



SW 617, Section 001
Death, Loss, and Grief
Spring/Summer, 2016
Room SSWB 3816
Tuesdays 6-10:00 p.m.

Professor: Debra Mattison
Office Phone: 734-763-1624
Office Room Number 2852

Email: debmatt@umich.edu

Please put SW617 in the subject line. Please allow 24 hours for email response Monday-Friday. Email is not monitored regularly on weekends.

Office Hours: I welcome meeting with any and all of you throughout the Semester and am happy to make individually scheduled appointments. I am available in the classroom prior to and after class and have regular office Hours to discuss any class questions or concerns.

By the second class meeting, students are responsible for reading the syllabus which serves as our guiding contract agreement for the term. Students are responsible for reviewing all reading and assignment instructions and class information posted on Canvas and tracking assignment due dates.

WELCOME and THANK YOU FOR BEING IN THIS CLASS

Thank you for choosing to invest your valuable elective hours in developing competencies and skills to assist persons who have experienced loss and grief. I believe that much of social work at its core is about loss and grief and I can think of no other topic that may be more universally relevant and applicable to your social work practice. Exploring and increasing your understanding of death, loss and grief will facilitate assessing, intervening and responding with compassion and competence in interactions with your clients, work places, colleagues and communities. I come to this course believing that it will be very meaningful for you in a variety of contexts both professionally and personally.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course addresses the theoretical framework of human loss and grief from a culturally and philosophically diverse perspective. It seeks to provide information about why and how humans grieve and how grieving is affected by type of loss, socioeconomic and cultural factors, individual personality and family functioning. Attention is focused on life span development and the meaning of death and loss at different ages. Various types of loss are discussed from an individual, family and socio/cultural perspective. The importance of understanding trauma and its relationship to grief and loss will be addressed. Coping and resiliency in loss are explored, emphasizing the diversity of human response and focusing on the significance of social groups in integrating loss. The formation and practice of

rituals, and diversity in religious and spiritual experience as a component of coping with loss will be discussed. While some interpersonal practice methods will be addressed, this course is NOT designed nor designated by the School of Social Work as a methods class.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

Upon completion of the course, students will be able to:

1. Understand the implications for practice and policy of the changing patterns of death/dying in the U.S., regarding socioeconomic status, age, gender, and cultural/ethnic patterns. (CSWE Competency 5)
2. Understand the different meanings of loss and the impact of loss on those grieving, caregivers, and larger social groups. (CSWE Competency 2)
3. Identify and describe responses and reactions of the various caregivers (including social workers) to death and loss and the impact of these reactions on client systems. (CSWE Competency 7)
4. Demonstrate increased awareness of the medical ethical issues in death and dying. (CSWE Competency 1)
5. Summarize the different theoretical models for understanding bereavement and grieving. (CSWE Competency 4)
6. Identify the practical issues and problems that arise for individuals and families following a death or major loss in the family and the significance of social groups in bereavement. (CSWE Competency 6)
7. Examine the variables impacting mourning (e.g. ability, age, class, color, culture, ethnicity, family structure, gender (including gender identity and gender expression), marital status, national origin, race, religion or spirituality, sex, and sexual orientation) in the experience and expression of grief for the family and/or person facing death and bereavement. (CSWE Competency 2, 3)
8. Discuss the ways in which violence affects the experience of death or loss, and the impact of layered loss when continually exposed to loss or violence. (CSWE Competency 2, 3)
9. Identify post-traumatic stress disorder. (CSWE Competency 8)
10. Discuss dominant themes of complicated mourning, including multiple losses, traumatized loss; disenfranchised and stigmatized loss, cultural genocide, and historical transmission of loss. (CSWE Competency 2, 3, 6, 7, 8)
11. Discuss typical ethical concerns related to death, loss, and grief. (CSWE Competency 1)

CSWE Course Competencies (EPAS 2015)

This course will address and support competency development in the following CSWE identified core competency areas:

Competency 1: Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior

Social workers understand the value base of the profession and its ethical standards, as well as relevant laws and regulations that may impact practice at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels. Social workers understand frameworks of ethical

decision-making and how to apply principles of critical thinking to those frameworks in practice, research, and policy arenas. Social workers recognize personal values and the distinction between personal and professional values. They also understand how their personal experiences and affective reactions influence their professional judgment and behavior. Social workers understand the profession's history, its mission, and the roles and responsibilities of the profession. Social Workers also understand the role of other professions when engaged in inter-professional teams.

Social workers recognize the importance of life-long learning and are committed to continually updating their skills to ensure they are relevant and effective. Social workers also understand emerging forms of technology and the ethical use of technology in social work practice. Social workers:

- make ethical decisions by applying the standards of the NASW Code of Ethics, relevant laws and regulations, models for ethical decision-making, ethical conduct of research, and additional codes of ethics as appropriate to context;
- use reflection and self-regulation to manage personal values and maintain professionalism in practice situations;
- demonstrate professional demeanor in behavior; appearance; and oral, written, and electronic communication;
- use technology ethically and appropriately to facilitate practice outcomes; and
- use supervision and consultation to guide professional judgment and behavior.

Competency 2: Engage Diversity and Difference in Practice

Social workers understand how diversity and difference characterize and shape the human experience and are critical to the formation of identity.

The dimensions of diversity are understood as the intersectionality of multiple factors including but not limited to age, class, color, culture, disability and ability, ethnicity, gender, gender identity and expression, immigration status, marital status, political ideology, race, religion/spirituality, sex, sexual orientation, and tribal sovereign status. Social workers understand that, as a consequence of difference, a person's life experiences may include oppression, poverty, marginalization, and alienation as well as privilege, power, and acclaim. Social workers also understand the forms and mechanisms of oppression and discrimination and recognize the extent to which a culture's structures and values, including social, economic, political, and cultural exclusions, may oppress, marginalize, alienate, or create privilege and power. Social workers:

- apply and communicate understanding of the importance of diversity and difference in shaping life experiences in practice at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels;
- present themselves as learners and engage clients and constituencies as experts of their own experiences; and
- apply self-awareness and self-regulation to manage the influence of personal biases and values in working with diverse clients and constituencies.

Competency 3: Advance Human Rights and Social, Economic, and Environmental Justice

Social workers understand that every person regardless of position in society has fundamental human rights such as freedom, safety, privacy, an adequate standard of living, health care, and education. Social workers understand the global interconnections of oppression and human rights violations, and are knowledgeable about theories of human need and social justice and strategies to promote social and economic justice and human rights. Social workers understand strategies designed to eliminate oppressive structural barriers to ensure that social goods, rights, and responsibilities are distributed equitably and that civil, political, environmental, economic, social, and cultural human rights are protected. Social workers:

- apply their understanding of social, economic, and environmental justice to advocate for human rights at the individual and system levels; and
- engage in practices that advance social, economic, and environmental justice.

Competency 4: Engage In Practice-informed Research and Research-informed Practice

Social workers understand quantitative and qualitative research methods and their respective roles in advancing a science of social work and in evaluating their practice. Social workers know the principles of logic, scientific inquiry, and culturally informed and ethical approaches to building knowledge. Social workers understand that evidence that informs practice derives from multi-disciplinary sources and multiple ways of knowing. They also understand the processes for translating research findings into effective practice. Social workers:

- use practice experience and theory to inform scientific inquiry and research;
- apply critical thinking to engage in analysis of quantitative and qualitative research methods and research findings; and
- use and translate research evidence to inform and improve practice, policy, and service delivery.

Competency 5: Engage in Policy Practice

Social workers understand that human rights and social justice, as well as social welfare and services, are mediated by policy and its implementation at the federal, state, and local levels. Social workers understand the history and current structures of social policies and services, the role of policy in service delivery, and the role of practice in policy development. Social workers understand their role in policy development and implementation within their practice settings at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels and they actively engage in policy practice to effect change within those settings. Social workers recognize and understand the historical, social, cultural, economic, organizational, environmental, and global influences that affect social policy. They are also knowledgeable about policy formulation, analysis, implementation, and evaluation. Social workers:

- Identify social policy at the local, state, and federal level that impacts well-being, service delivery, and access to social services;

- assess how social welfare and economic policies impact the delivery of and access to social services;
- apply critical thinking to analyze, formulate, and advocate for policies that advance human rights and social, economic, and environmental justice.

Competency 6: Engage with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities

Social workers understand that engagement is an ongoing component of the dynamic and interactive process of social work practice with, and on behalf of, diverse individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers value the importance of human relationships. Social workers understand theories of human behavior and the social environment, and critically evaluate and apply this knowledge to facilitate engagement with clients and constituencies, including individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers understand strategies to engage diverse clients and constituencies to advance practice effectiveness.

Social workers understand how their personal experiences and affective reactions may impact their ability to effectively engage with diverse clients and constituencies. Social workers value principles of relationship-building and inter-professional collaboration to facilitate engagement with clients, constituencies, and other professionals as appropriate. Social workers:

- apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks to engage with clients and constituencies; and
- use empathy, reflection, and interpersonal skills to effectively engage diverse clients and constituencies.

Competency 7: Assess Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities

Social workers understand that assessment is an ongoing component of the dynamic and interactive process of social work practice with, and on behalf of, diverse individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers understand theories of human behavior and the social environment, and critically evaluate and apply this knowledge in the assessment of diverse clients and constituencies, including individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers understand methods of assessment with diverse clients and constituencies to advance practice effectiveness. Social workers recognize the implications of the larger practice context in the assessment process and value the importance of inter-professional collaboration in this process. Social workers understand how their personal experiences and affective reactions may affect their assessment and decision-making. Social workers:

- collect and organize data, and apply critical thinking to interpret information from clients and constituencies;
- apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks in the analysis of assessment data from clients and constituencies;

- develop mutually agreed-on intervention goals and objectives based on the critical assessment of strengths, needs, and challenges within clients and constituencies; and
- select appropriate intervention strategies based on the assessment, research knowledge, and values and preferences of clients and constituencies.

Competency 8: Intervene with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities

Social workers understand that intervention is an ongoing component of the dynamic and interactive process of social work practice with, and on behalf of, diverse individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers are knowledgeable about evidence-informed interventions to achieve the goals of clients and constituencies, including individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers understand theories of human behavior and the social environment, and critically evaluate and apply this knowledge to effectively intervene with clients and constituencies. Social workers understand methods of identifying, analyzing and implementing evidence-informed interventions to achieve client and constituency goals. Social workers value the importance of inter-professional teamwork and communication in interventions, recognizing that beneficial outcomes may require interdisciplinary, inter-professional, and inter-organizational collaboration. Social workers:

- critically choose and implement interventions to achieve practice goals and enhance capacities of clients and constituencies;
- apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks in interventions with clients and constituencies;
- use inter-professional collaboration as appropriate to achieve beneficial practice outcomes;
- negotiate, mediate, and advocate with and on behalf of diverse clients and constituencies; and
- facilitate effective transitions and endings that advance mutually agreed-on goals.

Course Design Format

This course will consist of a variety of collaborative learning methods including interactive lectures with active student participation, guest speakers, readings, in-class application exercises, videos and written assignments. Understanding core class concepts and competencies and the ability to apply these concepts will be emphasized.

PARTNERSHIP: MUTUAL LEARNING COMMITMENT

My commitment is to provide organized, meaningful course material and opportunities for learning. Students are invited and expected to be active and engaged partners in the learning process by coming to class fully prepared, ready, willing and able to contribute to meaningful discussion and learning. I look forward to what we will experience and learn together.

PROFESSIONAL USE OF SELF

Respect for Others

- ✓ Students are encouraged and expected to demonstrate openness to ideas and perspectives different from one's own interests, views, belief and preferences.
- ✓ Listening and learning require a safe place and we commit to provide this safe space in this class.
- ✓ Sharing differing ways of thinking and how one sees the world is not always focused on changing others' minds, but about cultivating a way of being with others that fosters curiosity and a desire to see and hear another's point of view.
- ✓ We will be mindful that in our desire to advocate for our beliefs and values, that we do not commit the very acts of aggression, devaluation, marginalization, disenfranchisement and dismissal of others that we may have experienced and/or are trying to prevent.

Guiding Principles and Commitments

*Our commitment to learning is **in service to our clients**.*

We seek **mutual** growth, learning and benefit from sharing with each other.

*We **respect** even when we disagree or have conflict.*

We recognize and honor that **each person is at a different point** in their learning and life experience.

*We **do not assume** or pre-judge the intent or motivation of others. We commit to not intentionally harm another nor to assume that harm was intended.*

We seek to replace assumptions with **curious questions** and **invitations** to share and listen.

*We seek to **diminish fear, shame and blame** that immobilizes the learning process.*

We **view mistakes** and not yet "knowing" as a part of life-long learning and as preferable to stagnation and ignorance.

*We take responsibility to talking **with** people rather than **about** them.*

We find ways to be **curious** and **humane** in our interactions.

Personal Accountability in Learning

*Accountability shifts the focus from being **not solely about what one is taught**, to self-determination about what **one consciously chooses to learn**.*

Your learning is not just about academic learning but also involves learning and/or improving your life skills and professional use of self. Students are expected to take **personal responsibility** and be committed to their own learning experience by being active and responsible members of each class session. An optimal

individual learning experience is one that is **active, self-directed** and requires **engagement**.

Providing Feedback

Please provide feedback on your learning needs, how the class is going for you and suggestions for improvement throughout the class. We will do a mid-term and final evaluation, however the opportunity to respond to feedback is much more beneficial for the both professors and class members if it is ongoing and not just provided at the end of the term. You are encouraged to proactively address any concerns or needs as they arise.

RELATIONSHIP OF THE COURSE TO FOUR CURRICULAR THEMES

Multiculturalism and Diversity

will be addressed through the discussion of worker-client differences and power/privilege differentials based on culture, ethnicity, race, gender, age, and social class. Social system and case examples, possible interventions, and readings will reflect this theme.

Social Justice and Social Change

will be addressed through discussion of differences between problems that are responsive to interpersonal practice interventions and those which result from poverty, discrimination, and disenfranchisement and require systemic as well as individual intervention.

Promotion, Prevention, Treatment, and Rehabilitation

will be addressed through identification of ways to provide early intervention, guidance, and advocacy within systems, methods of preventing or mitigating later problems in loss and bereavement, and discussion of intervention theories and health care and social policies which support adaptive responses to loss that enhance later adjustment.

Behavioral and Social Science Research

will inform this course, especially current research in the following areas: bereavement and complicated mourning attachment and developmental requirements, response to trauma and maltreatment and resiliency/coping/adaptation.

RELATIONSHIP OF THE COURSE TO SOCIAL WORK ETHICS AND VALUES

Social work ethics and values will be addressed in this course using the NASW Code of Ethics. This course will increase awareness of the medical-ethical issues and decision making in death and dying. In addition, students will evaluate ethical issues involved in death and loss, and discuss the impact of the social workers values and reactions to these issues.

APPLICATION OF NASW CODE OF ETHICS AND PROFESSIONAL USE OF SELF

The NASW Code of Ethics outlines a set of core values that form the basis of the Social Work profession's purpose and perspective. The Code encourages behaviors which promote professionalism and respect for only for clients, but for colleagues and employers.

- *"Social workers should avoid unwarranted negative criticism of colleagues in communications with clients or with other professionals. Unwarranted negative criticism may include demeaning comments that refer to colleagues' level of competence or to individuals' attributes such as race, ethnicity, national origin, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, age, marital status, political belief, religion, immigration status, and mental or physical disability."*
NASW Code of Ethics 2.01
- It is expected that all students conduct themselves in a manner consistent with the Code of Ethics and demonstrate professional use-of-self behaviors in class including respect, courtesy and ACTIVE listening with fellow students, the instructor and guest presenters.
- As professionals, you are expected to maintain confidentiality and respect differences.
- You are expected to take personal responsibility and be committed to your own learning experience by being an active and responsible and response-able member of each class.
- Students are asked to honor confidentiality of the information shared by professor, colleagues and guest speakers in order to support a safe atmosphere for sharing and learning.

For further elaboration of the values and ethical standards inherent in social work, students are encouraged to access the Code of Ethics at: <http://www.socialworkers.org/pubs/code/code.asp> and the Student Guide (Chapter 13).

INTENSIVE FOCUS ON PRIVILEGE, OPPRESSION, DIVERSITY AND SOCIAL JUSTICE (PODS)

This course integrates PODS content and skills with a special emphasis on the identification of theories, practice and/or policies that promote social justice, illuminate injustices and are consistent with scientific and professional knowledge. Students are invited and expected to actively contribute from their experiences, field placement practice and knowledge of readings, etc. to help support and develop a vision of social justice, learn to recognize and reduce mechanisms that support oppression and injustice, work toward social justice processes, apply intersectionality and intercultural frameworks and strengthen critical consciousness, self knowledge and self awareness to facilitate PODS learning.

ACCOMODATIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Students needing accommodation for a disability should notify the instructor during **the first week of class** and provide the appropriate accommodation

recommendation documents to ensure needs are met in a timely and effective way. Resources are available (i.e. adaptive technology computing site, Services for Students with Disabilities, etc). Students with disabilities may contact Services for Students with Disabilities at 734-763-3000 or in Room G664 Haven Hall to coordinate reasonable accommodations. To the extent permitted by law, information will be treated as private and confidential.

STUDENT MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING

The University of Michigan is committed to advancing the mental health and wellbeing of its students. If you or someone you know is feeling overwhelmed, depressed and/or in need of support, there are services available. For assistance, contact Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) at 734-764-8312 or <https://caps.umich.edu>; University Health Services at 734-764-8320 or <https://www.uhs.edu/mentalhealthsvsc>. For alcohol and drug concerns and/or assistance regarding sexual assault contact <https://www.uhs.umich.edu/aodresources#sexualassault>. For a listing of other mental health resources available on and off campus, see <http://www.umich.edu/~mhealth/students.htm> or <http://www.umcpd.org/>

RELIGIOUS OBSERVATIONS AND MILITARY SERVICE

Students who will be absent during the semester due to religious observance and/or military services should notify me **during the first week of class** to facilitate appropriate accommodations and arrangements to obtain class materials and coordinate make-up class activities and assignments.

ACADEMIC CONDUCT AND HONESTY

Social Work students are held to the highest standards of academic and professional conduct. Cheating is the act of obtaining or attempting to obtain credit for academic work through use of any dishonest, deceptive or fraudulent means. Plagiarism is one form of cheating and is unacceptable and inconsistent with the NASW Code of Ethics and the Code of Academic and Professional Conduct which applies to all students enrolled in the School of Social Work. Any form of cheating and/or plagiarism will result in a failing grade for the relevant assignment and is grounds for expulsion. You are responsible for understanding the meaning of plagiarism and can refer to the Student Guide to the Master's in Social Work Degree Program or for further information see <http://www.lib.umich.edu/academic-integrity/resources-students>.

Distribution of Papers to Students

The federal informational privacy act prohibits anyone other than the student access to that student's papers. This means that papers cannot be left where anyone else can have open access. Papers should be returned by the instructor directly to or mailed to the student. During the semester, papers will be returned directly to students. Papers submitted at the end of the term may be returned by mail to the student, if the student supplies a self-addressed, self-stamped envelope to the instructor no later than the last day of class for return by U.S. Mail.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Attendance, Participation and Engagement

You and Your Learning are Important to the Class

As a graduate student, class attendance, completion of assigned readings for each class, participation and engagement are highly valued as these behaviors contribute to the quality of learning for the individual and the class as a whole and contribute to our ultimate goal of service to our clients. Predictability, reliability and consistency (“being there”) are core to any strong relationship as well as being incredibly important to our clients and our employers. Thus, “being here” is an important competency for this class.

A significant part of learning in this course is interactive and experiential with discussion, in-class activities and guest speakers which cannot be fully replicated or replaced with make-up work. Therefore, both your learning and the learning of your colleagues is benefitted by your attendance.

The School of Social Work Class Attendance Policy 5.03 states: It is expected that students attend classes and instructors are encouraged to monitor attendance. Therefore, attendance, participation and engagement are expectations and requirements (See Student Guide). Class grades will be negatively impacted by absences and/or lack of participation and engagement.

- Students are asked to notify me of any absence with as much advanced notice as possible.
- Our focus will not be on absences as excused or not excused but rather on promoting competency development.
- With a core focus on learning and competency development in service to our clients, **ALL ABSENCES FOR ANY REASON** will require completion of a make-up quiz AND a written assignment completion to ensure mastery of class content missed for each absence. This work will be graded on a Pass-Fail basis only.
- Students who choose not to do make-up work or do not initiate and complete make-up work within the required timeframe will receive a 3 point deduction per each class missed.
- Students are responsible for initiating contact with me to pre-arrange/ arrange for make-up quiz and to get specifics regarding additional written assignment as early as they are aware of an anticipated absence or as reasonably able to make contact after an unanticipated absence. In most cases, a reasonable timeframe is anticipated to be as soon as possible prior to a planned absence or within 1-2 days after an unplanned absence.
- Make-up quizzes and written assignments must be completed prior to the second class period following the absence.
- Students are responsible for obtaining information, handouts, announcements, assignments for missed classes.

- More than 3 absences for any reason will result in non-credit, non-passing grade for the course due to the significance of the portion of the course missed.
- Promptness in attendance is also valued as it conveys professionalism, respect and courtesy and creates a safe environment for sharing among one another and our guest speakers. We will begin and resume class promptly after designated break(s).
- Partial absences also negatively impact learning and will result in class participation deduction. A partial absence is defined as any one of the following: late arrival after class start time, late return from break after class has resumed and/or early departure before class ends.

Class Participation

Beyond physical presence through attendance, class participation is vital to the learning experience of this course and focuses on being emotionally and intellectually present and engaged in class each week. Active engagement and sharing of your diverse ideas, perspectives and experiences are highly valued and expected. In service to our clients, we must learn to use our voices on their behalf. Thus, participating in class will be an opportunity to practice and develop this skill even when it is challenging and/or not comfortable for you.

Students should be prepared each week to both be called on and to initiate knowledgeable sharing of their understanding, ideas, reactions and applications from readings in weekly class discussions and integration across progressive weeks. The quality and preparedness of responses illustrating completion of the readings will be used as a part of the assignment of grading for class participation and will differentiate grades of exceptional mastery (A) from grades of mastery (B).

Note Taking and Powerpoint Presentations

I share the following evidence based abstract with you for your consideration regarding note taking. Given this research, I will not be posting powerpoints on Canvas prior to class and will only be posting selected powerpoints as deemed most appropriate.

"Taking notes on laptops rather than in longhand is increasingly common. Many researchers have suggested that laptop note taking is less effective than longhand note taking for learning. Prior studies have primarily focused on students' capacity for multitasking and distraction when using laptops. The present research suggests that even when laptops are used solely to take notes, they may still be impairing learning because their use results in shallower processing. In three studies, we found that students who took notes on laptops performed worse on conceptual questions than students who took notes longhand. We show that whereas taking more notes can be beneficial, laptop note takers' tendency to transcribe lectures verbatim rather than processing information and reframing it in their own words is detrimental to learning." Mueller, P. (2014). The pen is mightier than the keyboard: Advantages of longhand over laptop note taking. *Psychological Science*: doi:10.1177/0956797614524581

Use of Phones, Computers and Other Electronic Devices

Being *present* is more than just "showing up." It involves *presence*. Presence is perhaps one of the most important interventions we offer to our clients and thus we will practice the art of presence in this class.

Research regarding portable technology (laptop computers, phones, PDAs, etc.) confirms that these devices can be a supportive classroom tool when used with a clear goal (i.e. note taking, interactive exercises) while also having negative consequences such as time spent on non-course tasks (i.e. emails, texting) and disruption to others (*CRLT Occasional Papers, No. 30 Use of Laptops in the Classroom: Research and Best Practices*).

Our colleagues and guest speakers who are sharing ideas, feelings, and experiences have a right to anticipate and expect our presence and professional use of self.

The focus of class time is understanding and discussion of the content presented, asking questions, sharing integrative ideas, giving examples, writing notes, practicing active listening and presence, or otherwise deepening your knowledge of the material in some way.

- Using electronic devices to assist in note taking and specifically directed class activities is encouraged for those who find this beneficial.
- Checking email, texting, searching the net for non-class related activities, reading non-class materials, etc. equate to talking/interrupting while someone else is talking and are not acceptable during class.
- Students who feel they must monitor email and texts are asked to do so during breaks and/or to leave the room to do so.
- Use of non-class related computer/phone/electronic devices/reading materials will be considered as the equivalent of being absent from class and will impact attendance and class participation grades with associated automatic deductions.

Assignments

The class assignments are designed to be incremental, building and demonstrating core competencies over time with a variety of assignments rather than focusing on only a few large assignments.

Assignments are designed to use a variety of evaluation methods including written papers, class room activities and discussions and in-class quizzes to allow opportunities to address strengths and preferences of diverse individual students. The goal of the course assignments is to promote integration and meaning of the material and competency in services provided to clients. You are empowered to self-direct your learning and assignments with some opportunities to choose areas of interest.

Students are responsible for reading the syllabus and assignment instructions/ grading rubrics and due dates.

Paper copies of written assignments are to be submitted at the beginning of the class on the date due with **all pages stapled together including relevant additional materials as assigned**. If you are unable to submit written assignments, please make other arrangements to get a paper copy of your paper to class or to my office by the assignment due date and time. **Emailed assignments will not be accepted.**

Assignment Descriptions and Rubrics

Written assignment descriptions and grading rubrics have been provided to clearly explain assignment expectations and point values. Please review these prior to completing and submitting your assignments to help you meet assignment criteria. You are encouraged to initiate asking questions regarding assignments and grading prior to submission.

Writing Skills

Written skills are essential to effective social work practice and as professionals we will be continually assessed and judged on our ability to express ideas clearly and professionally on behalf of our clients, our organizations, our profession and ourselves. Graduate level writing skills will be expected in this course including appropriate grammar, in-text citations, references, organization of thought, clarity of expression and creativity in your writing. The SSW Career Center offers writing assistance services and study tips for MSW students including proofreading, spelling edits and addressing basic argument flow issues. To make an appointment, contact ssw-cso@umich.edu. Writing labs are available through the Sweetland Writing Clinic in Angel Hall: <http://www.lsa.umich.edu/sweetland/>

APA format is the definitive source for standardized writing in the behavioral and social sciences and is required for assignments requiring referencing. Please refer to the APA Style manual in various UM libraries or the following sites:

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<https://sites.google.com/a/umich.edu/ssw-writing-help/apa-style>

<http://guides.lib.umich.edu/content.php?pid=39340>

<http://apastyle.apa.org.manual/>

<http://www.apastyle.org/learn/tutorials/brief-guide.aspx>

<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/>

Key components of APA format to be used in written papers include:

Title page with running head

Double spaced 12 font with 1 inch margins

Number pages except for title page in upper right corner

Indent 5 spaces for first line of every paragraph

Sources must be cited in the text of the paper(i.e. DeSpelder & Strickland (2015) state

Reference page with all sources at the conclusion of the paper

All direct quotes must be referenced with source and page number

Referencing internet sources: <http://www.apastyle.org/elecref.html>

Late Completion of Assignments

Meeting deadlines, planning ahead and timeliness in completing tasks are all important parts of our professional lives. Fairness goals guide consistent application of expectations for all students. Therefore, late assignments will not be accepted without deduction unless the circumstances are both rare and compelling. Commonly occurring life experiences (i.e. multiple demands/busy schedule, traveling, computer problems) are NOT considered grounds for exceptions for late assignments without deductions.

REQUIRED READING

Readings are considered a foundation of the course and you will be expected to know the content of the readings and to incorporate this knowledge into your assignments.

It is expected that assigned readings posted for each week will be completed prior to each class to enhance discussion and interaction. Grades of A will require completion of assigned readings. SCANNING the readings does not meet the definition of completion of the readings.

The amount of assigned text reading will vary from week to week, but overall, there is approximately an average of 2.5 chapters of reading from the assigned texts per week in this compressed summer term.

A list of discussion questions for each week's readings has been provided to help you in your class participation preparation.

Two Required Course Texts

DeSpelder, L. & Strickland, A. (2015). *The last dance: Encountering death and dying* (10th ed.). New York: McGraw Hill.

This text provides a broad overview and many additional reading references. It is important to have this revised edition which includes relevant updated material and references. If you choose to use a different edition, please be aware that assigned page numbers will vary and you will be responsible for making these adjustments by investigating updates and assigned page differences between editions.

Worden, J. W. (2009). *Grief counseling and grief therapy: A handbook for the mental health practitioner* (4th edition). New York: Springer Publishing Company.

This text serves as a clinical practice oriented text. Check interlibrary loans for availability at:

<http://proxy.lib.umich.edu/login?url=http://site.ebrary.com/lib/umich/docDetail.action?docID=10265308>

The required text have been placed on reserve in the UM Shapiro Undergraduate Library.

Diversity Texts (not required)

For those interested in exploring diversity texts, you may want to consider:

Parry, J. K., Ryan, A. S. (Eds.) (1995). *A cross-cultural look at death, dying and religion*. Chicago: Nelson-Hall-Publishers.

Irish, D. P., Lundquist, K.F., & Nelsen, V. J. (Eds.). (1993). *Ethnic variations in dying, death and grief*. Washington, DC: Taylor and Francis.

Additional Readings:

The amount of required text reading has been designed to provide you with a basic foundation while giving you freedom to individualize supplemental readings. You are expected and encouraged to do literature searches and additional reading to meet some assignments and to pursue areas of interest.

Additional relevant handouts will also be distributed in class for reading. Additional reference materials specific to class topics will be discussed throughout the term. Please refer to Internet list, relevant journal list and the grief and loss resource catalogs provided for additional reference materials.

GRADING

Academic standards matter to our clients and the responsibilities with which we are entrusted in our work with and on behalf of them.

Grades are the outcome of student efforts and demonstration of competency. They are “earned” not “given.” While this course has been designed to provide information and learning experiences, what you ultimately gain will largely depend on your use-of-self, your engagement in the class and your commitment to take responsibility for your individual learning.

Graduate school standards anticipate that for every credit hour spent in the classroom, students will spend 2-3 hours outside of the class room to complete readings and assignments at a level of mastery (i.e. 6-9 hours for a 3 credit course).

Final Grades will be based on individual personal performance and demonstration of course competencies and expectations including the quality of the work, demonstration of reading and ability to apply concepts. There is an opportunity to earn more than 100 points through bonus quiz questions. The total accumulation of points earned reflect competencies demonstrated in the context of one’s normal life challenges regarding time, obligations, multiple demands and the choices each student makes. When considering an individual assignment grade, i.e. 9 out of 10 points earned, think of the score as points earned rather than a percentage. For example, a 9 out of 10 is not a 90% overall course grade. It is 9 out of 10 points earned by demonstrating course competencies and one point unearned out of the total 100+ points possible.

Final Grades will be based on individual personal performance and demonstration of course competencies and expectations including the quality of the work, demonstration of reading and ability to apply concepts and professional use of self as defined in course documents.

Final letter grades are defined by the School of Social Work as follows:

- A grades** Earned for **exceptional individual performance and superior mastery** of the material. The use of A+ (100), A (95-99), and A-(90-94) should distinguish the degree of superiority.
- B grades** Earned for students who demonstrate **mastery of the material**. B+ (87-89) indicates performance just above the mastery level but not in an exceptional manner. B (84-86) indicates mastery and B- (80-83) indicate just below the mastery level.
- C grades** **Mastery of the material is limited.**
C- is the lowest grade which carries credit. C+ (77-79), C (74-76) and C- (70-73).
- D grades** Indicate deficiency and carry no credit. (below 70)
- E grades** Indicate failure and carry no credit.
- I grades** Incomplete grades can be given in **rare situations** in which significant unforeseen, extraordinary and compelling reasons prevent completion of work AND there is a **definite plan and date for completion pre-approved by the instructor.**
- If more than one-third of the required course work is incompleted and/more than 3 classes are missed, an incomplete grade will not be given & credit for the course is not possible.
 - In fairness to all students, incomplete grades will not be given based on requests for time extensions to complete assignments without a compelling reason and sufficient justification provided beyond common life experiences of having limited time or multiple class deadlines.
 - Students are responsible for initiating advanced contact with the instructor to request an incomplete grade and to establish a specific plan for completion. If no contact has been initiated by the student with the instructor regarding incomplete work and/or no specific plan has been established to complete work by the last day of class, a grade will be given based on the completed work submitted thus far. This may potentially result in a grade which carries no credit.

WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS

1. Syllabus Review and Learning Contract (4 points)

2. Written application & discussion assignments

4 journals /20 points total (1 point deduction for late completion)

RTAN Assignments: Read/Think/Analyze/Notice

These written assignments are designed to help integrate course readings and class discussions. Students should be prepared to be called on to share ideas and reactions from RTANS in weekly class discussions.

Please see separate document for specific RTAN assignment topics and questions.

3. In-Class Application Activities 10 points total

These in-class assignments focus on your ability to apply the readings and lectures and will be completed in class. You must be present to receive credit.

4. Insight Interview 20 points (4 points deduction for late completion)

This assignment gives you the clinical opportunity to interview someone about a loss in his/her life while applying and integrating your understanding of course concepts along with your personal insights and awareness into a 5-7 page paper. Specifics of this assignment are detailed in a separate document on Canvas.

**5. Self-Selected Diversity Readings Related to Grief and Loss
10 points total**

You are invited and expected to illustrate what you learned from these articles by initiating integration of them into classroom discussion.

This is an opportunity to select **2 peer reviewed professional journal articles** related to diversity and PODS issues regarding grief and loss in an area of your interest. You will be expected to summarize the major points of each article, integrate how the article applies to concepts from this course and the take-away messages you can apply to work with clients in a 2 page double spaced, typed paper for each article. **Please turn in a print copy of each article** along with each of your two written summaries.

6. Three In-Class Competency Quizzes Total of 26 points

This is your opportunity to demonstrate reading and understanding of course concepts and your ability to apply them. The quizzes will cover concepts from the readings and class discussions and will be cumulative. They will focus on designated core course competencies. Please see separate Quiz Core Competency document for details. **YOU MUST BE PRESENT ON QUIZ DATES TO TAKE AND RECEIVE CREDIT FOR THE QUIZZES.**

7. Class Participation, Class Attendance, Engagement & Professional Use Self 10 points

Class attendance, participation and professional use of self are core behaviors that are highly valued in this class and are a part of the learning experience which has relevant application to future professional practice. As social workers and other helping professionals, it is important to be able to speak out to advocate for clients and to address issues as a silent worker can have limited impact.

Class participation involves sharing and discussing class concepts and their application to our work. Participation is not simply talking and sharing your opinions. **Each week come prepared to discuss** what you have read, concepts from the class that apply to your field placement, what is happening in the news/TV that applies to death, loss and grief, etc. The quality of participation is important and effectively comes from reading the assigned texts,

analyzing theories and concepts and then noticing how to apply them to working with clients and organizations. Expectations are further defined in a separate Profession Use-of-Self document and a Class Participation Self-Evaluation Rubric document on Canvas.

Course Outline and Assigned Readings

May 12 Our Attitudes About Death and Dying
#1 Historical Perspective and Present Views
 Factors Impacting Attitudes

Required Readings:

DeSpelder and Strickland: Chapter 1
Posted Canvase Article: Pomeroy, E. C. (2011).
On grief and loss. *Social Work, 56(2)*, 101-105.

May 17 **WRITTEN RTAN 1 DUE**
#2 **Syllabus Review and Learning Contract Due**
NON-WRITTEN IN-CLASS DISCUSSION QUESTION
Chronic Illness; Life Threatening Illness and Living with Dying;
The Dying Process and Care of the Dying
Palliative Care, Hospice and Health Care System Issues

Required Readings:

DeSpelder & Strickland: Chapters 5 and 7
Worden: Chapter 1

May 24 **SELF-SELECTED DIVERSITY ARTICLE #1 DUE**
#3 **NON-WRITTEN IN-CLASS DISCUSSION QUESTION**
Grief Models and Theories: The Experience of Grief and
Mourning; Process and Tasks of Mourning
Variables Influencing Grief

Required Readings:

DeSpelder and Strickland: Chapter 9 (pp. 341-354)
Worden: Introduction (1-11) Chapters 2 & 3
Appendix (pp. 283-284; this is helpful with preparation for
competency quiz)

May 31 **COMPETENCY QUIZ 1**
#4 **NON-WRITTEN IN-CLASS DISCUSSION QUESTION**
Complicated Grief Reactions; Ambiguous and Chronic Grief
Theories of Complicated Mourning
Definitions, Symptoms, and Syndromes

Required Readings:

DeSpelder & Strickland: Chapter 9 (pp. 355-376)
Worden: Chapters 5 & 6
Rando Complicated Grief In-class Handout

- June 7
#5** **WRITTEN RTAN 2 DUE**
NON-WRITTEN IN-CLASS DISCUSSION QUESTION
Death and Grief in Adulthood; Life Stage Issues
- Required Readings:*
DeSpelder & Strickland: Chapter 11
Worden: Chapter 7 (pp. 187-216)
- June 14
#6** **CLINICAL INSIGHT INTERVIEW PAPER DUE**
NON-WRITTEN IN-CLASS DISCUSSION QUESTION
Death and Grief in Childhood and Adolescence
Socialization and Understanding of Death
Developmental Issues
- Required Readings:*
DeSpelder and Strickland: Chapter 2 and Chapter 10
- June 21
#7** **COMPETENCY QUIZ #2**
NON-WRITTEN IN-CLASS DISCUSSION QUESTION
Clinical Intervention with Grievers; Issues in Assessment and
Treatment; Spiritual Assessments
Counseling Principles in Facilitating Grief and Companionship
Diversity Perspectives in Experience, Expression and
Understanding of Grief
- Required Readings:*
DeSpelder & Strickland: Chapter 3 and Chapter 9 (p. 376-384)
Worden: Chapters 4 and 8
- June 28
#8** **WRITTEN RTAN #3 DUE**
NON-WRITTEN RTAN DISCUSSION QUESTION
Legal Issues; Defining Life and Death; Rights and the Dying;
Advanced Directives and Legal Planning
Ethical Principles: Medical Ethics and Technology
- Required Readings*
DeSpelder & Strickland: Chapter 4 and 6 (pp. 213-256)
- July 5
#9** **NON-WRITTEN IN-CLASS DISCUSSION QUESTION**
SELF-SELECTED Diversity ARTICLE #2
Suicide: Risks, Assessment and Impact on Grief
Traumatic Death: Violence, Disasters, War, PTSD
- Required Readings:*
DeSpelder & Strickland: Chapters 12 and 13
Worden: Chapter 7 (pp. 179-187)

**July 12
#10**

**WRITTEN RTAN #4 DUE
NON-WRITTEN IN-CLASS DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

Coping Mechanisms for Survivors
Rituals and Funerals; Honoring the Dead
Meaning Making

Required Readings:

DeSpelder and Strickland: Chapters 8 and 14

**July 19
#11**

**FINAL COMPETENCY QUIZ 3
NON-WRITTEN IN-CLASS DISCUSSION QUESTION
COMPLETED CLASS PARTICIPATION SELF-GRADING
RUBRIC DUE**

Personal and Professional Issues Related to Death, Loss, and
Grief
Caring for Self; Compassion Fatigue and Resilience
Semester Wrap-up and Reflection

Required Readings:

DeSpelder & Strickland: Chapter 15

Worden: Chapter 9