

SYLLABUS

Death and Dying HSE K171
Fall, 2010

Monday 6:30 – 9:15p
Room D 211

Three Rivers Community College
Norwich, CT 06360

Instructor:
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Office Hours: Immediately after class and by appointment

Course Description

This course is designed to familiarize you with attitudes toward death, dying, grief, and loss. You will have opportunities to understand approaching death from several perspectives. The issues will include the organizational context of dying, cross cultural studies of death, and the personal struggle of terminally ill people and their families.

Course objectives. You will be able to

- 1) Understand societies' definitions of death and dying from a variety of perspectives.
- 2) Challenge and increase your own awareness of how personal attitudes and beliefs about death and dying develop, and influence the grief process.
- 3) Understand the issues facing people with life threatening illnesses and their families.
- 4) Describe the death and grief concepts and rituals as viewed from a variety of cultural and spiritual perspectives.
- 5) Increase awareness and competence in successfully working through death, loss and grief.

Required supports: Text: The Last Dance , DeSpeleider & Strickland
Software: Open Office (Get it free from www.openoffice.org)

Course Schedule

8/30	Introduction
9/6	No class
9/13, 20, & 27	Cultural influences, historical perspectives, and social attitudes Reading: Chapters 1, 2, 3, & 15. Reaction paper due 9/13
10/4, 11 & 18	Legal issues Reading: Chapters 5, 7, & 9. Funeral paper due 10/18
10/25	The Health Care System Reading: Chapter 4
11/1 & 8	Life threatening illnesses Reading: Chapters 6, 10, & 11 Research topics due 11/1
11/15	Life risks Reading: Chapters 12 & 13
11/22 & 11/29	Grief and Bereavement Reading: Chapter 8
12/6	Concepts of Life after Death and Near Death Experiences Reading: Chapter 14
12/13	Research papers Final paper due 12/13

Course Requirements

Class Participation –It is an expectation that everyone will participate in the class discussions. When participating, the important thing is the quality of your discussion rather than the mere number of words you use. Over talking can be as damaging to the group process as under talking.

Reaction Paper – Given a journal article, write a brief (two page) paper, noting at least one of the salient points from the article, your experiences with this point (if any), and your view of it. This paper is about your reaction to the article - you need not buttress your view, merely give it.

The articles:

The Ambiguous Dying Syndrome

<http://plp.trcc.comnet.edu:6009/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid=3&hid=108&sid=ee919277-6b98-4423-a7b8-5897f3887514%40sessionmgr113>

Concept Analysis of Good Death in the Japanese Community

<http://plp.trcc.comnet.edu:6009/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid=3&hid=108&sid=152f9d90-3d6e-4642-a0ee-3e47cde7c91b%40sessionmgr110>

Funeral Paper: consider your own death.

1. Read several obituaries to get a flavor of the format and information presented. Write your own obituary.
2. Plan your own funeral or memorial service. Include the following:
 - What do you want people to remember about you? What key words will they use?
 - Indicate how old you are and how you die
 - What type of service do you want? Will there be a theme? Who will participate and what will they say? What (if any) music will be played/sung? What (if any) readings will be delivered?
 - Where will the service be held?
 - Will you be buried, cremated, entombed, or cryogenically suspended? What clothing will you wear?
 - How will your estate be settled?
3. Write a separate section on your thoughts, emotions, and physical feelings that emerged as you prepared your own obituary and service.

Research Paper – A major (8 pages) paper on a subject of your choice from the topics we cover in the class. Be prepared to briefly discuss your topic by 11/1. This paper will be a formal research paper. Be sure to include the following sections: 1) your research question, 2) your thesis, 3) support for your thesis from others' research (from scientific journals), 4) arguments against your position (also from scientific journals), and 5) a conclusion framing your thesis within the written body of prior research. Give the references for all works cited.

Submit papers electronically. Please send them to my email address using Open Office. Send the papers to me by the class due date. Papers must be double - spaced. Spelling, grammar, etc. will count. Any plagiarism may result in failure for the course. Consult the Writing Center early and often for help as needed. Use APA format for the research paper only.

Examinations

Either weekly quizzes – 3 – 5 short essay questions on the information covered in the previous week's reading and discussion, **or** Mid-Term and Final Exams – Primarily short answer with some T/F, fill-in-the-blank questions.