

Administrative Assistant III Health Sciences:
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Instructor Contact information:
Email:
Office Hours: Tuesdays

I. COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course is designed to introduce students to concepts associated with loss, grief, death and dying. The course includes introductory information about death in society, grief responses, communication strategies, care and support of the dying and of the surviving family, physical dying processes, cultural/religions considerations, and common legal/ethical issues associated with end of life decisions.

II. REQUIRED TEXTS AND MATERIALS:

At the End of Life: True Stories About How We Die, edited by Lee Gutkind (purchase at any local bookseller). You are encouraged to monitor current news resources, such as television and Internet news, newspapers, journals, news magazines, for developing issues related to death and dying in America and around the world. Such reading will provide a basis for personal awareness and individual contributions to class discussions. Blackboard has many links, articles, video for you to read and watch.

III. COURSE RATIONAL/OBJECTIVES:

This course is designed to give students an increased awareness of loss, death, dying, and grief, as they may encounter it in their professional lives. Students will be exposed to skills and techniques that facilitate communication and therapeutic interactions with clients and family members from different cultural and religious backgrounds. Student will also discuss legal and ethical issues related to death and dying. Personal insight into the student's own attitudes and concerns regarding these topics is intended as an outcome for the course.

IV. COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES:

Upon completion of this course, the student should be able to:

- Recognize cultural and personal values and attitudes concerning loss, grief, death, and dying.
- Discuss physical aspects of death and the dying process, and physical care of the dying patient.
- Recognize coping/grieving behaviors in adults and children and initiate appropriate interventions.
- Discuss the nature of grief experienced by professionals working with dying patients and their families, and coping strategies used by these professionals.
- Discuss current end-of-life issues from diverse cultural, religious, ethical and legal perspectives.
- Discuss the role of spirituality, religious practices, and rituals during the dying process and in bereavement.
- Recognize the contribution of memorialization, funerals, cemeteries and grave markers make to the grieving process.
- Discuss the Hospice concept of care for the dying person and their family/caregivers.

V. SCAN COMPETENCIES: Recently, the U.S. Department of Labor established the Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills (SCANS) to examine the demands of the workplace and whether the nation's students are capable of meeting those demands. How SCAN Competencies are incorporated into a Death and Dying course:

- Resources: Manages time by completing Death and Dying assignments by their due dates. (1.1) Uses the LRS and common informational sources as valuable resources. (1.3)
- Interpersonal: Participates as a member of a team when doing group activities and exercises. (2.1) Students are given the opportunity to teach other students in group discussions and presentations on particular topics. (2.2) Medical information is obtained to better service and educate clients. (2.3)
- Basic Skills: All basic skills are used in learning and applying Death and Dying information to better service the patients and families. (6.1 -6.6)
- Thinking Skills: All thinking skills are used in Death and Dying by students preparing for individual and group work, discussions of case studies and assigned readings, and general class discussions. (7.1 – 7.6)
- Personal Qualities: Death and Dying students will demonstrate accountability and responsibility by completing assignments and group activities in timely manner. (8.1) Students should have increased confidence regarding loss, grief, death and dying issues and skills by the completion of this course. (8.2)

VI. INSTRUCTIONAL METHODOLOGY: Instructional methodology includes lecture presentations, group discussions and group activities, guest speakers, field trips, written journal entries, and individual student presentations. Content for presentation and discussion arise from faculty presented topics, an in-depth course guide of reference materials, and a reading assignment of *At the End of Life*, edited by Lee Gutkind

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VII. COURSE EVALUATION AND GRADING:

A. Attendance:

Attendance for class and field trips is required. Absences from class periods will impact the course grade.

- Absences of 4 class periods will result in a grade no higher than a B.
- Absences of 5 class periods will result in a grade no higher than a C.
- Absences of 6 classes will result in a grade no higher than a D.
- Absences of 7 classes or more will result in a grade of F.
- Definition of an “absence” is missing more than one hour of the class. An absence can accrue due to arriving late or leaving early. There are no “excused” absences.
- Confirmation of EMS Ride-out conflicts must be provided from the ACC PMT Program faculty.
- Course announcements (Blackboard), Email and phone contact will be used when possible to communicate class schedule changes.

- Each student is responsible for keeping faculty informed of changes in email addresses and / or phone or pager numbers.

B. Grade Contracts:

Grade will be by contract. The requirements and criteria for each grade are specified below. Each student will submit a completed “Grade Contract Form” specifying a grade. I will determine class participation and attendance, timely submission of required work, and the quality and adherence to criteria of completed assignments. I reserve the right to lower the grade based on the individual student’s inability to meet the established criteria. Students may renegotiate their contract for a decrease in grade only. Academic Dishonesty will result in immediate withdrawal from the course.

C. Contract Options:

- "C": Class Attendance and Participation in Discussions and Activities; Participation in class meetings by completing readings, and assigned homework.
- "B": Class Attendance and Participation in Discussions and Activities; Journal: all entries submitted on time. Participation in class meetings by completing readings, and assigned homework.
- "A": Class Attendance and Participation in Discussions and Activities; Journal: all entries submitted on time. Participation in class meetings by completing readings, assigned homework, and 1 Class Presentation

D. Class Participation:

- It is assumed each class registrant desires to actively gain from this class, therefore, attendance is expected and participation in class discussions is anticipated.
- Maximum personal and professional growth will be attained in this course through both expressing of personal views and listening to differing ideas from classmates. It is expected that each individual will participate by both sharing and encouraging others to share.
- Contributions to class discussions should reflect assigned class preparation, and inclusion of additional information gained from optional readings or in pursuit of personal interests.
- Maintaining an open mind regarding differing views of members of the class is mandatory for gaining increased awareness of the multifaceted nature of issues and beliefs associated with the class topics.
- Class discussions are to reflect courtesy, respect, and receptivity of ideas being expressed. Disrespect will not be tolerated, and could result in instructor initiated withdrawal from the class.

E. Journal Entries:

- Journals will be kept throughout the semester.
- Journals are mechanisms through which individuals can articulate personal thoughts and feelings in a safe and confidential manner.
- These journals are treated as confidential and read only by the instructor.
- Entries should include general comments on subjects of interest, tangential subjects brought to mind by class discussions, personal experiences or specific reactions to topics discussed in class.
- **Each entry is expected to be a minimum of 450 words.**
- The journals are not intended to be summaries or an evaluation of speakers or classes. They should reflect some in-depth personal views on the topics and ideas expressed within the classes.
- Journals will be uploaded to Blackboard in the “Journal” section.

- Due dates are listed on the Course Calendar. Submission and acceptance of late journals must be approved prior to the due date.

F. 5 Wishes:

- Complete *Five Wishes* document. You may choose not to notarize this document.

G. Class Presentations:

- Presentations will provide the class with new and current information on relevant topics, and allow for individual interests to be shared with the class. Professional presentations to colleagues are inherent in many health related positions, and this opportunity will enhance self-confidence and skill in meeting these in-service type commitments to coworkers.
- A fifteen minute oral presentation to the class will be done on a topic preapproved by the professor.
- Presentations may be done in pairs (for a total of 30 minutes) or individually depending upon the topic selected.
- Presentation topics may include current ethical dilemmas, topics not covered in the course content as listed on the Course Calendar, or other topics related to death and dying suggested by a student.
- Sign-up sheets will be available by the end of the 2nd class period (in class).
- Topics of choice must be established and assigned a presentation date by the first week of October. Changes in topic or presentation date must be pre-approved by faculty.
- Failure to designate a topic and establish a presentation date by the first class period in October will result in a course grade no higher than a B.
- Copies of notes, reference documents, class handouts, and other related materials used to enhance the presentation are to be handed to faculty at the end of the presentation.

H. Criteria for “Satisfactory” on Class Presentations:

- Stays within the designated 15-minute time frame, plus or minus 5 minutes, as allocated.
- Addresses the intended topic incorporating relevant information for persons dealing with issues of loss, grief, death, and dying.
- Reflects outside reading from approved professional journals or literature. Readings should be current within the last 5 years. Any reference material older than 5 years requires pre-approval by instructor.
- Is delivered in a professional manner. Eye contact should be made, and reading of the presentation directly from a script is to be avoided.
- Is done on the scheduled day. Extenuating circumstances necessitating rescheduling of presentations must be cleared by me at least one class period in advance.
- Turns in copies of notes, handouts, etc. to the instructor after the presentation.
- Visual aids are encouraged but not mandatory for successful presentations. Handouts for the class are encouraged and can be duplicated by the instructor if given sufficient time prior to the presentation.
- The use of a "guest speaker" in lieu of doing a presentation is not an option. Please notify the instructor if you have a guest that you feel would be appropriate for the class.

IX. Course Policies

A. Attendance/Class Participation

Regular and punctual class and laboratory attendance is expected of all students. If attendance or compliance with other course policies is unsatisfactory, the instructor may withdraw students from the class.

B. Withdrawal Policy

- It is the responsibility of each student to ensure that his or her name is removed from the roll should he or she decide to withdraw from the class. The instructor does, however, reserve the right to drop a student should he or she feel it is necessary. If a student decides to withdraw, he or she should also verify that the withdrawal is submitted before the Final Withdrawal Date. The student is also strongly encouraged to retain their copy of the withdrawal form for their records.
- Students who enroll for the third or subsequent time in a course taken since Fall, 2002, may be charged a higher tuition rate, for that course.
- State law permits students to withdraw from no more than six courses during their entire undergraduate career at Texas public colleges or universities. With certain exceptions, all course withdrawals automatically count towards this limit. Details regarding this policy can be found in the ACC college catalog.

C. Incompletes

- An instructor may award a grade of "I" (Incomplete) if a student was unable to complete all of the objectives for the passing grade in a course.
- An incomplete grade cannot be carried beyond the established date in the following semester.
- The completion date is determined by the instructor but may not be later than the final deadline for withdrawal in the subsequent semester.

X. Statement on Scholastic Dishonesty

- A student attending ACC assumes responsibility for conduct compatible with the mission of the college as an educational institution.
- Students have the responsibility to submit coursework that is the result of their own thought, research, or self-expression.
- Students must follow all instructions given by faculty or designated college representatives when taking examinations, placement assessments, tests, quizzes, and evaluations.
- Actions constituting scholastic dishonesty include, but are not limited to, plagiarism, cheating, fabrication, collusion, and falsifying documents.
- Penalties for scholastic dishonesty will depend upon the nature of the violation and may range from lowering a grade on one assignment to an "F" in the course and/or expulsion from the college.
- **All electronic devices must be turned off during all examinations. If this directive is not followed, a charge of academic dishonesty could result.**
- The penalty for academic dishonesty in this course is an automatic failing grade of "F" in the course. If the student withdraws from the course after the offense, the instructor will re-instate and the failing grade given as stated.
- See the Student Standards of Conduct and Disciplinary Process and other policies at <http://www.austincc.edu/current/needtoknow>

XII. Student Rights and Responsibilities

- Students at the college have the rights accorded by the U.S. Constitution to freedom of speech, peaceful assembly, petition, and association.
- These rights carry with them the responsibility to accord the same rights to others in the college community and not to interfere with or disrupt the educational process.
- Opportunity for students to examine and question pertinent data and assumptions of a given discipline, guided by the evidence of scholarly research, is appropriate in a learning environment.
- This concept is accompanied by an equally demanding concept of responsibility on the part of the student.
- As willing partners in learning, students must comply with college rules and procedures.

XIV. Statement on Student Accessibility Services

- Each ACC campus offers support services for students with documented disabilities. Students with disabilities who need classroom, academic or other accommodations must request them through the office Student Accessibility Services (SAS). Students are encouraged to request accommodations when they register for courses or at least three weeks before the start of the semester, otherwise the provision of accommodations may be delayed.
- Students who have received approval for accommodations from SAS for this course must provide the instructor with the 'Notice of Approved Accommodations' from SAS before accommodations will be provided. Arrangements for academic accommodations can only be made after the instructor receives the 'Notice of Approved Accommodations' from the student.
- Students with approved accommodations are encouraged to submit the 'Notice of Approved Accommodations' to the instructor at the beginning of the semester because a reasonable amount of time may be needed to prepare and arrange for the accommodations.
- Additional information about Student Accessibility Services is available at <http://www.austincc.edu/sas>

XV. Safety Statement

- Austin Community College is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for study and work. You are expected to learn and comply with ACC environmental, health and safety procedures and agree to follow ACC safety policies. Additional information on these can be found at <http://www.austincc.edu/ehs>. Because some health and safety circumstances are beyond our control, we ask that you become familiar with the Emergency Procedures poster and Campus Safety Plan map in each classroom. Additional information about emergency procedures and how to sign up for ACC Emergency Alerts to be notified in the event of a serious emergency can be found at <http://www.austincc.edu/emergency/>.
- Please note, you are expected to conduct yourself professionally with respect and courtesy to all. Anyone who thoughtlessly or intentionally jeopardizes the health or safety of another individual will be dismissed from the day's activity, may be withdrawn from the class, and/or barred from attending future activities.
- You are expected to conduct yourself professionally with respect and courtesy to all. Anyone who thoughtlessly or intentionally jeopardizes the health or safety of another individual will be immediately dismissed from the day's activity, may be withdrawn from the class, and/or barred from attending future activities.

XVI. Use of ACC email

- All College e-mail communication to students will be sent solely to the student's ACCmail account, with the expectation that such communications will be read in a timely fashion.
- ACC will send important information and will notify you of any college related emergencies using this account.
- Students should only expect to receive email communication from their instructor using this account.
- Likewise, students should use their ACCmail account when communicating with instructors and staff. Information about ACCmail, including instructions on setting up an account, can be found at <http://www.austincc.edu/accmail/>

XVII. Student and Instructional Services

- ACC strives to provide exemplary support to its students and offers a broad variety of opportunities and services. Information on these services and support systems is available at: <http://www.austincc.edu/support/>
- Links to many student services and other information can be found at: <http://www.austincc.edu/>
- ACC Learning Labs provide free tutoring services to all ACC students currently enrolled in the course to be tutored. The tutor schedule for each Learning Lab may be found at: <http://www.austincc.edu/tutor>
- For help setting up your ACCeID, ACC Gmail, or ACC Blackboard, see a Learning Lab Technician at any ACC Learning Lab.