

SOC 307: Death, Dying and Bereavement

Fall 2019, 8-weeks, Session I

3 Hours

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

Instructor: Jo Anna M. Kelly, PhD

Email: jkelly@walsh.edu

Phone: 330-244-4691

Virtual Office Hours: Tuesday 11:30am-12:30pm

Communicating with the instructor: Please contact me with any questions or concerns. I will make every effort to respond to your emails/phone calls within 24 hours on the weekdays and 48 hours on the weekends.

COURSE DESCRIPTION: DV/H2b: Increasing one's knowledge of death, dying and bereavement is embarking on a journey of personal discovery. The course combines a comprehensive interdisciplinary study from health care, the humanities, and social/behavioral sciences. Focuses on, but it not limited to, how socialization influences the way people relate to death, dying bereavement; historical and cross-cultural perspectives; options for delivering care to terminally ill persons; ethical questions pertaining to informed consent, euthanasia, definitions of death, medical directive, organ donation, suicide, physician assisted euthanasia; psychological factors of grief; the rites and ceremonies of grief; lifespan perspectives, impact of the legal system.

Course Prerequisites: None

PROGRAM STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES (PSLOS)

- **PSLO 1:** demonstrate knowledge of theories, facts, methodologies and research in the respective discipline to evaluate, propose and provide solutions to problems.
- **PSLO 2:** recognize and evaluate ethical issues and situations.
- **PSLO 3:** demonstrate the ability to apply qualitative and/or quantitative analytical reasoning skills to solve problems and evaluate outcomes.
- **PSLO 4:** demonstrate the ability to communicate effectively in forms appropriate to the discipline, individually and/or in groups.
- **PSLO 5:** compare the beliefs, behaviors, values, and /or worldview of others.

COURSE STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES (CSLOS)

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Summarize changing attitudes and experiences with death in U.S. society.
- Describe how individuals and societies respond to death, dying and bereavement.
- Identify the death-related traditions and beliefs of various cultures.
- Critically evaluate current research in the field of death and dying.
- Apply principles of the Gaudium et Spes document to caring for the dying.

REQUIRED COURSE MATERIALS

Kalanithi, P. (2016). *When breath becomes air* (First edition.). New York: Random House. ISBN: 9781784701994.

Additional readings, resources and website links will be provided via ECN.

Students are responsible for all material discussed and assigned in class throughout the term.

STUDENT REQUIREMENTS AND EXPECTATIONS

Attendance/Course Participation

It is an expectation in this course that all students complete the readings and other assignments, and actively contribute to all discussion topics. Many of the course activities are built upon collaborative learning and rely on the input and feedback of others. Because of the nature of online course work, late or missing activities may have a negative impact on the overall student learning and course performance.

Participation in this course is taken to mean sharing thoughts as well as engaging actively in the exercises and experiences that are a part of the teaching-learning design. There is also the expectation that contributions made should reflect a growing understanding of course topic(s). Students are required to reflect informed and articulate answers and thoughts based on careful readings and completion of assigned activities and materials.

Discussion Forum Participation

Participation in discussion forums is critical for maximizing students' learning experiences and is required for the online delivery of this course. Each student is required to be part of an online community who interact, through discussion, to enhance and support the professional development of the group.

Active participation in discussion topics is defined as making at least one (1) original posting per week for each discussion topic and at least two (2) responses to colleagues' postings. This will result in a minimum total of three (3) postings, per week, for each week a discussion is assigned.

NOTE: Your original post will be due each week by Wednesday at 11:55 p.m. and all subsequent posts will be due by Sunday at 11:55 p.m.

The course discussion rubric provides specific guidelines on how discussion contributions will be graded and what is considered a substantive response. Some characteristics of excellent discussion contributions are outlined below. The instructor will consider these characteristics when assessing students' quality and level of participation.

- Each student should submit his/her initial post(s) early in the session and your subsequent responses to the posts of other learners at timely intervals within the duration of the session. Keep in mind the goal is to have a dynamic discussion that lasts throughout the entire session.
- Posts and responses should be thorough, thoughtful and properly posted BEFORE the due dates for the week. Just posting an "I agree" or "Good ideas" will not be considered adequate. Support statements with examples, experiences, or references. However, students are encouraged to be brief – try to keep each post and response to one or two short paragraphs. Keep in mind that fellow students will be reading and responding too.
- Make certain to address the discussion prompt(s). This does not mean one should not extend the topic, but do not stray from the topic.
- Discussions occur when there is dialogue. Build upon the posts and responses of other learners to create discussion threads. Revisit the discussion forum and respond (if necessary) to what other learners have posted to initial responses.
- When relevant, add to the discussion by including prior knowledge, work experiences, references, websites, resources, etc. (giving credit when appropriate).
- Contributions to the discussions (posts and responses) should be complete and free of grammatical or structural errors.

Assignments

All course written requirements should be submitted to the Dropbox. Lessons will run Monday-Sunday of each course week. All assignments, other than the first Dropbox assignment and Discussion Forum posts, should be completed and submitted by the last day of the lesson week (Sunday) at 11:55 p.m. Because of the way the course is structured, students must stay on track with assignment dates and cannot complete assignments from previous weeks once the due date is passed.

Computerized Web-Based Evaluations for Courses/Faculty

Students will be given the opportunity to evaluate the course and faculty at the end of the semester.

GRADING METHODOLOGY AND POLICIES

Final course grade will be based on graded assignments, interactive participation, and demonstration of ethical and professional conduct in all learning activities. Course assignments will be graded on a point system.

A grade will be assigned based on the following grading scale:

Letter Grade	Percentage
A	93% – 100%
A -	90% – 92%
B+	87% – 89%
B	83% – 86%
B-	80% – 82%
C+	77% – 79%
C	73% – 76%
C-	70% – 72%
D+	67% – 69%
D	63% – 66%
D-	60% – 62%
F	Below 60%

Late Assignments

All assignments are due, to the Dropbox, by the day indicated on the assignment. Late submissions will be assessed a 10% penalty for calendar day late.

Make-up assignments will only be permissible under EXCEPTIONAL circumstances. It is the student's responsibility to notify the instructor in-advance of the assignment. The instructor will evaluate each situation on a case-by-case basis. A request is not synonymous with approval. In some cases, the assignment will be due or examination taken prior to the original due-date.

All course assignments must be completed before a course grade will be issued. If not completed, an incomplete grade may be assigned. Refer to Walsh University Catalog for incomplete grade protocol and policies.

Grade Appeal

Refer to the Walsh University Catalog for the specific policy.

UNIVERSITY AND DEPARTMENTAL POLICIES

Academic Integrity

Appropriate source documentation must be supplied for all quoted and/or referenced materials. If any student has specific questions about proper citations, quotations, etc., please contact the instructor. Students found guilty of any form of academic dishonesty will receive a zero for the assignment involved. For a more detailed description of the Academic Integrity Policy and Procedures, please see the following link from the Walsh University Catalog:

<http://catalog.walsh.edu/undergraduate/academic-policies-procedures/> .

Accessibility Services for Students with Disabilities

Walsh University is committed to fostering an institutional climate in which qualified students with disabilities have full access to the academic environment. It is our practice to create an inclusive and accessible learning environment consistent with federal law.

If you feel that you may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability or temporary medical condition, please contact Meredith Soduk, the Director of Academic Support Services, at 330-490-7529 or msoduk@walsh.edu. Accessibility Services will confidentially discuss your needs, review your documentation, and determine your eligibility for reasonable accommodations. Please know that it is the student's responsibility to request and coordinate accommodations. Although students may contact

Accessibility Services at any point throughout the semester, it is ideal for a student's accommodations to be arranged and communicated as early as possible because accommodations are not retroactive.

University Administrative Withdrawal Policy

After one written warning to the student, and with appropriate notice of such a practice in the syllabus, an instructor may administratively withdraw a student from a course after unexcused non-attendance in an on-ground course, or unexcused non-participation in an online course, in at least 20% of the specific course schedule per the following schedule:

- 8-week course – after two weeks

The student must receive one written warning from the instructor to the student's Walsh University email address. Administrative withdrawals will not be permitted after the last day to withdraw from the term (per appropriate term of the Academic calendar) without permission of the Associate Vice President and Dean of Academic Administration and Department Chair of the program. Refer to the academic calendar for specific dates. A student who is administratively withdrawn from a class will receive a final grade of W (withdrawal).

TECHNICAL SUPPORT

Walsh University Help Desk
Phone: 330-244-4357
Email: helpdesk@walsh.edu

Weekly Topic(s)	Deliverables	Due Date
Week 1 Why study death and dying? How do we learn about death and dying?	Dropbox assignment (4 points) Week 1: Discussion (16 points) Week 1: Reflection (10 points) Week 1: Blog (10 points)	August 28, 2019 September 1, 2019 September 1, 2019 September 1, 2019
Week 2 What is death? End-of-life decision making	Week 2: Discussion (16 points) Summary: Quinlan, Cruzan & Schiavo (15 points)	September 8, 2019 September 8, 2019
Week 3 Book: When Breath Becomes Air	Week 3: Discussion (16 points) Summary: When Breath Becomes Air (30 points) Essay 1 (32 points)	September 15, 2019 September 15, 2019 September 15, 2019
Week 4 Caring for the dying Hospice & palliative care	Week 4: Blog (10 points) Exam 1 (100 points)	September 22, 2019 September 22, 2019
Week 5 Children and death Parental bereavement Research	Week 5: Discussion (16 points) Research Article Critique 1 (35 points)	September 29, 2019 September 29, 2019
Week 6 Suicide Bereavement & grief	Week 6: Discussion (16 points) Week 6: Reflection (10 points) Summary: Suicide Risk Factors/Prevention (15 points) Essay 2 (32 points)	October 6, 2019 October 6, 2019 October 6, 2019 October 6, 2019
Week 7 Funerals Afterlife beliefs	Week 7: Discussion (16 points) Research Article Critique 2 (70 points)	October 13, 2019 October 13, 2019
Week 8 Global perspectives Gaudium et Spes	Week 8: Blog (16 points) Exam 2 (100 points)	October 20, 2019 October 20, 2019

APPENDICES

Discussion Rubric

Criterion	Below Average	Average	Very Good	Excellent	Score*
Quality of Information in Posting	Posting simply restates the main concept.	Postings consistently focus on the week's topic, but do not relate the underlying concepts in the readings to the discussion. No details and/or examples are given.	Postings consistently focus on the week's topic and relate the underlying concepts in the readings to the discussion. Provides at least 1 supporting detail or example.	Postings consistently focus on the week's topic and relate the underlying concepts in the readings to the discussion. Comments include several supporting details and/or examples.	
Citations and Resource Development	Never cites sources and /or does not provide	Rarely cites sources or provides information	Occasionally cites sources or provides information	Consistently cites sources used to develop posting and provides	

Criterion	Below Average	Average	Very Good	Excellent	Score*
	information regarding outside resources related to the topic.	regarding outside resources related to the topic.	regarding outside resources related to the topic.	information regarding outside resources related to the topic.	
Critical Thinking	Does not identify and summarize the problem, is confused or identifies a different or inappropriate problem	Identifies the main problem and subsidiary, embedded, or implicit aspects of the problem	Identifies not only the basics of the issue, but recognizes nuances of the issue	Provides exemplary insights, engages other opposing postings, and draws support from experience and information not available from assigned sources	
Participation	Posts own comments but does not interact with others in the online community.	Rarely interacts or responds to other members of the online community other than required responses.	Occasionally responds to other members of the online community over the required minimum number of postings.	Consistently encourages and facilitates interaction among members of the online community on an ongoing basis over the required minimum number of postings.	
Total Score: (May be recorded in decimals or fractions)					

Writing Rubric

Criterion	Not Acceptable	Needs Improvement	Satisfactory	Exemplary	Score*
Organization & Coherence	Unorganized and incoherent.	The paper is weak in organization and/or coherence. The reader cannot identify a line of reasoning.	The paper is generally organized and coherent. The reader can mostly follow the line of reasoning.	The paper is well organized and coherent throughout. The reader can follow the line of reasoning.	
Professional Tone/Voice	Tone and voice are inappropriate throughout.	Frequent lapses in tone and voice. The writing does not engage the reader.	Tone and voice are generally appropriate with only minor lapses.	Tone and voice are professional and consistently appropriate throughout.	
Presentation of Ideas	Lacking in flow of thoughts and ideas.	Minimal flow of thoughts and ideas.	Flow of thoughts and ideas is generally consistent.	Flow of thoughts and ideas is consistent throughout.	
Word Choice	Word choice is confusing, unclear and/or inappropriate.	Word choice is poor and/or inappropriate.	Word choice is generally clear, concise and appropriate.	Word choice is accurate, clear, concise and appropriate throughout.	
Sentence Structure	Sentences are fragmented and incomplete.	Several sentences are constructed incorrectly.	Most sentences are well phrased, clear and varied.	Sentences are well phrased, clear and varied throughout.	
Grammar & Spelling	No attention given to grammar and spelling.	Errors are frequent and distracting.	Minor errors are apparent but do not detract from or obscure meaning.	Writing is error free throughout.	
Punctuation & Capitalization	No attention given to punctuation and capitalization.	Errors are frequent and distracting.	Minor errors are apparent but do not detract from or obscure meaning.	Writing is error free throughout.	
Format (Length, Report, Essay, APA)	No apparent format.	Inappropriate format and/or frequent inconsistency in application.	Writing is error free throughout. Appropriate format but with minor inconsistencies in application.	Appropriate format consistently applied and artifact within assigned page length.	
Total Score: (May be recorded in decimals or fractions)					