Syllabus – Winter Intersession 2015-2016
(Dates: December 28, 2015 – January 15, 2016)

Excluding materials for purchase, syllabus information may be subject to change. The most up-to-date syllabus is located within the course in HuskyCT.

Course and Instructor Information

Course Title: Death, Dying and Bereavement
Credits: 3
Format: Online via HuskyCT

Professor: Keith Bellizzi, PhD, MPH

Email: keith.m.bellizzi@uconn.edu

Office Hours/Availability: Office hours by appointment. Unless otherwise noted, I will check into the course at least five days a week to monitor discussions and respond to HuskyCT Messages. I will respond to emails within 24-48 hours. If I expect to be away due to travel or illness, I will notify you in a timely manner.

Course Materials

Required course materials should be obtained before the first day of class.

Texts are available through a local or online bookstore. The UConn Co-op carries many materials that can be shipped via its online Textbooks To Go service. For more information, see Textbooks and Materials on our Enrolled Students page.

Required Materials:

ISBN: 9781133315940

ISBN: 0-553-27486-4

3. Movie: Bucket List (2007). Warner Brother Pictures. Director Rob Reiner. Writer Justin Zackham. [Access: This movie may be available from our UConn Library if they are able to negotiate streaming rights. If they are not able to negotiate the streaming rights, you may stream the video from your preferred provider (see http://www.canistream.it/search/movie/Bucket%20list for options) or feel free to purchase the DVD).
Note: Additional course readings and media are available within HuskyCT, through either an Internet link or Library Resources

Course Description

Course Catalog Description: Cultural context of death, personal meaning of death at different stages in the life cycle, and the effect of death upon survivors.

Additional Course Information: This course provides students with opportunities to explore different perspectives and realities focused on experiences of death, dying and bereavement. We will examine the cultural context of death, personal meaning of death at different stages in the life cycle, and the effect of death upon surviving family members and society. This course will cover sociological, psychological, anthropological, historical, ethical viewpoints along with exploration of our own reactions to death, dying and bereavement. We will examine death and dying from the points of view of dying persons, their families and friends, and human services providers, as well as policy makers.

Course Objectives

By the end of the semester, students should be able to:

1. Articulate different perspectives (sociological, psychological, historical, cultural, ethical) of death dying and bereavement.
2. Identify micro and macro level factors that have influenced death encounters and death attitudes in our society.
3. Explain how the experience of death, dying and bereavement is different and/or similar at different stages in the life cycle.
4. Identify relevant theories and models explaining the effect of death upon surviving family members.
5. Reflect on one’s own cognitive, affective, behavioral, and valuational reaction to death and dying and bereavement.

Course Outline

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Module</th>
<th>Dates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Module 1: Defining Death, Dying and Bereavement</td>
<td>Dec 28, 2015 - Dec 31, 2015</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Course Requirements and Grading

An online course requires discipline, self-motivation, collaboration, and organization. Although this course is offered online during a condensed 3-week winter intersession schedule, it remains a 3 credit graduate course and requires you to accomplish the same learning you would during a 14-week, full semester, face-to-face course. Although there is greater flexibility for "when" you complete your work in an online course than there is in a face-to-face course, there are specific due dates throughout the semester. You should expect to spend upwards of 42 hours per week working and learning in this course. Please plan your time accordingly. Lastly, class participation is expected and will add to the learning experience for everyone.

Summary of Course Grading:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Components</th>
<th>Percentage of final grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Weekly Quizzes</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussion Posts</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reflective Journals</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing Assignment One (Due December 31, 2015 11:59 PM EDT)</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing Assignment Two (Due January 3, 2016 11:59 PM EDT)</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing Assignment Three (Due January 7, 2016 11:59 PM EDT)</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing Assignment Four (Due January 10th, 2016 11:59 PM EDT)</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Weekly Quizzes

At the conclusion of each module, students are expected to complete a short quiz which will assess students understanding of assigned readings, videos, and lecture. Quizzes are individual exercises and should be completed without the assistance of others. However, you may refer to your readings and notes. You may take the quiz twice before its close date. Your goal is to achieve a minimum score of 80% on a quiz in order to earn full credit. If you score below 80% on a quiz, you will receive no points for that quiz.

Discussion Posts

Each module will provide opportunities for group discussion which is essential to the online learning environment. Discussion posts are neither right nor wrong. Rather, they provide a means for expressing your opinions, attitudes, and feelings about the topics addressed in the course. For each discussion assignment, you are to compose an original and thoughtful response to the question(s) or prompt(s) provided by the instructor. Your response should clearly draw on the module’s readings, videos, and lectures. After you complete your original response, you are expected to engage your peers by responding to at least one comment/post which should be geared to enhance or enrich the discussion for the entire group. Given the diversity of students, including academic discipline, culture, and religious affiliations that typically enroll in this course, class will be further enhanced by students providing their insights and opinions, reactions to class material, and sharing personal experiences. Please respect the views and contributions of others, even if they differ from your own.

Reflective Journals
At the conclusion of each module you will make at least one journal entry that reflects on how the module has affected your thoughts, feelings, and behaviors related to the topic covered. This reflective journal entry is private and will only be viewed by the student and the instructor. If you complete the journal entry, you earn full credit. If you do not complete the entry, you receive no credit.

Writing Assignment One

After watching the movie “The Bucket List”, you will write (typed and double spaced) a brief 3-4 page paper addressing 1) elements of the American death system that you see reflected in the movie, 2) explain factors that you feel influenced the two main character’s attitudes toward death, and 3) your cognitive (thoughts), affective (feelings), behavioral (what did you do or might do after watching the movie), and valuational (meaning to you) reaction to the movie. In addition, you will create your own bucket list of at least 5 things you would like to accomplish before you die. Please describe how you might achieve those goals. Complete expectations for this activity (including a Grading Rubric) are provided in the course.

Writing Assignment Two

After reading the book “A Grief Observed” by C.S. Lewis, you will write a brief 3-4 page paper addressing the following questions. Please explain your answer to each question thoroughly and provide quotes if applicable. Your report should be typed, double-spaced, with one inch margins.

1) Explain how C.S. Lewis defines grief and what do you think of his definition?
2) How does C.S. Lewis’s experience fit (or not) into the two models (Kubler-Ross “stage-based” and Corr’s “task-based”) of coping with dying?
3) Explain how C.S. Lewis translates his feelings and experiences of grief into the context of his everyday world?
4) How did C.S. Lewis find his way back to a meaningful life?
5) Briefly reflect on your cognitive, affective, behavioral and valuational reaction to the book?

Complete expectations for this activity (including a Grading Rubric) are provided in the course.

Writing Assignment Three

While death is inevitable and universal, the rituals, behaviors and feelings associated with grief and mourning are culturally bound. Using the internet and/or Google Scholar, identify and research a specific culture that was not discussed in class readings or during the introductory lecture and write a brief two page (12 point font, one inch margins, and double spaced) report describing typical and/or distinctive features of 1) death-related encounters, 2) attitudes, and 3) practices of that group. Please cite accordingly (using APA or MLA format) and include a reference page for specific sources used in your report. For help with APA and MLA formatting, see additional document readings (posted in module 3) which provide guidelines.

Writing Assignment Four

In this writing assignment you are asked to write your own obituary. But it’s too easy to write your obituary as though you might die tomorrow. So write your obituary from the vantage point of your wishes, hopes, dreams, and accomplishments. In other words, write your obituary as the fully actualized self you want to be and are becoming. This task requires patience, honesty,
fantasy, hope, and promise. What’s particularly tough about writing an obituary is that they must be brief; generally, no more than a couple of paragraphs. People want to know about your death. You can have a full typed page which is about two columns in an average newspaper. (see additional instructions in module four)

Grading Scale:

Undergrad

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Letter Grade</th>
<th>GPA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>93-100</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>90-92</td>
<td>A-</td>
<td>3.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>87-89</td>
<td>B+</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>83-86</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80-82</td>
<td>B-</td>
<td>2.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>77-79</td>
<td>C+</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>73-76</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70-72</td>
<td>C-</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>67-69</td>
<td>D+</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>63-66</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60-62</td>
<td>D-</td>
<td>0.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&lt;60</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Due Dates and Late Policy

All course due dates are identified in the Course Schedule. Deadlines are based on Eastern Standard Time; if you are in a different time zone, please adjust your submittal times accordingly. The instructor reserves the right to change dates accordingly as the semester progresses. All changes will be communicated in an appropriate manner.

All assignments, journal entries, and discussion posts are due at the 11:59 pm on the date indicated in the course schedule, unless you have made other arrangements with the instructor before the due date. You will lose 5 percentage points for every day that a written assignment is late, including weekends.

Feedback and Grades

I will make every effort to provide feedback and grades in a timely manner, typically within 48 hours after submission. I will keep you informed if anything changes. To keep track of your performance in the course, refer to My Grades in HuskyCT.

Student Responsibilities and Resources

As a member of the University of Connecticut student community, you are held to certain standards and academic policies. In addition, there are numerous resources available to help you succeed in your academic work. This section provides a brief overview to important standards, policies and resources.

Student Code

You are responsible for acting in accordance with the University of Connecticut's Student Code. Review
and become familiar with these expectations. In particular, make sure you have read the section that applies to you on Academic Integrity:

- Academic Integrity in Undergraduate Education and Research
- Academic Integrity in Graduate Education and Research

Cheating and plagiarism are taken very seriously at the University of Connecticut. As a student, it is your responsibility to avoid plagiarism. If you need more information about the subject of plagiarism, use the following resources:

- Plagiarism: How to Recognize it and How to Avoid It
- University of Connecticut Libraries’ Student Instruction (includes research, citing and writing resources)

Copyright

Copyrighted materials within the course are only for the use of students enrolled in the course for purposes associated with this course and may not be retained or further disseminated.

Netiquette and Communication

At all times, course communication with fellow students and the instructor are to be professional and courteous. It is expected that you proofread all your written communication, including discussion posts, assignment submissions, and mail messages. If you are new to online learning or need a netiquette refresher, please look at this guide titled, The Core Rules of Netiquette.

Adding or Dropping a Course

If you should decide to add or drop a course, there are official procedures to follow:

- Matriculated students should add or drop a course through the Student Administration System.
- Non-degree students should refer to Non-Degree Add/Drop Information located on the registrar’s website.

You must officially drop a course to avoid receiving an "F" on your permanent transcript. Simply discontinuing class or informing the instructor you want to drop does not constitute an official drop of the course. For more information, refer to the:

- Undergraduate Catalog
- Graduate Catalog

Academic Calendar

The University's Academic Calendar contains important semester dates.

Winter intersession Info: See the UConn Winter Session website for more general information.

Academic Support Resources

Technology and Academic Help provides a guide to technical and academic assistance.

Policy Against Discrimination, Harassment and Inappropriate Romantic Relationships

The University is committed to maintaining an environment free of discrimination or discriminatory harassment directed toward any person or group within its community – students, employees, or visitors.
Academic and professional excellence can flourish only when each member of our community is assured an atmosphere of mutual respect. All members of the University community are responsible for the maintenance of an academic and work environment in which people are free to learn and work without fear of discrimination or discriminatory harassment. In addition, inappropriate Romantic relationships can undermine the University’s mission when those in positions of authority abuse or appear to abuse their authority. To that end, and in accordance with federal and state law, the University prohibits discrimination and discriminatory harassment, as well as inappropriate Romantic relationships, and such behavior will be met with appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal from the University.

More information is available at [http://policy.uconn.edu/?p=2884](http://policy.uconn.edu/?p=2884).

**Sexual Assault Reporting Policy**

To protect the campus community, all non-confidential University employees (including faculty) are required to report assaults they witness or are told about to the Office of Diversity & Equity under the Sexual Assault Response Policy. The University takes all reports with the utmost seriousness. Please be aware that while the information you provide will remain private, it will not be confidential and will be shared with University officials who can help.

More information is available at [http://sexualviolence.uconn.edu/](http://sexualviolence.uconn.edu/).

**Students with Disabilities**

Students needing special accommodations should work with the University’s Center for Students with Disabilities (CSD). You may contact CSD by calling (860) 486-2020 or by emailing csd@uconn.edu. If your request for accommodation is approved, CSD will send an accommodation letter directly to your instructor(s) so that special arrangements can be made. (Note: Student requests for accommodation must be filed each semester.)

Blackboard measures and evaluates accessibility using two sets of standards: the WCAG 2.0 standards issued by the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) and Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act issued in the United States federal government.” (Retrieved March 24, 2013 from Blackboard’s website)

**Software Requirements and Technical Help**

- Word processing software
- Adobe Acrobat Reader
- Internet access

This course is completely facilitated online using the learning management platform, HuskyCT. If you have difficulty accessing HuskyCT, online students have access to the in person/live person support options available during regular business hours in the HuskyTech or see the HuskyTech FAQs for Online Students. Students also have 24x7 Course Support with access to live chat, phone and support documents.

**Minimum Technical Skills**

To be successful in this course, you will need the following technical skills:

- Use electronic mail with attachments.
University students are expected to demonstrate competency in Computer Technology. Explore the [Computer Technology Competencies](#) page for more information.

**Evaluation of the Course**

Students will be provided an opportunity to evaluate instruction in this course using the University’s standard procedures, which are administered by the [Office of Institutional Research and Effectiveness](#) (OIRE).

Additional informal formative surveys may also be administered within the course as an optional evaluation tool.