:* Recommended processes and strategies to effectively implement the change and manage the change process.
- **Potential Impacts:**
  - Description of how the proposed change may impact the organisation, practices, services, etc., considering both risks and opportunities.
  - Suggestions about how the change and the change process may impact clients, staff, and the community, considering both risks and opportunities.
- **Resource implications:**
  - Additional costs that may be associated with the proposed change (not specific cost figures, just noting elements of the change that imply cost savings and expenditure).
  - Other potential resource requirements and impacts (i.e. existing and additional).
- **References.**

**Assessment Criteria:**

- Demonstrated reading and application of literature on organisational systems, theory, culture, and change.
- Critical and theoretical analysis of the presenting organisational issues.
- Use of specific examples from the organisation to illustrate arguments.
- Demonstrated knowledge about the skills and strategies required to deal with organisational issues and change management.
- Creativity in problem solving.
- Demonstrated capacity to present a document that covers each required component of the submission in a cohesive, succinct, and informed manner (including spelling and grammar accuracy).
- Demonstrated capacity to draw on and appropriately reference relevant literature and other source material to support arguments and discussion.
**Individual Assignment 2: Group dynamics and process**

**Due:** Monday 9 November 2009  
**Length:** Paper: 2,500-3,000 words  
Video: 30 minutes duration  
**Weighting:** 50%  

This assignment is linked to the group task. It is a process recording and analysis of the dynamics and process of your ‘interagency group’ during the course of completing your group task.

**Preparation:**

**Video:** To provide material for this assignment your group is required to video record a number of your meetings during the semester. You should record at least three meetings: the first or second meeting, a meeting towards the middle of the task, and the final meeting. [Recording equipment will be provided]

As a group, select a ten-minute portion from three recordings of your group meetings and join these together (in chronological order) into one video on DVD (using Windows Moviemaker). The final video should include a title page with the names of all group members, and separator titles noting what meeting is to follow (eg. the number & date of the meeting).

**Journal:** To assist your final analysis of the group dynamics and process you should maintain a reflections journal during the semester. After each meeting you should record some reflections on the group dynamic and process during that meeting. This is not about the content of the meeting (the group task and associated actions); it is about the process (how the group worked together, what happened between members, your experience of the group, etc). These only need to be brief and can be built on in the assignment paper. You should include 4-6 extracts from your journal in the assignment and support it with some discussion and analysis in the context of other points you raise in the paper.

**Title page:** There will be a second marker for this assignment who may not be familiar with all the students in the course. On the title/ intro page of your assignment (not the cover sheet) include a picture of yourself so the marker knows who to watch when marking your paper and viewing the video.

Task – see next page …
**Task:**

Your task is to critically analyse the recordings of your group meetings using groupwork literature and knowledge about groups gained from experience and discussions during the course. This may include, establishment and contracting, types of groups, development, roles, dynamics, process, etc.

**Part A: Groupwork skills demonstrated on video**

Your skills in group participation and (where applicable) facilitating are being assessed. You need to demonstrate skills you have already developed in previous courses (ie. interpersonal skills) and their application in a group setting, in addition to newly developed skills in terms of groupwork. Your capacity to balance the views, needs and contributions of others, with your own, will be considered as part of the assessment. Your ability to apply the theory in a practice situation is equally important as your ability to critique your efforts (Parts C and D).

**Part B: Context summary**

Provide a brief summary of the context of the group and the focus you chose in terms of the task (Wood Report recommendations). Set the scene for the portions of the meetings that are included in the video, briefly describing the focus of each recorded meeting (this should give context to the entire meeting, only part of which is shown on the video).

**Part C: Process record and critique of application of theory to practice**

Provide a process summary of each meeting portion on the video. For each meeting portion, this can be in four parts - content summary, relevant theory, your thoughts during that part of the meeting, and your reflections with hindsight in terms of your role and the role of others, and the dynamics and process of the group (eg. how well did you and other members manage to apply groupwork theory in practice?). You should support your work with reference to relevant literature.

**Part D: Groupwork/ team work in the organisational context**

Discuss how groupwork theory and practice is relevant to work in groups and teams in organisational contexts (eg. workplace groups or teams, interagency groups), discussing the benefits and disadvantages in this context. You should incorporate reflections on your own values and principles as they are developing in the context of this work, and on your experiences in this group and placement. Once again, you should support your work with reference to relevant literature.

**Assessment criteria:**

- Demonstrated knowledge, understanding, and critical appraisal of the use of groupwork theory and skills in social work practice.
- Demonstrated understanding of theory as it relates to this particular group experience, the organisational context, and social work practice in general.
- Beginning skills in groupwork practice.
- Capacity to critique practice of self and others.
- Demonstrated personal reflection.
- Demonstrated capacity to present a document that covers each required component of the task in a cohesive, succinct, and informed manner (including spelling and grammar accuracy).
- Demonstrated capacity to draw on and appropriately reference relevant literature and other source material to support discussion.
Group Assessment Task: Interagency Group & the Wood Report

Due:
- Report briefing: 18 August 2009 (Wk 4)
- Lecturer briefing: 15 September 2009 (Wk 8)
- Recordings (for Ind Ass 2): Various between Wks 4 & 10 – Finalised 20-23 October 2009 (Wk 11)
- Presentation: 20 October 2009 (Wk 11)
- Self & Peer Review: 3 November 2009 (Wk 13)
- Group Process Feedback: 3 November 2009 (Wk 13)

Grading: Satisfactory / Unsatisfactory

There are a number of parts to this task. The primary focus of the task is the Report of the Special Commission of Inquiry into Child Protection Services in NSW (Wood, 2008) (referred to as the ‘Wood Report’ hereafter). Additionally, this task provides opportunity for you to experience working in an interagency group and to apply groupwork theory and skills in this context (this in turn will assist completion of the second individual assignment).

Child protection is the collective responsibility of the whole of government and of the community. Primary responsibility for rearing and supporting children and young people should rest with families and communities, and with government providing support where it is needed, either directly or through the funded non-government sector … The child protection system should comprise integrated universal, secondary and tertiary services, with universal services comprising the greater proportion. They should be delivered by a mixture of the non-government and state agencies, with DoCS being a provider of last resort (Wood 2008, p v).

Organisation and process:

Group membership

This has been pre-determined by the lecturer based on students’ most recent placement agencies. A mix of government and non-government agencies, and a mix of service focus, has been created for each group.

Agency representation

For the duration of this task, when in group meetings, each student will act as a social worker from their agency. This does require particular knowledge about your agency and its practices. It may help (on occasion) to consult with staff from the agency on matters related to the task, or to clarify practices and procedures. This is encouraged however be mindful of the workloads of those staff and arrange conversations with them in advance so they can factor it into their schedule (ie. don’t call at the last minute and expect them to be able to provide information on-the-spot, or to disrupt client or other work for you). It is important not to over-rely on staff from the agency you represent. Your placement experience should have been adequate for you to have sufficient knowledge and expertise and to be able to build off that when unsure about some things. It is acceptable for the purpose of this task for you to make some assumptions about the agency you represent.

Your experience and knowledge from your previous placement agency may also be relevant. Although you are representing the most recent agency, your previous experience may be used to inform the initiatives.

Continued …
Interagency group meetings

Several time slots in the course timetable will be dedicated to interagency meetings where each group can meet and discuss their task and work towards completion and their presentation. Time periods allocated to these meetings will vary between 1-2 hours, and this will be negotiated in class in terms of other class commitments (other subjects, presentations, and visitors). At least three of these meetings will be recorded for the second individual assignment.

Group process, roles and activities

In the course of completing this task you will experience working with a mixed group of agency representatives. It is important to consider the relevance of this to your future practice, and to take the opportunity to apply groupwork theory and knowledge to the process. [Note in the second assignment outline, you should keep a journal about the dynamics and process of this group].

It will be helpful to consider past experiences of group members in working in interagency groups or projects – eg. What worked well? What did not work well? And, outcomes, lessons for the future, etc.

There is no required process for the groups and for determining roles. These are open to the group to determine. For example, the group needs to decide how meetings will be facilitated (eg. will there be one facilitator/ chairperson, or will you rotate?), the same for scribing, etc.

Tasks:

Report briefing (Wk 4: 18 August 2009)

The Wood Report is extremely lengthy and it would be challenging for all students to read all of it in sufficient time to be adequately informed for their interagency group work. Everyone must read the Executive Summary and Recommendations section. To ensure the whole class is up-to-speed on the remainder of the report as early as possible each group will be allocated a number of chapters to read on the class’ behalf. In the week 4 class each group needs to provide an overview to the class of the chapters they read. A summary of the key points (no more than one page) should be provided to the lecturer. The summaries will be collated and posted on BB.

Once the interagency groups have decided on their focus the group should identify and read relevant chapters more thoroughly.

Lecturer briefing (Wk 8: 15 September 2009)

During group meeting time in week 8 the lecturer will visit each group for a 15-20 minute briefing. This should be about the current status of the task and how the group is going. This is a verbal briefing and does not require any documentation. The purpose of this briefing is twofold: (1) when working in organisations we are regularly required to provide briefings to supervisors or other staff about cases or other events. This assists us to check we are on track and to seek guidance to ensure the best possible outcomes; and, (2) when assigned group tasks students are often left to their own devices to prepare presentations that are part of teaching and learning in our courses. This briefing strategy is aimed at achieving the best possible task outcome and presentation for the group.

At any time subsequent to this formal briefing, groups can request additional consultation time with the lecturer (either during their meeting time or at another time suitable to the group and lecturer).
Interagency collaborative initiative

As an interagency group you are required to look at ways in which the agencies you represent can implement changes recommended in the Wood Report. You may choose a specific recommendation/s or you may take a broader view, encapsulating the overarching principles and ideas of the report into an interagency strategy that will improve collaborative responses to child protection issues. If choosing the latter, the end result needs to demonstrate clear links with parts of the Wood Report.

In developing this initiative you should consider:

- The most relevant aspects of the Wood Report for this particular group of agencies.
- The current and potential role of each individual agency in child protection (separate to any interagency collaboration).
- Existing links between agencies in the group – nature, purpose, processes, outcomes, what has been working, what has not been working, etc.
- Potential new links between agencies in the group – nature, purpose, processes, outcomes, if they would enhance or replace existing links between other agencies, etc.
- A collaborative strategy/initiative that involves all of the agencies in the group and that is consistent with one or more of the report’s recommendations.
- The potential impact of the proposed initiative on each agency’s organisation, eg. does this mean minimal change, some reform, or dramatic change? What will be critical for those organisations to consider? Etc.

Presentation & Workshop (Wk 11: 20 October 2009)

Each group will present their proposed initiative to the class via a presentation and workshop format. One hour will be allocated to each group. There should be four parts to the session:

1. A presentation overview of the proposed initiative (input from the presenting group). Examples of what you might include here are listed below. You may have other ideas. You may also choose to include some of these in the workshop/small groups section.
   - Brief overview of the partner agencies and their existing work in child protection.
   - Detail of the proposed initiative – what it will look like, risks and opportunities; and,
   - Examples of the implications for the partner agencies’ organisations.

2. Small groupwork/consultation. The focus of these sessions is determined by the presenting group as part of their planning. There will be 4 small groups (determined by the lecturer) each co-facilitated by two members of the presenting group;

3. Feedback; and

4. Sum up and conclusion.

Planning and facilitation of the workshop should include:

- Consideration of how to actively engage the interest of workshop participants and how to effectively facilitate the group process (include both didactic and interactive segments).
- Obtaining and preparing resource material that is current and relevant.
- Clearly introducing and explaining the content and structure of the workshop.
- Clear and concise presentation of material, supported by relevant handouts and a resource list. Note: these should also be provided electronically so that they can be made available through Blackboard.
- Utilisation of different theoretical perspectives to analyse the topic area.

Continued …
Assessment criteria (group presentation & workshop):

- **Preparation and organisation**: Time management, clear structure, clear roles and responsibilities.
- **Content**: Current information, clarity, relevance to audience, supporting handouts and resource list.
- **Application**: Workshop participants develop knowledge and skills that could usefully be applied in the practice and organisational context.
- **Theory**: Workshop participants enhance their capacity to analyse practice and organisational issues from different theoretical perspectives.
- **Process**: Attention to facilitation of the group, working with the group dynamics, actively engaging participants.
- **Creativity**: Engagement of audience, variety in presentation style.
- **Reflective evaluation of practice**: Feedback effectively sought and utilised.

Grading of Group Task:
This group task will be graded as **satisfactory or unsatisfactory**, based on the assessment criteria listed above. All group members will obtain the same result, unless a case is made to the course coordinator to exclude one or more group members from the final result. Such cases will be reviewed by the course coordinator in consultation with the Social Work Discipline Convenor. Groups or individuals with an unsatisfactory grade will be required to submit additional work to a satisfactory standard.

Recordings of group meetings
These will be used for the second individual assignment – refer to that section for details about group requirements. The final video should be complete and circulated to group members during Week 11 (20-23 October). It is anticipated that the final recording will be done in class time during Week 10. Completion and circulation of the video afterwards can be determined by the group but each group member must have a copy by the Friday of Week 11 to allow adequate time to complete the second individual assignment.

Self & Peer Review of presentation workshops: 3 November 2009 (Wk 13)
A final result for the group presentations will not be determined until after feedback from other members of the class. This will occur in Week 13. During the presentations in Week 11 each student will receive a peer review/feedback form with the assessment criteria listed. Notes should be taken during or after each presentation to inform review discussions in Week 13. It is much easier to recall the presentations after the fact if you have some notes.

During the review session each group will provide a general overview on how they think their presentation went, eg. What went well? What didn’t work well? What would you change? After this, each of the other groups will provide brief feedback to the presenting group making reference to their comments in terms of the assessment criteria. The presenting group should engage in conversation with others about the feedback.

Based on these discussions a final result decision will be determined for each group.

Group Process Feedback: 3 November 2009 (Wk 13)
This in-class activity will bring the course full circle to the groupwork workshops in weeks 1, 2 & 3. It will also assist completion of the second individual assignment.

As part of in-class activities each group will be expected to provide information and comment about dynamics and process of their interagency groups when completing the group task.
Readings

These are some preliminary readings for the two sections of the course – organisations and working with groups. They are available via Blackboard – short loans. They are recommended as foundational reading for the course and students are encouraged to identify and access other readings based on their identified learning needs and assessment tasks. This is complemented with a list of additional reference materials in the following section. Students will be advised in class if/when any of the readings below are required for class discussions and activities.

Organisations


Groupwork


**Additional Reference Material**

**Organisations – Texts**


**Organisations – Journals (examples)**

Academy of Management Review

Group and Organization Management

Harvard Business Review

International Journal of Organization Theory and Behavior

Journal of Change Management

Journal of Organisational Transformation and Social Change

Journal of Organizational Change Management

Leadership

Leadership and Organization Development Journal

Leadership Quarterly

Research in Organizational Behavior

Systemic Practice and Action Research

The Learning Organization
**Organisations – Novels, videos, etc**

You may like to intersperse your text book reading on work and organisations with novels, autobiographies and videos. Some of these will be available in your local library or video store:


*Modern Times* (video recording) (1936) Charlie Chaplin, NY


*Norma Rae* (video recording)


**Groupwork – Texts**


**Groupwork – Journals (examples)**

Group Dynamics: Theory, Research and Practice

Group Facilitation: A Research and Applications Journal

Group Processes and Intergroup Relations

Journal for Specialists in Groupwork