Course Description

Students in this course will explore the nature of death, dying, and bereavement in the United States. Topics covered will include:

- what is a "good death"
- where death occurs
- how social policy affects the experience of dying
- ethical aspects of terminal care
- how physician and medical perspectives affect the experience of dying
- how death affects family members
- race, class, and gender differences in death, dying, and bereavement
- what may be done to improve end-of-life care

Required Readings:


Additional required weekly readings will be made available on the D2L site.
Objectives:

In this course we will be considering a number of perennial questions. To what extent are our beliefs about death largely social constructs? Is there a best way to die or will what is considered "appropriate" vary? To what extent are our lives driven by our need to deny the reality that each of us will one die?

While this course is a 410/510 level course, I recognize that for many of you this will be the first exposure to the sociology of dying and death. Accordingly, part of the purpose of this course is to provide you with opportunities to critically analyze your personal experiences and understanding of dying, death and bereavement. Additionally, this course is designed to provide you with the opportunity to develop your analytic and written skills.

Course format and expectations

For Soc 410 students: this is a fully online course.

For Soc 510 students and Hon 410 students: this is a hybrid course, with both online and in-class components.

This course is designed as a seminar course, so the style and expectations may be different from other courses that you have taken. While I chose not to have a textbook (since the average costs of the textbooks were over a hundred dollars), there will still be a significant amount of both reading and writing in this course. Journal articles will be assigned most weeks, in addition to the two required books.

This is a four credit class, which would be approximately 3.5 classroom hours per week for a 10 week term. Studying and homework is on top of these hours (the general expectation is usually 2-4 hours per credit per week). Additionally, online classes require more work than in-person classes since all communication is done through the written word. This means that you should be devoting approximately 13.5 hours per week to the readings, online discussions, journals, and papers. It could take you more (or less) time. Students are expected to complete all requirements for the course in order to receive a grade. Specific details for assignments can be found in each assignment description.

A 400-level course requires a high level of independent thinking, organization, and self-discipline. While these skills are essential for success in all upper division courses, they are even more critical in an online course. You are expected to interact with your community of students in this course - in other words, be an active participant not a passive learner. You will not do well in this course if you fall behind on your readings, or do not actively, thoughtfully, and respectfully participate in discussions and coursework.

I encourage you to think seriously about whether you are willing to commit the time and effort necessary to be successful in this course.
Course requirements and evaluation

Prior computer/word processing experience is highly recommended. If this is the first class that you have taken using D2L please take advantage of the trainings offered at PSU to familiarize yourself with the online system and requirements. Regular and reliable access to the internet is mandatory. Problems accessing the course due to computer or internet issues will not be taken into consideration when grading.

Students are expected to complete all requirements for the course in order to receive a passing grade. Grades are assigned based on points earned for each assignment. Details about expectations and evaluation of specific assignments will be included in the assignment descriptions.

Your grades will be based on the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Percent of Grade</th>
<th>Soc 410</th>
<th>Soc 510</th>
<th>Hon 410</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Journal</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>16.3%</td>
<td>17.7%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussion Posts</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>24.4%</td>
<td>26.5%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussion Replies</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>4.1%</td>
<td>4.4%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paper &quot;Prep&quot;</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>3.3%</td>
<td>3.5%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paper Draft and Peer Review</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>7.3%</td>
<td>8.0%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Paper</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>12.2%</td>
<td>13.3%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ABQs</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>16.3%</td>
<td>17.7%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seminar presentation 1</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>8.1%</td>
<td>8.8%</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Seminar presentation 2</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>8.1%</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td></td>
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Final grades will be assigned based on percent total:

A   93-100  C   73-76.9
A-  90-92.9  C-  70-72.9
B+  87-89.9  D+  67-69.9
B   83-86.9  D   63-66.9
B-  80-82.9  D-  60-62.9
C+  77-79.9  F   < 60
HON 410 students: you are expected to attend the in-class portion of this course. You are allowed to miss ONE of these sessions. For each class that you miss beyond that, your course grade will drop. (We will discuss how this works at the first meeting).

SOC 510 students: you are expected to attend the in-class portion of this course. You are allowed to miss ONE of these sessions. For each class that you miss beyond that, your course grade will drop. (We will discuss how this works at the first meeting). As graduate students, there will be additional expectations for your work in the annotated bibliography, as well as in the in-class portion of the class. The expectation is that each assignment and exercise gives you the opportunity to really develop yourself as an academic. I want you to take some risks in your analysis and application of theory. The expectations of your behavior and work will be held to a graduate level.

Confidentiality

In respecting each other’s experiences and creating a safe environment, students should maintain confidentiality at all times. Students' individual experiences regarding class may be discussed with friends and colleagues outside of class. However, students may not discuss other students' experiences, and must refrain from using any identifying information about their colleagues. Because of the nature of this topic, as the instructor I reserve the right to break confidentiality if I am concerned about a student's mental or physical well-being. If you become concerned about another student, please contact me directly. (I need to reiterate here - I am not a counselor and this class is not designed to be used for personal counseling.)

Participation

This class is designed for students to do individual work as well as to learn from one another. Participation in the online discussions and activities is therefore mandatory. The expectation is that you check into D2L a minimum of 2 times a week. Additionally, participation in this course requires that your participation is thoughtful and respectful.

Written work

All written work should be professional and polished, prepared in a recognized citation format (either ASA or APA), including proper citations and references. Journal entries and discussion posts can be more informal, but I expect proper spelling and complete sentences. Documents should be prepared and submitted in a standard word processing format. Due dates will be strictly enforced, please contact both the instructor and the TA prior to the due date if you have a compelling and legitimate reason that you need to have an exception to this rule. Please see each assignment for due dates. **Paper Drafts (due Week 8) may not be accepted late. Students who do not turn in a paper draft will not be able to review a peer’s paper and will lose all points for both paper draft and peer review.**
Accommodations

Students in need of accommodations due to a disability should contact the Disability Resource Center (http://www.pdx.edu/drc/) and notify me as soon as possible to arrange appropriate support.

Instructor availability

Please note that neither I nor the TA will respond to each and every post but we will read them and post questions or redirect if necessary.

Both the TA and I are available to answer questions via email or by appointment. My email responses will most likely be between 2-4 pm on Tuesdays and Thursdays. I will NOT be checking your emails over the weekends. It is your responsibility to ensure that your important messages are received in a timely manner - do not wait until just before an assignment is due and expect me to respond to you immediately. Just as I will not give you "pop" quizzes, you cannot give me "pop" emails.

Academic Integrity

Students are expected to maintain the highest standards of academic integrity. Cheating or plagiarism will not be tolerated. The University describes academic dishonesty in the Student Code of Conduct as “the act of knowingly or intentionally seeking to claim credit for the work or effort of another person or participation in such acts. This includes, but is not limited to: (a) cheating, (b) fraud, (c) plagiarism, such as word for word copying, using borrowed words or phrases from original text into new patterns without attribution, or paraphrasing another writer's ideas; (d) The buying or selling of all or any portion of course assignments and research papers; (e) Performing academic assignments (including tests and examinations) for other persons; (f) Unauthorized disclosure or receipt of academic information; (g) Falsification of research data; and (h) Unauthorized collaboration.” Students who are caught breaking the student code of conduct will be reported to the Office of Student Affairs (and Honors Advisor if an Honors student) and receive a zero on any relevant assignments.

Defining plagiarism

- According to the MLA Handbook, plagiarism is “using another person’s ideas, information or expressions without acknowledging that person’s work.”
- How to avoid plagiarizing
  - Rule #1: If you use another person’s ideas, you must cite your source (author last name and year)
  - Rule #2: If you use another person’s exact words, you must put those words in quotation marks as well as cite your source (author last name, year, and page number)
• If any portion of your assignment includes plagiarized material, you will fail the assignment and you will be reported to the university. If in doubt, cite the source!

Examples of plagiarism and appropriate citations (Used with permission from Dr. Wilkenson)

• Text from original source:
  Karen’s transgressive campiness is also manifest in her flagrant sexuality.

• Examples of plagiarism:
  • Karen’s transgressive campiness is also manifest in her flagrant sexuality. [copy and paste, no quotation marks, no citation]
  • In Will and Grace, Karen’s transgressive campiness is shown in her flagrant sexuality. [almost identical language, no citation]

• Examples of appropriate citation
  • Karen’s sexuality is subversive and campy (Cooper 2003) [paraphrased, with citation]
  • The character of Karen shows “transgressive campiness” (Cooper 2003:519). [phrase quoted, with citation]
  • Cooper stated, “Karen’s transgressive campiness is also manifest in her flagrant sexuality” (2003:519). [full quote with citation]
  • As one scholar observed, “Karen’s transgressive campiness is also manifest in her flagrant sexuality” (Cooper 2003:519). [full quote with citation]

Support Services

Students who would like assistance writing, formatting, or proofreading their written work should visit the PSU Writing Center. This is important for all written work. This is a free resource, though it does get busy towards the end of the quarter so it is important to make appointments early. Students may schedule regular appointments for assistance throughout the quarter. http://www.writingcenter.pdx.edu/index.php

For additional support services and study skills assistance students may refer to the Skills Enhancement and Tutoring Center (SETC), also a free resource for all PSU students. http://www.pdx.edu/tutoring/

Students who need assistance locating academic resources should consult the PSU Millar Library.

If you are struggling specifically with this class, please contact me during office hours or via email. As a college student, the expectation is that you will reach out to your professors when
you need help – do not expect your professors to contact you if you miss an assignment or your grades are slipping.

If you decide that you wish to withdraw from the class, please keep these important dates in mind:

https://goo.gl/78ezPE

If you find that you are struggling (whether it is to successfully pass your courses this term, experiencing barriers to education due to a disability, or just feeling stressed) there are many resources for you to connect with. I would recommend starting with the resources listed here:

https://my.pdx.edu/students/resources-across-campus

Food insecurity is a real issue for many students. If you are experiencing food insecurity, there are resources for you: https://www.pdx.edu/student-access-center/

The PSU Food Pantry is open Monday - Friday from 12:30-2:30 in SMSU 047A. You can get 5 items daily.

Harvest Share is at noon on the 2nd Monday of every month, outside Shattuck Hall in the Park Blocks.

**Access and Inclusion for Students with Disabilities**

PSU values diversity and inclusion; we are committed to fostering mutual respect and full participation for all students. My goal is to create a learning environment that is equitable, useable, inclusive, and welcoming. If any aspects of instruction or course design result in barriers to your inclusion or learning, please notify me. The Disability Resource Center (DRC) provides reasonable accommodations for students who encounter barriers in the learning environment.

If you have, or think you may have, a disability that may affect your work in this class and feel you need accommodations, contact the Disability Resource Center to schedule an appointment and initiate a conversation about reasonable accommodations. The DRC is located in 116 Smith Memorial Student Union, 503-725-4150, drc@pdx.edu, https://www.pdx.edu/drc.

- If you already have accommodations, please contact me to make sure that I have received a faculty notification letter and discuss your accommodations.
- Students who need accommodations for tests and quizzes are expected to schedule their tests to overlap with the time the class is taking the test.
• Please be aware that the accessible tables or chairs in the room should remain available for students who find that standard classroom seating is not useable.
• For information about emergency preparedness, please go to the Fire and Life Safety webpage (https://www.pdx.edu/environmental-health-safety/fire-and-life-safety) for information.

Title IX Reporting Obligations and other Mandatory Reporting

As an instructor, one of my responsibilities is to help create a safe learning environment for my students and for the campus as a whole. We expect a culture of professionalism and mutual respect in our college and classes. You may report any incident of discrimination or discriminatory harassment, including sexual harassment, to either the Office of Equity and Compliance or the Office of the Dean of Student Life. Please be aware that as a faculty member, I have the responsibility to report any instances of sexual harassment, sexual violence and/or other forms of prohibited discrimination as well as abuse of infants and children, people who are elderly or dependent, individuals with mental illness or developmental disabilities, and residents of nursing homes and other health care facilities. If you would rather share information about sexual harassment, sexual violence, abuse to a confidential employee who does not have this reporting responsibility, you can find a list of those individuals here: http://www.pdx.edu/sexual-assault/get-help. For more information about Title IX, please complete the required student module Creating a Safe Campus in your D2L.
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<tr>
<th><strong>Week One</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Watch Ted Talk</td>
<td>Reflection Paper Discussion post and replies</td>
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<tr>
<td>Read the first 15 sections of Tuesdays with Morrie (p1-107)</td>
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<th><strong>Week Two</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td>Continue reading Tuesdays with Morrie (you will be finishing this book next week)</td>
<td>Reflection Paper Discussion post and replies</td>
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<tr>
<th><strong>Week Three</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Finish reading Tuesdays with Morrie</td>
<td>Reflection Paper Discussion post and replies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(read Paper Guidelines, Annotated Bibliography Questionnaire [ABQs], and ABQ Example)</td>
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<th><strong>Week Four</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Read the preface and chapter 1 in Dancing with Broken Bones</td>
<td>Reflection Paper Discussion post and replies</td>
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<th><strong>Week Five</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Read chapters 2 and 3 in Dancing with Broken Bones</td>
<td>Reflection Paper Discussion post and replies Select your paper topic</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
### Week Six
- **Reflection Paper**

### Week Seven
- Read chapters 6, 7, & epilogue in Dancing with Broken Bones
- **3 ABQs due**

### Week Eight
- **Draft of Paper Due**

### Week Nine
- **Peer review Due**

### Week Ten
- Death Systems (Table)
- **Final Paper Due**

### Finals Week
Course evaluation