



GERO-503: END OF LIFE ISSUES

Effective Term

Spring 2025

BOT Approval Date

04/11/2024

Discipline

GERO - Gerontology-Aging Studies

Course Number

503

Course Title

End of Life Issues

Short Title

End of Life Issues

Credit Status (CB 04)

D - Credit - Degree applicable

Units**Lecture Units**

3.00

Total Units

3

Hours**Lecture Contact Hours**

48-54

Out of Class Hours Lecture

96-108

Total Contact Hours

48 - 54

Total Out of Class Hours

96 - 108

Total Student Learning Hours

144 - 162

Distance Education

Yes

Distance Education**Distance Education Type**

Both Fully Online and Hybrid Online

Fully Online Delivery Requirements:

- a. Students must be notified via the college schedule of classes and the syllabus for the class if proctored tests are required for this course
- b. Any planned face-to-face meetings, such as an orientation or study session, must be optional

c. The MSJC curriculum committee requires the use of accessible, asynchronous discussion as a component of every fully online course

Are you using publisher content?

No

Regular Substantive Interaction

Instructor-to-student, student-to-student, and student-to-content contact shall be distributed in a manner that will ensure regular substantive interaction (RSI) is maintained not only weekly but also for the duration of the course. Instructor interactions should be equivalent in time, quality and consistency to the engagement students would receive in a face-to-face course—for example, through announcements, discussion participation, personalized feedback, video messages, or other instructional communications. Instructors are expected to be responsive to student inquiries within a 24-72 hour time frame excluding holidays. RSI will be maintained through a variety of methods:

- Orientation - Students must be oriented to the online and face-to-face portions at the start of the course.
- Announcements - Announcements using the course management system must be posted at least weekly to keep students current on course events, due dates, materials, etc.
- Discussion Forums - Content-related discussion forums within the designated CMS will include appropriate instructor participation and will be initiated and maintained, with timely feedback provided. Instructors are required to monitor the discussions and related activities to provide guidance and direction. Open-ended discussion boards may be used to further learning and interaction.
- MSJC Communication – Instructor will use MSJC-administered communication tools (such as email or the designated CMS communication tools) to regularly communicate with and provide ease of access to students.
- Timely Feedback - Timely feedback on student work will be provided by the instructor, which may include comments and/or rubrics, within the Grades area of the designated CMS.
- Scheduled Meetings – Hybrid and synchronous courses will meet at regularly scheduled times. ADA Compliance - All course interactions and content must be designed with accessibility in mind and meet ADA requirements.

Additional Regular Substantive Interaction

Discussion boards- Course and technical issues are addressed in a separate discussion board. It is recommended that faculty will respond within 48 hours, except for holidays and weekends.

E-mail Communication - E-mail may reinforce announcements and discussion board communication. It is recommended that the faculty will respond within 48 hours, except for holidays and weekends.

Catalog Description

This course will focus on cross-cultural and historical perspectives, as well as attitudes, regarding dying and death. Age-based and sociocultural differences in attitudes toward death and dying are examined from a historical, political, social and cultural perspective. Students will explore the roles that hospitals, healthcare systems, caregivers, and hospices play in the dying process. Issues related to bioethics, euthanasia, suicide, funerals, grief, and bereavement as well as living wills, advance directives, organ donation, autopsies, and other legal aspects of dying will be presented. In addition, beliefs and religious interpretations about death and the afterlife will be examined.

Attach Supporting Documents

Sample Program Map Gerontology with Gerotechnology Certificate of Achievement (Revised April 2023).pdf

Riverside County Office on Aging Report.pdf

California Master Plan for Aging.pdf

AGHE Competencies.pdf

Centers for Excellence LMI_Gerontology.pdf

Occupational Outlook_ Social and Community Service Managers _ US Bureau of Labor Statistics.pdf

Deans Meeting_Gerontology-Aging Studies.pdf

Centers for Excellents LMI_Human Services.pdf

Occupational Outlook_Medical and Health Services Managers.pdf

Sample Program Map Gerontology with Mental Health Certificate of Achievement (Revised April 2023).pdf

Sample Program Map Gerontology with Caregiving (Revised April 2023) (1).pdf

Codes

TOP Code (CB 03)

1309.00* - *Gerontology

CIP Code

30.1101 - Gerontology.

Repeatability Code

No

Grading Option

Letter grade OR P/NP

Learning Objectives**Learning Objectives****Learning Objective**

1. Describe and recognize the impact on individuals and societies of the universality of impermanence, death and loss.
2. Express the various ways that people can live their own lives, and value their lives to address the inevitability of death and loss.
3. Recognize historical changes in the Western perception, experiences, and treatment of death and dying, bereavement and loss.
4. Illustrate the uniqueness of death, dying, and bereavement for each individual in terms of relationship, manner of death, complicating emotions, age, circumstances, etc.
5. Name the primary formulations of the complicated grief process.
6. Examine the experiences and challenges of the caregiver and strategies that can assist the caregiver at the end of life.
7. Describe key legal, medical and health approaches to dying and death such as hospice, palliative care, living wills, etc.
8. Appraise the multiple ways that people seek to "make meaning" of loss, pain, illness, etc., through spiritual care and/or social activism, and/or learning, and/or creativity, and/or relationship strengthening.
9. Interpret how the end of life, dying and death are perceived throughout the lifecourse.
10. Incorporate alternate, divergent, or contradictory perspectives or ideas about death and dying.
11. Students will cultivate sensitivity and empathy towards the needs of individuals facing the end of life, as well as the impact on their communities, fostering a holistic and informed approach to addressing death and dying within diverse cultural contexts.

Learning Outcome Information**Course Learning Outcomes****Learning Outcome**

1. Students will understand the theory and history, social and political implications of death practices, grief, dying and bereavement in the United States.
2. Students will understand the importance of life review at the end of life, and the differences between stages/ages of people in the expression of grief from a historical, cultural, spiritual and social perspective.
3. Students will gain understanding of varying perspectives and awareness of death, dying and loss .

Program Learning Outcomes**Learning Outcome**

Student will demonstrate knowledge of relationships among older adults, their families, and society.

Student will apply current theory and research in the interdisciplinary field of gerontology and its role in society to assess biological, social, and psychological issues that impact older adults and those who work with and care for them.

Student will integrate information and perspectives from various disciplines to understand the biological, social, and psychological aspects of aging related to diversity and equity shape the experience of aging.

Student will demonstrate the ability to conduct and evaluate gerontological information and research using a variety of methods

Student will understand and evaluate social policy and its impact on programs and services for older adults and examine how issues

Student will express ideas effectively in oral and written formats.

Student will analyze critical issues, aspects of ageism in American society and socially conscious behavior regarding the older population and apply knowledge to the field of aging.

Student will apply acquired interdisciplinary knowledge of older adults in varied career applications, such as the design of services for older adults, patient care, and engineering and technology for independent living.

Institutional Learning Outcomes

Critical Thinking: The student will analyze problems, gather and synthesize relevant information, evaluate ideas, information, and evaluate alternative points of view to create, innovate and implement effective solutions.

Cultural Awareness and Humility: The student will demonstrate knowledge of and sensitivity toward individuals of diverse ethnicity, age, gender, sexual orientation, and religious affiliations, as well as toward those individuals with diverse abilities and socio-economic

classes to respectfully interact with individuals of diverse perspectives, beliefs and values while being mindful of the limitation of their own cultural frameworks.

Civic
Personal
and Professional Responsibility

Content

Course Lecture Content

1. Death, Dying and Bereavement
 - a. attitudes toward death
 - b. demographics of death
 - c. Historical and current approaches to studying death and dying
 - d. death systems and the dying process
 - e. differing cultural approaches to death, dying and expression of bereavement
2. Defining Death
 - a. the meaning of death and dying
 - b. the American experience of death from a variety of cultural contexts
 - c. death meanings
 - d. relating to the dying person
 - e. death with dignity
 - f. contemporary attitudes toward death
 - g. contemplating one's own death
3. Aging, Loss, and Death over the Lifecourse
 - a. Childhood
 - i. loss of a child
 - b. adolescence
 - c. adulthood
4. Perspectives on Life After Death
 - a. Perspectives on Death and Life after Death
 - b. The Need to Look Beyond Death
 - c. Diversity in Perspectives
 - d. Religious Interpretations of Death
 - e. Temporal Interpretations of Death
 - f. Symbolic Immortality
 - g. Near-Death Experiences
5. Living With the Dying
 - a. Professional competence when working with elders
 - b. Understanding and Coping with the Illness
 - c. Treatment Options
 - d. Palliative Care
 - e. The Hospice Movement
6. Dying in the American Health Care System
 - a. The Medical Model Approach to Dying
 - b. End-of-Life Education in Medical and Nursing Schools
 - c. Developing a Sensitivity to Social and Psychological Needs
 - d. Developing Communication Skills
 - e. Biomedical Issues and Euthanasia
 - f. Ethical Behavior
 - g. Use of the Body in Medical Research and Training
 - h. Organ Transplantation
 - i. Euthanasia
 - j. Inequalities in the dying experience for those with language barriers, minority religious beliefs, economic disadvantages.
 - k. Inequalities in the dying experience for women

- i. pain management
 - ii. access to care
 - iii. generational healthcare anxiety
- I. Inequalities in the dying process for the LGBTQ+ population
 - i. access to care
 - ii. equitable and competent care in LGBTQ+
- 7. Suicide and Other Sudden, Unnatural Traumatic Deaths
 - a. Changing Attitudes Toward Suicide
 - b. Social Factors Involved in Suicide
 - c. Opioids and Suicide
 - d. Theoretical Perspectives on Suicide
 - e. Suicide through the Life Cycle
 - f. Rational Suicide
 - g. Other Sudden, Unnatural, Traumatic Deaths
- 8. Diversity in Death Rituals
 - a. Understanding Death Rituals and Post-Death Rituals
 - b. Mourning Behaviors
 - c. Customs at Death
 - i. Gender differences
 - d. Death Rituals of Major and Minor Religious and Cultural Groups
 - e. Business of death
- 9. Coping with Loss and Bereavement
 - a. The Bereavement RoleThe Grieving Process
 - b. Assisting the Bereaved
 - i. Gender Differences in Accessing Supportive Care
 - c. Coping with Sudden Death
- 10. Griefwork
- 11. Surviving Death

Methods of Instruction

Method

Lecture

Integration

End of life issues can be sensitive and highly subjective in nature, and just be addressed in a variety of modalities to best meet the needs of students with differing experiences around death and dying. Lecture will include both quantitative and qualitative findings and anecdotal content. Accessible supporting visual materials (video and Powerpoint) are used to introduce topics, and present multidisciplinary information about aging and the psychological and social issues surrounding issues at the end of life. Outside resources and websites may be integrated into the lecture materials to provide topical and current research on death, dying, bereavement, and the legal and social implications of death-related public policy.

DE Adaptations for MOI

Lectures can be communicated through the CMS in a variety of formats, including accessible Powerpoint presentations and lecture videos. Websites and online videos can be incorporated as part of these lectures. Lectures can be delivered through video conferencing platforms.

Method

Discussion

Integration

Discussions on topics related to death and dying, (student-to-student as a class or in small groups) will, with supporting materials (reading or multimedia) introduce concepts and provide a platform for integrating existing knowledge of end-of-life issues. Framed in a safe and respectful environment, discussions will encourage students to exchange ideas, share experiences around end-of-life issues, and gain insight into the experience of death and dying from both an individual and cross-cultural perspective. Instructions to discussion boards will meet accessibility requirements. All communication will use a course management system (CMS) to meet accessibility needs.

DE Adaptations for MOI

To ensure accessibility needs are met, student discussion will be achieved using asynchronous threaded discussions with other students and the instructor within the CMS, or by participating in synchronous discussions using accessible video conferencing platforms.

Method

Visiting Lecturers

Integration

Guest speakers, experts in the fields of death and dying, may be invited to offer lectures on specialized areas or topics related to end-of-life issues, including hospice, thanatology, estate, and legacy planning and medicine in order to enhance student learning and offer them exposure to various perspectives on death, and the end-of-life experience.

DE Adaptations for MOI

Guest Speakers can join online classes via CMS teleconferencing. It can be synchronous or asynchronous. Instructors may also elect to post videos/media interviews of guest speakers with closed captioning to ensure accessibility needs are met.

Method

Reading

Integration

Students will read chapters from textbooks, articles, case studies, oral histories, poetry, and other materials that help illustrate the concepts, themes, experiences relevant to understanding the experience of death and dying. These readings may come from the perspective of caregivers, bereaved or those who are at the end of life, and may include both legal, spiritual, psychosocial and biological perspectives.

DE Adaptations for MOI

To best meet accessibility needs, relevant readings can be delivered through materials provided in the CMS or the assigned texts, or students can access current research through MSJC's online library collections. Some papers and projects related to class readings may also use asynchronous threaded discussions in Discussion Boards, where students can compare their ideas from a reading and also compare research projects or share resources or websites related to reading content. Students can also use discussion boards to share common issues related to the project, such as Q & A forums where students can ask questions about the reading or project, and the instructor or other student can answer in an accessible format through the CMS.

Methods of Evaluation**Method**

Class Participation

Integration

Class participation is a crucial element in the learning process, especially when it comes to the delicate topics of death, dying, and end-of-life issues. Sensitively curated discussions, writing and journaling assignments and regular interaction with the instructor provides students with a safe and supportive platform for sharing their thoughts and ideas, often a space they may have never been granted in their prior education or personal experiences. In many cases, families tend to avoid open discussions about death and dying. Therefore, classroom discussions offer students a unique format and context for processing new ideas and concepts related to end-of-life. Class participation provides a platform to explore the different ways Americans experience the experience of dying and death, and exposes students to differing "ways of being" at the end of life based on culture, religion and family tradition, and introduces the barriers that may exist for older adults with social, language, economic or cognitive challenges.

Active engagement in discussion boards, along with the completion of written reflective and research assignments, is integral to assessing student learning in this context. These activities not only facilitate the processing of new information but also encourage students to actively contribute to discussions and other opportunities that enable them to demonstrate their competence. Through these assignments, students can not only showcase their cumulative knowledge but also exhibit their ability to integrate new

materials, thereby fostering a comprehensive understanding of these intricate and sensitive subjects. This open dialogue is instrumental in providing students with the necessary space and support to explore and grapple with these profound topics, which might have been neglected in other educational and personal settings.

DE Adaptations for MOE

Discussion forums and blogs within the CMS can be utilized to assess class participation in asynchronous courses and video conferencing tools can be utilized for synchronous online course. The instructor will employ available accessibility features within the CMS to ensure equitable access for all students during the evaluation process

Method

Exams/Tests

Integration

Intermittent assessments, including short objective tests of course-related learning objectives, offer students a valuable opportunity to gauge their understanding of new concepts surrounding end-of-life issues. These assessments serve as a pivotal platform for students to engage in open, structured, and safe expressions of their thoughts and reflections on the profound topics of death and dying.

By providing this opportunity for students to write, research, and make connections between theoretical approaches to death, legal requirements, challenges around the end of life, and even the larger concepts about life after death, the assessments play a vital role in helping students integrate the material into their own lives.

The test formats may encompass objective question types such as true/false, multiple choice, or short answer, as well as essay formats. These quizzes and exams may undergo grading either manually or through an automated grading process, facilitated either within the course management system (CMS) or using scantron technology. Instructors remain committed to providing correct responses, feedback, and grades within a two-week timeframe from the due date of these assessments. This ensures that students not only receive timely and constructive input on their performance but also have the opportunity to deeply engage with these complex and sensitive subjects, further enriching their learning experiences.

DE Adaptations for MOE

Unit quizzes offered through CMS will assess course learning objectives. Using accessible tools, including objective tests, closed-caption video responses, or other accessible technology, students will demonstrate understanding of core course competencies. Quizzes should be timed, open book/note, focusing on course learning objectives. Quizzes may be graded manually by the instructor or through the CMS auto-grading system. The instructor will provide correct responses, comments, and grades within two weeks of the due date of these quizzes within the gradebook using the CMS.

Method

Papers

Integration

Students are not only encouraged but also provided with the opportunity to utilize written expression as a channel for sharing their deeply personal and potentially profound thoughts and emotions about dying and death. This expression is significant both in relation to the theoretical material and their own real-world experiences with death within the context of their own social and cultural experiences. Through long and short-form research and reflection papers, they can delve into a range of topics linked to the end of life, loss, death, end-of-life policy, and planning. These assignments serve as a platform for students to apply learning objectives and skills while drawing from their personal experiences outside the classroom.

To ensure that students receive the necessary clarity and guidance, rubrics and explicit instructions will be made available to support them in completing these assignments effectively. Evaluation of these papers will encompass criteria such as correctness, clarity, completeness, and precision. Each student can expect to receive a grade and constructive feedback from the instructor within two weeks of the assignment's due date. This valuable feedback, accessible through the course management system (CMS) gradebook, assists students in their ongoing exploration of the intricate and emotionally charged subject matter surrounding the end of life.

DE Adaptations for MOE

Evaluation of student application of aging concepts will be submitted via CMS. Rubrics/clear instructions will be provided. The instructor will employ available accessibility features within the CMS to ensure equitable access for all students during the evaluation process. Papers will be evaluated through correctness, clarity, completeness, and precision. The student will receive a grade

and feedback from the instructor within two weeks of the assignment's due date within the gradebook using the CMS to meet accessibility requirements.

Assignments

Assignment Type

Writing

In-class and/or outside of class

Outside of class

Formative or Summative

Formative

Assignment

Assignment Description: Journal of Reflection on End of Life Issues

The journal consists of five entries where you will be asked to complete an out of class activity and then reflect on the experience in written format. Guidelines for the journal will be disseminated out separately and reflect key topics covered in course, including personal reflections on life after death, end of life rituals, fears and concerns about end of life, your personal experiences with end of life, and how you might want to be memorialized. This is your opportunity to consider the course materials from the perspective of what is "different" than your own experiences. Topics may include: 1) How do different cultures address euthanasia and assisted suicide, and how does their approach differ to your own? 2) We know that families and physicians from different cultures treat dying and death differently, for example "open" vs. "closed" awareness of dying. If you were to be a caregiver, how might you reconcile your own beliefs with those of your patient, family or their physician? 3) For those with limited financial resources, there are fewer choices in terms of end of life care. What social responsibility exists to care for the older adult who cannot afford to pay for quality palliative care or hospice?

Evaluation:

Using the rubric provided in the assignment instructions, student submissions will be evaluated on grammatical correctness, clarity, completeness, and precision. The student will receive a grade and feedback from the instructor within two weeks of the assignment's due date within the gradebook using the CMS.

Submissions via CMS will ensure accessibility requirements are met. Rubrics/clear instructions will be provided. Papers will be evaluated through correctness, clarity, completeness, and precision.

How assignment will be adapted in online format

The assignment will be assigned, submitted, and graded through the course management system (CMS). Online courses should make course material, including assignment instructions, supplemental resources, website links, etc., available to students through the CMS. Students will submit the assignment through the CMS and will be provided with instructor feedback through the grade book function, messaging, or other forms of confidential communication within 2 weeks of submission. Any material for students and communications must meet accessibility guidelines

Assignment Type

Writing

In-class and/or outside of class

Outside of class

Formative or Summative

Formative

Assignment

Assignment Description: Completing Your Advanced Directives

Advance Care Planning (ACP) is an important step in making sure that your healthcare wishes - whatever they may be - are honored in the event that you are not able to communicate them to your healthcare providers. It also provides us with an opportunity to explore the things that are most important to us (by drawing attention to our own death - as well as the wishes surrounding that). Be aware as you move through the document of your own cultural beliefs, and consider how cultures other than your own might

experience the document differently. Remember, we all come from different perspectives on end-of-life care, including medical and spiritual practices.

You will be using a preformatted tool titled "The Five Wishes," which is a user-friendly advance directive form which will help you understand the key decisions that need to be made in advance of your becoming unable to make healthcare and end of life decisions for yourself.

Think of Five Wishes as a sophisticated advance care planning document that asks the right questions to get you thinking about the big decisions that you and your family may have to make one day.

Your task is to complete the Five Wishes document on your own. **DO NOT SUBMIT THE DOCUMENT.**

Once you have completed it, please draft a 250 word REACTION paper. Tell me what it felt like to complete this document. Were there questions that made you stop and consider something that you had never thought about? Were there questions that made you uncomfortable? When you were finished, did you have an emotional reaction? If so, tell me about it. If not, tell me why you think you did not. No right or wrong answers, I just want to see that you 1) did complete it, and 2) really thought about it!

Using the rubric provided in the assignment description, student submissions will be evaluated on grammatical correctness, clarity, completeness, precision and evidence of understanding. The student will receive a grade and feedback from the instructor within two weeks of the assignment's due date within the gradebook using the CMS to meet accessibility needs.

How assignment will be adapted in online format

The assignment will be assigned, submitted, and graded through the course management system (CMS). Online courses should make course material, including assignment instructions, supplemental resources, website links, etc., available to students through the CMS. Students will submit the assignment through the CMS and will be provided with instructor feedback through the grade book function, messaging, or other forms of confidential communication within 2 weeks of submission. Any material for students and communications must meet accessibility guidelines

Assignment Type

Reading

In-class and/or outside of class

In-class

Formative or Summative

Summative

Assignment

Assignment Description: The Planning for the Final Celebration

Overview:

If you go to the grocery store magazine aisle, you will find at least four magazines dedicated to brides, weddings and celebrations. People spend years planning a wedding. In fact, on average it takes 18-months to plan a typical American wedding, which costs anywhere from \$12,000-\$150,000. Every detail is agonized over, and it is supposed to be a perfect day. It should be!

But, have you considered the other, largest celebration that we will ever have - even though we probably won't be there? Yep. Next to our weddings, the most expensive and elaborate party of our lives will be our funeral. No magazines for that! I haven't seen many Pinterest pages. In fact, for most of us, the planning of a funeral is about the LAST thing we want to put into our minds. Why? Well, we live in a death denying culture, so we never have the uncomfortable conversations. The average American funeral requires similar components to a wedding (flowers, venue, music, food, announcement/invitations) and layers the emotions of grief.

The Assignment

The first step in this assignment is to READ:

"RIP OFF: Funeral Scams" (AARP, June 2023)

Kemp, Elyria, and Steven W. Kopp. "Have You Made Plans for That Big Day? Predicting Intentions to Engage in Funeral Planning." *Journal of Marketing Theory and Practice*, vol. 18, no. 1, 2010, pp. 81–90, <https://doi.org/10.2753/MTP1069-6679180106>.

It's hard to imagine that the grief and our desire to honor our loved one with the "best possible," can lead to being taken advantage of by disreputable funeral directors. We need to understand what needs to be done, and explore some options outside of the traditional.

The second (and largest) step in this assignment is to prearrange your (or you can do a make-believe person if you are uncomfortable doing your own) own funeral and body deposition. -- Follow the points below and be sure to include the specifics on where, (name

companies) how, cost, etc. If you do not plan on a service, outline what you want to happen and why you chose that route. Find costs, companies, contacts, and locations. Be sure to include the specific how this will be carried out. This must be REAL world information. Include the URL or source for all of your information (prices, etc.)

In order to do this, you will need to do research. You can do all of this on the internet (fortunately!)

Your grade is based on how well you explain the following

How would you like for your remains disposed of? (burial, cremation, donation, etc.) How much will this cost? Who is the contact?

What services, activities or celebrations do you want to celebrate your life? Please explain in detail (food, music, speakers, etc.)

If you choose cremation, explain what a crematorium does you want and explain your impression of how that process works.

How does one get their body to the crematorium? What type of casket, if any, is needed? What would you want to happen to your ashes? (Note: there are LOTS of possibilities)

In your area, are permits required?

How are the ashes disposed of? If you're going to "scatter," do you need a permit? (Disneyland has a real problem with this....)

Cost - what are the costs involved in the entire process?

What do you want to wear?

Any special items you want to be placed in the crematorium with you? What is the cost of the place you choose?

Is it the same, less, or more than other places? Why?

There are lots of "alternate" ways to have funerals and manage both the celebrations and the disposition of the body. If you are interested in these alternatives, do the research! Explain how we can save money and environmental impact by not doing a traditional funeral (as opposed to cremation and scattering). At a minimum, it includes saving money on casket prices, storing the remains, and transporting the body. What are their rights? What choices exist?

Whether you plan a burial or cremation, should you have purchased a pre-paid burial plan? What is that? How does it work? What are the benefits? What are the complications?

And then.... As you finish up your logistics research, spend a moment considering the following. Prepare a one or two-paragraph response. It will remain private.

How do you want to be remembered? How do you want to remember someone that you have lost? In our culture, our lifetimes are often consolidated into the space of a newspaper article in the obituary column or a speech at our memorial services. Take some time to write the words you would want to express about the loved one for whom you planned the funeral above, or do a really hard task and write what you would want to be recorded in history as the summary of your life.

Evaluation:

Student work will be submitted to the accessible discussion board in the CMS and evaluated on content and organization. Please use the "post, response, feedback" model for your discussion posts. Feedback will be provided within two weeks through the CMS and evaluated for correctness, clarity, and completeness based on the rubric provided.

How assignment will be adapted in online format

The assignment will be assigned, submitted, and graded through the course management system (CMS). Online courses should make course material, including assignment instructions, supplemental resources, website links, etc., available to students through the CMS. Students will submit the assignment through the CMS and will be provided with instructor feedback through the grade book function, messaging, or other forms of confidential communication within 2 weeks of submission. Any material for students and communications must meet accessibility guidelines

Course Materials

Textbooks

Corr, Corr & Koka. (2024) (9th Edition) Death and Dying, Life and Living,), Cengage Learning Group.

OR

Leming, M. & Dickison, G. (2021) (9th Edition). Understanding Dying, Death, & Bereavement. Boston, MA: Cengage Learning Group.
(note: this is the most recent edition)

Class Size Information

Class Size

40

Class Size Category

A - Lecture/discussion 40

Diversity and Inclusion

Explain how diversity and inclusion(e.g., gender, culture/race, sexuality, etc.) is infused into the course.

Death and dying are two universal conditions that everyone will ultimately encounter, yet as a society we generally do not encourage open dialogue about end of life issues. There are distinctly different approaches to end of life between different cultures, and much of the current understanding of death and dying is framed around the experience of the dominant white culture. This course provides students with the opportunity to gain a general understanding of the biophysiology of death and dying, and opens dialogue about the very personal experiences of loss and grief. It also allows an opportunity for students to see how death and dying is treated among different cultures, and how important it is to honor different approaches to end of life and the decisions that come with dying and death, loss and grief, funerary practices and concepts of afterlife.

Describe how assignments, instruction, evaluation, course content, and interactions are contextualized for diverse learners promoting an equitable course.

This course provides a platform for students from diverse cultural backgrounds and perspectives to actively engage in discussions on end-of-life issues, fostering collaboration and exploration of new ideas. The aim is to develop a nuanced understanding of the varied ways we learn about aging across the cultural landscape. Emphasis is placed on practicing language that reflects respect, fostering a willingness to listen, and honoring diverse experiences.

Particular attention is given to cultivating sensitivity when discussing death, recognizing it as a highly sensitive topic that may evoke emotional responses. Students are encouraged to use non-inflammatory language, fostering an environment of empathy and understanding.

Students have equal opportunities to access all learning resources through CMS, supplemented by individual support from the instructor via CMS video conferencing. Various media, including accessible videos, are employed to ensure success in the area of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI). Instruction is delivered through recorded/captioned video and printed lectures.

Discussion boards, available in both student-to-student and student-to-instructor formats, facilitate asynchronous participation through accessible CMS video conferencing software. PowerPoint or video presentations are uploaded onto Canvas for student reference. Exams and tests are conducted fully online, encompassing multiple choice, short answer essays, or other formats, aligning with the learning objectives. These assessments adhere to accessibility guidelines and are evaluated through CMS. Instructor feedback is provided within two weeks.

The textbooks and supplemental materials are intentionally designed to address segments of the population often marginalized, introducing students to a life course perspective on the aging process. Engaging interactions between instructor-to-student and student-to-student prompt thoughtful consideration of age-related attitudes in society, broadening students' understanding of their futures.

Interactions

Explain how the course will incorporate student-to-student interaction.

The course places a strong emphasis on student-to-student interaction, recognizing that discussions about death and dying are profoundly personal and require a nuanced understanding. Encouraging group discussions as a method of evaluation, students are prompted to engage with their peers, sharing their interpretations of lecture content and readings, posing questions, and drawing connections between personal experiences and the theoretical foundations of biomedical and psychosocial theories related to the end-of-life experience.

Within this dynamic space, students are not only encouraged but also required to interact regularly, fostering a safe and respectful environment for sharing their thoughts on sensitive issues. These encompass topics like euthanasia, the right to life, death rituals, and concepts of the afterlife. By participating in these discussions, students discover the depth and complexity of human connections that extend beyond the classroom setting.

Utilizing a diverse range of collaborative strategies, including breakout rooms, small groups, and asynchronous discussion boards, students are provided with frequent opportunities to engage in peer-to-peer discussions, designed to foster a sense of community within the classroom. Additionally, students may work in small groups, both online and in class, collaborating on presentations, sharing research findings, and participating in group activities such as surveys or other interactive experiences.

Through the course management system (CMS) discussion forums, video-conferencing breakout rooms, and in-class settings, students are invited to collaborate on critical approaches and the practical application of course concepts. These formative activities are integral to building a deeper understanding and fluency in the subject matter, and to foster the creation of a classroom community that acknowledges the significance of these sensitive discussions.

Explain how the course will incorporate instructor-to-student interaction.

The instructor plays a pivotal role in guiding students through what may be unfamiliar and sensitive topics related to loss, grief, death, laws, rules, and medical ethics surrounding end-of-life issues. Employing a combination of written and video presentations, the instructor serves as a knowledgeable guide in explaining the multifaceted concepts of biopsychosocial aspects of end-of-life matters.

In addition to providing guidance, the instructor assesses assignments in accordance with a rubric and ensures timely feedback on all assessments. For instance, the instructor may moderate discussions on contentious topics, such as euthanasia, facilitate conversations on family death rites, and offer valuable insights to enrich students' understanding.

Moreover, the instructor takes on the role of modeling critical thinking, emphasizing the importance of understanding intersectionality, and encouraging students to draw connections between course content and their own personal experiences with end-of-life issues. This approach fosters a comprehensive and empathetic understanding of the subject matter.

To ensure that students receive the necessary support and guidance, faculty members may provide feedback on student assignments through various means, including video conferencing software, the grading functionality within the course management system (CMS), or individual meetings with students. This multifaceted approach serves to create a rich and supportive learning environment for students as they navigate complex and sensitive topics.

Explain how the course will incorporate student-to-content interaction.

Students are provided with multiple avenues to connect with new and unfamiliar concepts surrounding dying and death, enabling a profound engagement with the subject matter. Through the course management system (CMS) discussion forums, video-conferencing breakout rooms, and in-class settings, students actively interact with course content and supplementary materials, enhancing their understanding of course topics.

Instructors actively participate in class discussions, prompting students to apply both psychosocial theories concerning end-of-life issues and the legal and political challenges surrounding topics such as euthanasia, durable powers of attorney for healthcare, and the right to self-determination. These interactions foster a comprehensive exploration of the multifaceted aspects of these topics.

The course encourages student-to-content interactions through diverse methods of instruction, including lectures, individual and group activities, visual and virtual demonstrations, and experiments. Students are not only encouraged but also provided with ample opportunities to engage with the content, whether through readings in a book or engaging with visual simulations. For example, students may be tasked with selecting and discussing a particular challenge related to end-of-life rights and its impact on community discussions about death.

Instructors assume the role of not just providers of information but also models and facilitators of the ways in which students can effectively interact with course content. This approach supports students in the development of critical thinking, reflective skills, and the ability to identify sociological concepts in their daily lives, thus fostering a meaningful connection between the theoretical material and their real-world experiences.

Explain how the course will incorporate student-to-self interaction (metacognitive).

This course serves as a gateway to critical thinking, encouraging students to delve into new and multifaceted concepts surrounding end of life, dying, and death. Beyond the theoretical, it presents an opportunity for introspection, fostering a deeper understanding of these topics' relevance to students' personal lives, communities, and families.

Through a combination of readings, lectures, engaging activities, and discussions, students embark on a journey that challenges them to reflect on how society addresses the profound aspects of death and dying in contemporary times. Additionally, the course

delves into the complex and deeply personal legal issues that orbit around the end of life. It encourages students to explore how these issues, both personal and legal, are intertwined and poised to directly influence their own life satisfaction as they progress through the aging process.

By exposing students to these vital subjects, the course aims to open doors for meaningful conversations within families and broader communities. It facilitates a deeper awareness of cultural and sociological differences that manifest at the end of life, thereby promoting a richer understanding of the diverse ways in which individuals and societies grapple with these intricate and sensitive topics.

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