Nursing 685
and
Social Work 856
SPRING, 2009

CARE OF THE DYING AND BEREAVED
THROUGHOUT THE LIFE SPAN

SCHOOL OF NURSING
and
SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA AT CHAPEL HILL

Class will be held in the
School of Social Work
Tate, Turner, Kuralt Building
Room: 114
Tuesdays, 5:00 PM – 7:50 PM

FACULTY

Mi-Kyung Song, Ph.D., RN
Assistant Professor, School of Nursing
Carrington Hall, Room
843-9496
songm@email.unc.edu

Denisé Dews, MSW
Clinical Instructor
Tate-Turner-Kuralt Building Room
301 Pittsboro St. CB# 3550
962-6439
ddews@email.unc.edu
Prerequisites: None. Undergraduate and graduate students from nursing, social work, and other health science related disciplines may take the course.

Description
The overall focus of this course, designed for students from a variety of health sciences related disciplines, is to gain an understanding of issues in working with dying and bereaved individuals of all ages and their families, including families with diverse characteristics and experiences e.g., diversity in ethnicity, culture, socioeconomic status, education, and location. Various models for providing care to the dying and bereaved will be discussed.

Credit Hours: 3

Objectives
By the end of this course the students will be able to:

1. Identify their own attitudes and feelings toward death and grief and be aware of the impact of caring for dying patients and their families on themselves in their professional role.
2. Identify the impact of terminal illness, death, and grief on individuals of various ages and their families.
3. Describe the interrelationships of variables which affect the ability of an individual and family to cope with terminal illness, death, and grief (e.g. ethnicity, culture, poverty, rural location, etc.)
4. Use a variety of theoretical perspectives in assessment and intervention with dying and bereaved individuals.
5. Discuss the strengths and weakness of a variety of models of care for dying and bereaved individuals.
6. Discuss selected ethical and legal issues that are involved in the care of the dying and bereaved.
7. Critically analyze research related to the course material.

Methodology
Didactic, seminar and experiential methods will be used to present and discuss theoretical, clinical, and research content of the course. Guest speakers will bring an added richness to the course content. Small group discussions will be used to facilitate sharing and self-awareness. Various audiovisual materials will be used. Selected papers and class presentations will be expected.

Grades
Graduate students are graded on an H, P, L, system.

H = 94-100
P = 80-93
L = 70-79
F = 69 and below
**Honor Code**

THIS COURSE AND ALL RELATED ACTIVITIES WILL BE CONDUCTED ACCORDING TO THE HONOR SYSTEM OF THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA AT CHAPEL HILL.

The Honor Code and the Campus Code, embodying the ideals of academic honesty, integrity, and responsible citizenship, have for over 100 years governed the performance of all academic work and student conduct at the University. Acceptance by a student of enrollment in the University presupposes a commitment to the principles embodied in these codes and a respect for this most significant University tradition. Your participation in this course comes with the expectation that your work will be completed in full observance of the Honor Code. Academic dishonesty in any form is unacceptable, because any breach in academic integrity, however small, strikes destructively at the University's life and work. If you have any questions about your responsibility or the responsibility of faculty members under the Honor Code, please consult with someone in either the Office of the Student Attorney General (telephone: 919-966-4084) or the Office of the Dean of Students (telephone: 919-966-4042). For additional information about the honor code, please also refer to the University website. [http://www.unc.edu/depts/honor](http://www.unc.edu/depts/honor). The Information for Students and Plagiarism sections are especially helpful.

**Disability Services** ([http://disabilityservices.unc.edu](http://disabilityservices.unc.edu))

Students with disabilities that affect their participation in the course and who wish to have special accommodations should contact the University’s Disabilities Services and provide documentation of their disability. Disabilities Services will notify the instructor that the student has a documented disability and may require accommodations. Students should discuss the specific accommodations they require (e.g. changes in instructional format, examination format) directly with the instructor.

**Inclement Weather Policy**

All attempts shall be made by faculty and students to attend course activities. Students are encouraged to explore alternative means of transportation (buses, carpool, walking) when they do not feel comfortable driving because of weather conditions. However, we do not want individuals to jeopardize their safety by traveling during hazardous road conditions. Given the wide geographical region from which individuals commute, individual judgment is required. The University Weather and Disaster Hotline will provide information about conditions and closure of the University. The number is 685-8100

**Course Requirements and points:**

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<tr>
<th>Requirement</th>
<th>Points</th>
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<tr>
<td>Class attendance, preparation, and participation</td>
<td>20</td>
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<tr>
<td>Group Presentation</td>
<td>20</td>
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<tr>
<td>Journal Article Reviews (two @ 10 points each)</td>
<td>20</td>
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<td>Book analysis</td>
<td>15</td>
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<tr>
<td>Clinical intervention paper</td>
<td>25</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
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Description of Assignments

1. Class Attendance, Preparation, and Participation

Because of the nature of this course, class participation and attendance is very important. You are expected to read and be prepared to discuss selected theoretical, clinical, and research articles and textbook chapters related to class content.

Carefully selected audiovisuals will be shown in class. In addition, you are urged to see other commercial, TV, and educational audiovisuals related to loss, death, and grief on your own. These audiovisuals are integral to class discussions.

2. Class Presentation on Diversity in Religious/Cultural Views of Death, Dying and Grief: Due date: February 17, February 24, or March 3

Small groups of students will work together to review the beliefs and practices of a specific religious/cultural group that relate to illness, loss, suffering, dying, death, grief, mourning rituals, and burial. Do not choose any religious/cultural tradition with which you are already familiar. Although there may be many approaches to identifying the relevant literature, we suggest that you start with the book Caring and Curing: Health and Medicine in Western Religious Traditions by R.L. Numbers and D.W. Amudsen, New York: MacMillan and the related series of books on specific religious traditions available in the HSL library. You should also interview an individual of that faith or culture, or patient/family of that faith/culture experiencing an illness crisis. If you choose a formal religion, interviewing a clergy person of that faith would be helpful. All members of the group will participate in making a brief class presentation on your findings; include a handout and bibliography to handout to other students. Prepare two questions that can be used on the mid-term exam: one multiple choice and one short answer.

3. Analysis of a published work related to death, dying or bereavement: Due February 10

Read a novel, biography, or autobiography related to death, dying, grief, or loss. See list at the end of the syllabus for ideas but feel free to choose something not on the list. DO NOT WRITE A BOOK REPORT!! A short (one paragraph) concise description of the contents of the book is sufficient. The majority of the paper should be an analysis of this book focusing on a selected issue addressed in the book. This might include, for example, family communication, family responses, losses incurred, pain responses, grief, coping behaviors, peer responses, relationship to health care professionals, the helping responses of others, or the perceptions of the individuals about life and death. Use current references from textbooks, class readings, and references you locate to substantiate your discussion. Use APA style, type the paper and include references. The paper should be no longer than 5 double-spaced pages.

4. Article reviews: Due March 17 and March 31

5. Paper on a Clinical Intervention in Death, Dying or Bereavement Care: Due April 14

Guidelines: This paper should focus on a specific issue or problem in clinical practice (social work, nursing, or interdisciplinary) related to grief, dying or death. Possible topics include: physician assisted suicide; using animals in grief therapy, cryonics, patient comfort at end-of-life, pain management at end-of-life, teenage suicide, elderly suicide, healthcare professionals and the death penalty.
Write a summary of these, critiquing their strengths and weaknesses. Write a concise summary and synthesis of the literature reviewed, critiquing its strengths and weaknesses. Identify the populations served/affected by the selected issue (include
special settings, locations, others affected, as relevant); identify any special educational and/or training requirements for professionals working in topic field, as relevant. Are there legal regulations, self-regulation, and/or ethical codes affecting the issue; professional organizations, associations, or support groups associated with this issue, if any. Discuss implications of what you found to social work or nursing practice. Offer your reasons for interest in the topic.

For purposes of this assignment a minimum of seven scholarly (data-based, peer-reviewed) references are to be used.

All papers MUST be typed double spaced using APA format.
Please note: additional reading will be assigned during course

Jan 13  Introduction and Overview
Selection of class presentation groups and topics
Please complete Student Information Sheet
Class activity: My Attitude and Beliefs

Jan 20  American Experience of Dying
Readings: Leming & Dickinson, Ch. 1 & 2; Walsh-Burke, preface, Ch. 1 & 2.
Complete the Exercise: Exploring Losses in Your Own Life – page 26 or W-B
Exercise: Social Construction of Dying
Film: On Our Own Terms: Living with Dying

Jan 27  Developmental perspectives on Death
Readings: L&D Ch. 3
Guest speaker: Tiffany Christiansen, Sick Girl Speaks

Feb 3  Grieving through the Life Cycle – part 1
Readings: W-B, Ch. 3-4, L&D Ch. 13
Guest speaker: Shirley Massey, Chaplin, UNCH Department of Pastoral Care,
UNC Hospital Ethic Committee

Feb 10  Grieving Through the Life Cycle – part 2
L&D Ch. 14
DUE: Book analysis
Guest speaker(s): Marion Kalbacker, MSW, LCSW, Duke University Medical
Center, Pediatric Bone Marrow Unit

Feb 17  Death Rituals, Religion and Death Interpretation
Readings: L&D, Ch. 4 & 10; W-B, Ch.5
Student Group Presentations – Diversity in Religious/Cultural Views of Death,
Dying and Grief

Feb 24  Student Group Presentations – Diversity in Religious/Cultural Views of Death,
Dying and Grief

March 3  Student Group Presentations – Diversity in Religious/Cultural Views of Death,
Dying and Grief

March 10  Spring Break

March 17  Living and Dying
Readings: L&D Ch. 5 & 6
Guest speaker: Libby Hart, RN, UNC Hospice  
DUE: First article review

March 24  
Field trip to Duke Bereavement Center, begins at 5:00 *(allow 20 minutes for travel time)*

March 31  
**American Health Care System and Dying**  
Readings: L&D, Ch. 7 & 12  
DUE: 2*nd* article review

April 7  
**Issues and Challenges in End of Life Conversations**  
Readings: W-B, Ch. 6  
*Clinical Intervention in Death, Dying and Bereavement Care* paper due

April 14  
**Biomedical Issues; Euthanasia & Suicide**  
L&D, Ch. 8,9;  
Film: *Self-Made Man*  
DUE: Clinical Intervention Paper

April 21  
**Pot-luck** – Professor Dews’ home – address and directions will be given in class

**Required Textbooks:**

Belmont, CA: Thomson Wadsworth.

Allyn & Bacon.

**Recommended**

Brounner-Routledge.