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COUN 520.B01: Group Counseling and Guidance

Emily K. Sallee

University of Montana, Missoula, emily.sallee@umontana.edu

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COUN 520 – Group Counseling
University of Montana Department of Counselor Education
Spring 2021 Course Syllabus

Instructor: Emily Sallee, PhD
Email: emily.sallee@umontana.edu Phone: 406-243-5273
Office location: EDUC 335
Office hours: By appointment

Teaching Assistant: Kanbi Knippling, MS
Email: kanbi.knippling@umontana.edu
Office location: EDUC 350A
Office hours: By appointment

Class Location and Time: Tuesdays 1:00 – 3:50, via Zoom (until further notice)
[Zoom: Meeting ID – 925 9148 8076 \(passcode: Group\)](#)

Course Content and Description:

Group counseling represents a vital approach to working with people who need to make changes in their lives. There is potential for harm when untrained facilitators attempt to run a group. Group skills can be utilized in various settings, including mental health agencies, private practice, schools, and professional counseling agencies.

The primary objective of this course is to teach the Core Training Standards as outlined by the Association for Specialists in Group Work (ASGW). Students will learn group leadership, group dynamics, theories of group development, group treatment planning, group assessment, and ethical considerations related to group treatment. As part of this course (and the ASGW Core Training Standards), students will also take part in an in-class experiential group process as well as a community-based group experience.

Required texts:

Jacobs, E.E., Schimmel, C.J., Masson, R.L., & Harvill, R.L. (2015). *Group counseling: Strategies and skills* (8th ed.). New York, NY: Pearson.

[Association for Specialists in Group Work \(ASGW\): Best Practice Guidelines \(2007\)](#)

[ASGW Multicultural and Social Justice Competence Principles for Group Workers \(2012\)](#)

Any additional readings (provided by instructor)

Supplemental Reading Materials:

Corey, M.S., & Corey, G. (2014). *Groups, process and practice* (9th ed.). Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole.

Yalom, I.D., & Leszcz, M. (2005). *The theory and practice of group psychotherapy* (5th ed.). New York, NY: Basic Books.

Geroski, A.M., & Kraus, K.L. (2010). *Groups in schools: Preparing, leading, and responding*. Boston, MA: Pearson.

Stoiber, K.C., & Kratochwill, T.R. (1998). *Handbook of group intervention for children and families*. Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon [in UM Library]

Course Objectives:

Core Training Standards ([ASGW, 2000](#)):

- A. Nature and Scope of Practice
 - a. Knowledge Objectives. Identify and describe:
 - i. The nature of group work and the various specializations within group work
 - ii. Theories of group work including commonalities and distinguishing characteristics among the various specializations within group work
 - iii. Research literature pertinent to group work and its specializations
 - b. Skill Objectives. Demonstrate skill in:
 - i. Preparing a professional disclosure statement for practice in a chosen area of specialization (COUN 610)
 - ii. Applying theoretical concepts and scientific findings to the design of a group and the interpretation of personal experiences in a group
- B. Assessment of Group Members and the Social Systems in which they Live and Work
 - a. Knowledge Objectives. Identify and describe:
 - i. Principles of assessment of group functioning in group work
 - ii. Use of personal contextual factors (e.g., family-of-origin, neighborhood-of-residence, organizational membership, cultural membership) in interpreting behavior of members in a group
 - b. Skill Objectives. Demonstrate skill in:
 - i. Observing and identifying group process
 - ii. Observing the personal characteristics of individual members in a group
 - iii. Developing hypotheses about the behavior of group members
 - iv. Employing contextual factors (e.g., family-of-origin, neighborhood-of-residence, organizational membership, cultural membership) in interpretation of individual and group data
- C. Planning Group Interventions
 - a. Knowledge Objectives. Identify and describe:
 - i. Environmental contexts, which affect planning for, group interventions
 - ii. The impact of group member diversity (e.g., gender, culture, learning style, group climate preference) on group member behavior and group process and dynamics in group work
 - iii. Principles of planning for group work
 - b. Skill Objectives. Demonstrate skill in:
 - i. Collaborative consultation with targeted populations to enhance ecological validity of planned group interventions
 - ii. Planning for a group work activity including such aspects as developing overarching purpose, establishing goals and objectives, detailing methods to be used in achieving goals and objectives, determining methods for outcome assessment, and verifying ecological validity of plan
- D. Implementation of Group Interventions
 - a. Knowledge Objectives. Identify and describe:
 - i. Principles of group formation including recruiting, screening, and selecting group members

- ii. Principles for effective performance of group leadership functions
 - iii. Therapeutic factors within group work and when group work approaches are indicated and contraindicated
 - iv. Principles of group dynamics including group process components, developmental stage theories, group member roles, group member behaviors
 - b. Skill Objectives. Demonstrate skill in:
 - i. Encouraging participation of group members
 - ii. Attending to, describing, acknowledging, confronting, understanding, and responding empathetically to group member behavior
 - iii. Attending to, acknowledging, clarifying, summarizing, confronting, and responding empathetically to group member statements
 - iv. Attending to, acknowledging, clarifying, summarizing, confronting, and responding empathetically to group themes
 - v. Eliciting information from and imparting information to group members
 - vi. Providing appropriate self-disclosure
 - vii. Maintaining group focus; keeping a group on task
 - viii. Giving and receiving feedback in a group setting
- E. Leadership and Co-Leadership
- a. Knowledge Objectives. Identify and describe:
 - i. Group leadership styles and approaches
 - ii. Group work methods including group worker orientations and specialized group leadership behaviors
 - iii. Principles of collaborative group processing
 - b. Skill Objectives. To the extent opportunities for leadership or co-leadership are provided, demonstrate skill in:
 - i. Engaging in reflective evaluation of one's personal leadership style and approach
 - ii. Working cooperatively with a co-leader and/or group members
 - iii. Engaging in collaborative group processing
- F. Evaluation
- a. Knowledge Objectives. Identify and describe:
 - i. Methods for evaluating group process in group work
 - ii. Methods for evaluating outcomes in group work
 - b. Skill Objectives. Demonstrate skill in:
 - i. Contributing to evaluation activities during group participation
 - ii. Engaging in self-evaluation of personally selected performance goals
- G. Ethical Practice, Best Practice, Diversity-Competent Practice
- a. Knowledge Objectives. Identify and describe:
 - i. Ethical considerations unique to group work (continuation from COUN 610)
 - ii. Best practices in group work
 - iii. Diversity competent group work
 - b. Skill Objectives. Demonstrate skill in:
 - i. Evidencing ethical practice in planning, observing, and participating in group activities
 - ii. Evidencing best practice in planning, observing, and participating in group activities
 - iii. Evidencing diversity-competent practice in planning, observing, and participating in group activities

CACREP Standards (2016):

1. Professional Counseling Orientation and Ethical Practice
 - c. counselors' roles and responsibilities as members of interdisciplinary community outreach and emergency management response teams
5. Counseling and Helping Relationships
 - m. crisis intervention, trauma-informed, and community-based strategies, such as Psychological First Aid
6. Group Counseling and Group Work
 - a. theoretical foundations of group counseling and group work
 - b. dynamics associated with group process and development
 - c. therapeutic factors and how they contribute to group effectiveness*
 - d. characteristics and functions of effective group leaders
 - e. approaches to group formation, including recruiting, screening, and selecting members
 - f. types of groups and other considerations that affect conducting groups in varied settings
 - g. ethical and culturally relevant strategies for designing and facilitating groups
 - h. direct experiences 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

School Counseling CACREP Standards:

2. Contextual Dimensions
 - e. school counselor roles and responsibilities in relation to the school emergency management plans, and crises, disasters, and trauma

Course KPIs:

- 2.F.2.d. Students can describe the impact of heritage, attitudes, beliefs, understandings, and acculturative experiences on an individual's view of others.
- 2.F.6.c. Students can describe therapeutic factors and how they contribute to group effectiveness.

Course Expectations:*Diversity Statement:*

This is meant to be a safe, welcoming, and inclusive classroom environment for students of all races, ethnicities, sexual orientations, gender identities/variances, ages, religions, economic classes, and ability statuses. As such, you will be encouraged and challenged to use language and basic counseling techniques that are respectful, inclusive, representative and culturally appropriate.

Attendance & Participation:

The syllabus details readings for each week. When students come to class, it is expected that the readings will be finished, and the students will be prepared to engage in meaningful discussion about them. You will receive a participation grade and this will reflect your professionalism including attendance, participation, preparation for class, and professional conduct. Attendance and participation will be worth **50 points** towards your final grade.

- **COVID Considerations: If you are unable to attend class or engage in remote learning activities due to COVID-related impacts, contact your instructor as soon as possible. If we are at some point able to resume in-person classes, all students will be expected to follow CDC guidelines, including maintaining a 6-foot radial distance from others, entering and exiting through identified doors, and wearing a mask covering their nose and mouth at all times; relatedly, eating and drinking in class will be highly discouraged.**

Assignments:

Assignments are to be turned in via Moodle on the day the assignment is due, unless otherwise specified. Only in the event of documentable extenuating circumstances are assignments accepted late. With the exception of documentable emergencies, late assignments will be assessed a 2-point deduction per day of lateness up to two weeks, after which late assignments will not be accepted.

Evaluation:

In lieu of a quiz or test, evaluation of the students' engagement with the course material will be assessed via the group proposal assignment and reflection statement at the end of the term. Throughout the term, student growth will be gauged by active participation during in-class and Moodle discussions.

Ethical Conduct:

In this course, as in every other course in the counseling program, it is expected that all students adhere to the ethical guidelines as outlined by the American Counseling Association's Code of Ethics, which can be found at <http://www.counseling.org/knowledge-center/ethics>. Some of the material discussed in this course is of a sensitive nature. It is expected that students will engage with the material and with each other in this course, while maintaining appropriate boundaries and behaviors. Please discuss with the professor any concerns you have regarding ethical conduct.

Academic Integrity:

Students are expected to practice professionalism and academic integrity in all assignments and class discussions. This includes but is not limited to treating other students and the professor respectfully, engaging in meaningful class discussions, thinking and writing critically and thoughtfully, creating original works, and citing all resources using APA format. Plagiarism will result in loss of credit for this course, and further consequences may result from the university system.

Students with Disabilities Notice:

If you are a student with a disability and wish to discuss reasonable accommodations for this course, contact me privately to discuss the specific modifications you wish to request. Please be advised I may request that you provide a letter from Disability Services for Students verifying your right to reasonable modifications. If you have not yet contacted [Disability Services](#), located in Lommasson Center 154, please do so in order to verify your disability and to coordinate your reasonable modifications.

Methods of Instruction:

This is an experiential course. A substantial portion of your grade is based on attendance and participation in a variety of activities. You are expected to be as fully engaged as possible during the experiential portions of the course.

Remote and Online Learning Etiquette:

This class will include a combination of remote learning methods (synchronous, or real time Zoom class meetings, small group work, guest presentations, student presentations, etc.). Below are some simple etiquette guidelines for participating in online video platforms (i.e. Zoom) both as a learner, a participant, and as a facilitator/counselor.

General guidelines:

- Reliable internet connection
- Camera and microphone enabled on computer
- Good front lighting
- Decent background
- Prepared (camera ready, not eating or attending to other tasks)
- Minimize distractions
- Appropriate clothing
- Direct gaze angle -- preferably have webcam at eye level
- Keeping microphone muted when not speaking

Potential issues/distractions:

- Attending to other tasks during class
- Unintended items shown during screen share
- Background noise
- Interruptions (by the other people in your home/setting)
- Eating
- Signs of boredom via utterances or behavior
- Alerts/notifications from technology (diverting eyes to see who is calling)
- Cam or mic on without knowledge

Please remember to open Zoom and troubleshoot prior to class (including webcam and lighting). I will provide a link to the Zoom classroom on Moodle, and specific instructions for how to access Zoom. I will review these expectations during our first scheduled meeting. One of the most important things is to minimize distractions, attending only to what is happening in the Zoom room. I will pay attention to signs of engagement in this potentially new learning modality, and work with you to make this the best learning environment possible for all students.

Electronic Device Notice:

As a matter of courtesy to your classmates and the instructor, please silence cell phones and any other electronic devices that make noise.

- *Laptop Policy* -- You are welcome to use your laptop in class for purposes of taking notes. Please be respectful of your classmates and the instructor, and do not engage in social networking, online chatting, or responding to emails during class.
- *E-mail Policy* -- You are assigned a university e-mail account that will be used by professors. Students should make every effort to get to know their account and check it regularly.

Land Acknowledgement:

This course is taking place on the indigenous lands for the Salish and Kalispel people. (Cited by the University of Montana's Diversity Advisory Council.)



Assignments:

1. **Happiness Group Experiential Activity (80 points) – 2.F.2.d.**

Each student will co-facilitate a group of undergraduate students enrolled in JSF's *Happiness* course. Basic weekly topics will be provided based on the *Happiness* course content, and the groups will run the first 90 minutes of class for ten consecutive weeks. Students will co-facilitate a 5-week group, and then observe a 5-week group (or vice versa). There will be time afterwards for debriefing together and/or in small groups, in addition to our course content for that day. Debriefing includes observation of the group process, dynamics observed, stages of group, leadership qualities, participant roles, and personal likes and dislikes. Each week during this group process, students will add a short entry to their Process Journal (10 total entries), closely attending to impact of heritage, attitudes, beliefs, understandings, and acculturative experiences on an individual's view of others in the group.

2. **Psychoeducational Group Attendance and Summary (40 points) – 2.F.6.c.**

You are required to attend at least 10 hours of group outside of class (if your group meets for less than 10 hours, or if you miss a group session, see me for an additional way to make up that time). Upon completion of the group (or the end of the term, whichever is first), you will write a 2-3 page summary and critique of the group process and the group facilitator's behavior as a group leader. I will provide resources for this required assignment.

3. Group Written Proposal and Presentation (70 points)

Each student will write a proposal to conduct a counseling group. This proposal should be written as if it were to be presented to an agency, organization, or school as an actual proposal to start a group. The proposal will include (a) a letter of introduction, (b) organizational and contact information, (c) mission, (d) leader credentials/qualifications, (e) description of the group, (f) goals and objectives, (g) 10-week plan, (h) intended population, (i) sustainability or financial plan and budget, (j) marketing strategy, (k) legal and ethical issues, and (l) rationale using current (i.e. within last 10 years) peer-reviewed literature. Students will design a brochure or flyer and present at 10-minute marketing pitch during which the materials will be presented. The proposal should be an APA-style (7th edition) document and is worth 60 points. The professional presentation is worth 10 points.

The length of the proposal should be 6-7 pages, with the following parameters:

- One (1) page should be your cover page for the project.
- One (1) page should be your cover letter to an agency/organization/school proposing the group. Besides selling the project, this letter should briefly mention how parental consent is obtained (for children), and how potential group members will be recruited, screened, selected, and oriented to the group.
- One (1) page should be an advertising/marketing brochure or flyer. This should include appropriate information for the potential group member and may include appropriate graphics. Be creative to attract attention.
- One to two (1-2) pages should be rationale for the group. Include information you have found in regards to Evidence-Based (i.e. researched) Practices. Document research that supports why the group will be effective. For example, is there evidence that suggests anger management groups for antisocial youth are effective or not? This should include a literature review on the group process and client population. What has been done with this type of group in the past? Or, if there is minimal literature, why would this group potentially work for the given populations, and/or specific topic? Although this is brief, students should write this section in APA format and expect to consider **eight sources** from recent literature (within last 10 years).
- One (1) page should address potential legal and ethical issues involved with the proposed group project (APA style).
- One (1) page should be a summary script for the group process. Design your group as a 10-week process, including topics to be covered and addressed each week. Group activities need to be developmentally, culturally, gender, and age appropriate. In addition, consider social, educational, emotional, and physical issues and challenges.
- A reference page should be included (APA).

Breakdown of points:

Attendance and participation: 50 points

In-class group experiential activity: 80 points (10 sessions + 10 journal entries)

Psychoeducational group attendance and summary: 50 points

Group written proposal and presentation: 70 points

= 250 possible points

A = 93%+

B = 83-86%

C = 73-76%

D = 63-66%

A- = 90-92%

B- = 80-82%

C- = 70-72%

D- = 60-62%

B+ = 87-89%

C+ = 77-79%

D+ = 67-69%

F = Below 60

Class Schedule:

Week	In-Class Topics and Activities	Readings
Week 1: January 12	Course Introduction: ◇ Review of syllabus ◇ ASGW Core Training Standards	ASGW Multicultural and Social Justice Competence Principles for Group Workers (2012)
Week 2: January 19	Introduction to Group Work: ◇ Ground rules and NORMS ◇ Cultural sensitivity and humility ◇ Leadership and co-leadership ◇ Facilitating Happiness groups	Jacobs et.al: ch.1 ASGW Multicultural and Social Justice Competence Principles for Group Workers (2012)
Week 3: January 26	Stages of Groups, Group Process, and Therapeutic Forces Purpose of Groups	Jacobs et.al: ch.2-3
Week 4: February 2	Planning Getting Started: The Beginning Stage and Beginning Phase Orientation to Happiness Group (John SF and/or Dan Salois)	Jacobs et.al: ch.4-5
Week 5: February 9	Basic Skills for Group Leaders Focus Happiness Group #1 - Process Journal: Entry #1 DUE Friday 2/12	Jacobs et.al: ch.6-7
Week 6: February 16	Cutting Off and Drawing Back Rounds and Dyads Happiness Group #2 - Process Journal: Entry #2 DUE Friday 2/19	Jacobs et.al: ch.8-9
Week 7: February 23	Exercises Introducing, Conducting, and Processing Exercises	Jacobs et.al: ch.10-11

	Happiness Group #3 - Process Journal: Entry #3 DUE Friday 2/26	
Week 8: March 2	Leading the Middle Stage of a Group Happiness Group #4 - Process Journal: Entry #4 DUE Friday 3/5	Jacobs et.al: ch.12
Week 9: March 9 NO CLASS 3/16	Using Counseling Theories in Groups Counseling and Therapy in Groups Happiness Group #5 - Process Journal: Entry #5 DUE Friday 3/12	Jacob et.al: ch.13-14
Week 10: March 23	Closing a Session or Group Happiness Group #6 - Process Journal: Entry #6 DUE Friday 3/26	Jacobs et.al: ch.15
Week 11: March 30	Dealing with Problems Situations Happiness Group #7 - Process Journal: Entry #7 DUE Friday 4/2	Jacobs et.al: ch.16
Week 12: April 6	Working with Specific Populations Happiness Group #8 - Process Journal: Entry #8 DUE Friday 4/9	Jacobs et.al: ch.17
Week 13: April 13	Group Written Proposal DUE Proposal Presentations (5) Happiness Group #9 - Process Journal: Entry #9 DUE Friday 4/16	
Week 14: April 20	Proposal Presentations (5) Happiness Group #10 - Process Journal: Entry #10 DUE Friday 4/23	
Week 15: April 27	Proposal Presentations (15) Course Evaluations	

Group Work Proposal (60 points) and Presentation (10 points) scoring rubric:

	<i>25 points</i>	<i>23-24 points</i>	<i>21-22 points</i>	<i>20 points or less</i>
<i>Content (25 points)</i>	All parameters followed thoroughly. Outside source requirements met (eight peer-reviewed sources within last 10 years).	All parameters addressed. Outside source requirements mostly met (eight peer-reviewed sources within last 10 years).	All parameters addressed, though clearly lacking thoughtfulness. Outside source requirements partially met (eight sources or within last 10 years).	Not all parameters addressed. Outside source requirements not met.
<i>Grade</i>				
	<i>25 points</i>	<i>23-24 points</i>	<i>21-22 points</i>	<i>20 points or less</i>
<i>Application (25 points)</i>	Proposal targets a specific population and is considerate of setting, legal/ethical, and diversity dimensions. Understanding of group formation and process evident.	Proposal targets a specific population and is mostly considerate of setting, legal/ethical, and diversity dimensions. Understanding of group formation and process is fairly evident.	Proposal targets a vague population and is not very considerate of setting, legal/ethical, and diversity dimensions. Understanding of group formation and process unclear.	Proposal does not target a specific population and is inconsiderate of setting, legal/ethical, and diversity dimensions. Understanding of group formation and process lacking.
<i>Grade</i>				
	<i>10 points</i>	<i>9 points</i>	<i>8 points</i>	<i>7 points or less</i>
<i>Format (10 points)</i>	Response is well-written, in APA format, with no errors.	Response is adequately written, in APA format, with few errors.	Response is marginally written or contains several errors.	Response is poorly written and contains several errors.
<i>Grade</i>				
	<i>10 points</i>	<i>8-9 points</i>	<i>6-7 points</i>	<i>5 points or less</i>
<i>Pres. (10 points)</i>	Presentation is well-planned, professional, and within the time constraints.	Presentation is adequate, mostly professional, and within time constraints.	Presentation is not well planned and/or not professional and/or too short or too long.	Presentation lacks planning, is unprofessional, and is either too short or too long.
<i>Grade</i>				
Total Points:				

Attendance and Participation: 50 points

50-46	Regularly asks questions or makes observations that indicate reflection, knowledge of readings for class, participates actively in small groups in class, attends class regularly (no missed classes and does not leave early or arrive late).
45-41	Occasionally asks questions or makes observations that indicate reflection, some knowledge of readings for class, participates in small groups, misses the equivalent of 1 class (3 hours) with prior arrangement, is never late or leaves early w/out due reason.
40-36	Rarely asks questions or makes comments that indicate familiarity with the topics prepared for class, does not actively participate in small groups, misses no more than the equivalent of 1 class (3 hours) w/o prior arrangement, is occasionally late or leaves early w/out due reason.
Below 36	Does not ask questions or make comments that indicate familiarity with topics for class, does not participate actively in small groups, misses class often, is often late or leaves early w/out due reason.

Basic Group Counseling Skills	Advanced Group Counseling Skills
Active Listening to the Individual (You)	Reflection of the Group Process or Norm
Active listening to the Group (You All)	Reflection of Affect about the Process/Norm
Reflection of Content to the Individual (You)	Question to the Group about Process or Norms
Reflection of Content to the Group (You All)	Linking Members in Content
Reflection of Affect to the Individual (You)	Linking Members on Affect
Reflection of Affect to the Group (You All)	Linking Members on Process
Question/Clarification to an Individual (You)	Encouraging/Supporting the Group (You All)
Question/Clarification to the Group (You All)	Encouraging/Supporting the Process of the Group (You All)
Summarizing for an Individual (You)	Mini-Lecturing/Information Giving for the Group (You All)
Summarizing for the Group (You All)	Modeling Self Disclosure – Content
Encouraging/Supporting the Individual (You)	Modeling Self Disclosure – Affect
Mini-Lecturing/Information Giving for the Individual (You)	Modeling Self Disclosure – Process
Scanning/Verbalizing Observations - Individual (You)	Scanning/Verbalizing Observations about the Group (You All)
	Response to address the Here and Now
	Drawing Out Response (You or You All)
	Cutting Off Response (You or You All)
	Response to Hold the Focus
	Response to Shift the Focus
	Response to Deepen the Focus
	Use of an Exercise/Activity
	Facilitate Feedback Loop
	Contracting
	Circular Questioning

Campus Safety and Emergency Procedures

[Campus safety](#) is of the utmost importance at the University of Montana and the Phyllis J. Washington College of Education and Human Sciences. *Emergencies are rare*, but if one should arise during class, everyone will need to work together. Be aware of your surroundings and familiar with some basic safety and security concepts. Emergency procedures will be discussed during the first class of each semester or session. Above all, remember to dial 911 to report all emergencies.

Emergency procedures are posted in every classroom. Should a building evacuation become necessary, know the evacuation route, the location of the nearest fire extinguisher and the location of the nearest area of refuge. (Areas of refuge are located at the elevator doors on the second and third floors.) Please notify your instructor at the beginning of the semester if you have special needs or will require assistance during an emergency situation.

[UM's emergency notification system](#) notifies the campus community of emergencies by sending subscribers a text or email. Sign up for notifications through Cyberbear.

Please report suspicious activity by calling 911 or (406) 243-4000. [An online form is also available](#). You may elect to remain anonymous when making a report.

[Active shooter preparedness](#) requires that we develop a survival mindset. [UM recommends the "Run, Lock, Fight"](#) response for an [active shooter](#) incident.

RUN

- Quickly assess your situation.
- Leave your belongings behind.
- Keep your hands visible for law enforcement.

HIDE

- Hide in an area out of the shooter's view.
- Block entry to your hiding place and lock the doors.
- Silence your cell phone and/or pager.

FIGHT

- As a last resort and only when your life is in imminent danger.
- Attempt to incapacitate the shooter.
- Act with physical aggression and throw items at the active shooter.

Finally, stay current with campus safety information by following [UM's Police Department](#) on Twitter @UMPublicSafety.

