Course Name: Sociology of Death and Dying
Course Number: SOC 355
Credits: 4
Instructor name: Paula C. Wenell
Instructor email: wenellp@oregonstate.edu
Phone: 541-961-4111

Course Description
This course provides an overview of cross cultural and historical attitudes and practices around end of life, death and dying. Assessment of contemporary legal, professional, cultural and technological issues surrounding end of life/death and dying.

Additional Course Description
This course will introduce life course development and the final stages of death and dying. Students will compare and contrast historical and modern attitudes toward death and dying found in literature, rituals, religion, philosophy, film, medico-legal issues, and in the process clarify their attitudes and values. Review contemporary issues in death and dying, including: funeral expenses, rituals, artificial life support, death with dignity, advance directives, euthanasia, hospice and suicide. Identify professional responsibilities and patient rights including legal issues such as HIPAA and other legal aspects of care. Students will explore the adaptation of our society toward changes in death and dying systems and customs.

Communication
Please post all course-related questions in the Q&A Discussion Forum so that the whole class may benefit from our conversation. Please contact me privately for matters of a personal nature. I will reply to course-related questions within 24-48 hours. I will strive to return your assignments and grades for course activities to you within five days of the due date.

Course Credits
This course combines approximately 120 hours of instruction, online activities, and assignments for 4 credits.

Technical Assistance
If you experience any errors or problems while in your online course, contact 24-7 Canvas Support through the Help link within Canvas. If you experience computer difficulties, need help downloading a browser or plug-in, or need assistance logging into a course, contact the IS Service Desk for assistance. You can call (541) 737-8787 or visit the IS Service Desk online.
Learning Resources

Required Text:


**Note to prospective students:** Please check with the OSU Bookstore for up-to-date information for the term you enroll ([OSU Bookstore Website](http://ecampus.oregonstate.edu) or 800-595-0357). If you purchase course materials from other sources, be very careful to obtain the correct ISBN.

Recommended Reading:

- *Tuesdays With Morrie* by Mitch Albom  
- *Dying Well* by Ira Byock, M.D.  
- *The Mourning Handbook* by Helen Fitzgerald  
- *A Grief Observed* by C.S. Lewis

Assignment Text:

- *Living with Death and Dying* by Elizabeth Kübler Ross  
- *On Death and Dying* by Elizabeth Kübler Ross  
- *To Live Until We Say Goodbye* by Elizabeth Kübler Ross  
- *Questions and Answers on Death and Dying* by Elizabeth Kübler Ross  
- *Death, the Final Stage of Growth* by Elizabeth Kübler Ross

The above selection of recommended books will be used for additional assignment, this is not required each term, but will be assigned as instructor chooses. From this selection of books marked with a (*), an assignment will be due at the conclusion of the course. It will be a research and study of the Pioneer Elizabeth Kübler Ross setting the background of the Hospice, the Movement in America. A paper of 4-5 pages, double spaced will be compiled as a result of the study and reading of these books (should be available at your local Library), you may also use web sites to further enhance your sources and information. A Bibliography will be required using both text and web documentation at the conclusion of your Historical Search.

**Research on the impact of Loss and Grief on Children and Adolescents**

- *Tear Soup, A recipe for Healing After Loss* by Pat Schwiebert and Chuck DeKlyen

Sources of children’s therapy:

- [The Dougy Center](http://ecampus.oregonstate.edu) (www.dougy.org)  
- [Growth House](http://ecampus.oregonstate.edu) (www.growthhouse.org)  
- [Kids Said](http://ecampus.oregonstate.edu) (https://kidsaid.com/)

**Professional Journals:**

Research statistics and Case Studies of Children dealing with Grief and Loss. These should be available in local Libraries or University Library. Use these sources and related other articles to research the topic of Children/Adolescent Grief. The paper should consist of 4-5 page, double spaced pages with documentation/Bibliography at the conclusion of the paper.
**Canvas**
This course is delivered via Canvas, where you will interact with your classmates and your instructor. You will access the learning materials within the course site, such as the syllabus, class discussions, assignments, projects, and quizzes. To preview how an online course works, visit the [Ecampus Course Demo](http://ecampus.oregonstate.edu). For technical assistance, please visit [Ecampus Technical Help](http://ecampus.oregonstate.edu).

**Measurable Student Learning Outcomes**
Upon successful completion of the course, students should be able to:
1. Evaluate cultural and historical changes and attitudes toward dying through selected Readings and discussions as related to the study of Sociology and Cultural change.
2. Critique death and dying issues in literature and film.
3. Review contemporary issues in death and dying including funerals and expenses, Rituals, artificial life support, death-with-dignity, advance directives, euthanasia, Hospice, and suicide.
7. Define and clarify personal values and beliefs regarding death and dying.
8. Identify professional responsibilities and patient's rights.
10. Learn about near-death experiences and their implications for growth and healing.
11. Upon completion of this class, the student should be familiar with the related Terminology and how to document appropriate care.

**Course Purpose:**
Welcome to this online class dealing with issues that will provoke to contemplate our entire life course. This is a one term introductory course to a relatively new and very large discipline. This class is designed to encourage your critical thinking about human behavior and facing our own mortality. We will use terminology, frankness, and honesty with our cognitive and emotional processes. As you read the assigned material, I trust you will find understanding and meaning in the material that we cover and understand how Society responds and adjusts to change and adapts to the care and prospect of the future.
Evaluation of Student Performance
Grading will be determined by class participation in the class discussions, the completion of assigned homework, and completion of exams. Each assignment is weighted with a point value. There will be no extra-credit options.

Total points for each category are computed on the following Grade scale:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percent Range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>94-100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>90-93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>88-89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>84-87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>80-83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>78-79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>74-77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>70-73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D+</td>
<td>68-69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>64-67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D-</td>
<td>60-63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

F = Student, work does not meet acceptable standards in order to pass the class.
## Course Content

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Reading Assignments</th>
<th>Learning Activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>Chapters 1 &amp; 2</td>
<td>Discussions: Introduction &amp; Mixer Assignment: Terminology Quiz: Chpt 1 &amp; 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Perspectives on Death &amp; Death Systems</td>
<td>Chapters 3 &amp; 4</td>
<td>Discussion Assignment: Terminology Assignment: Begin Interview Paper Quiz: Chpt 3 &amp; 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Health Care: Patients, Staff and Institutions</td>
<td>Chapter 5</td>
<td>Discussion Assignment: Terminology Assignment: Resource Discovery Quiz: Chpt 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>End-of-Life &amp; Living with Life-Threatening Illness</td>
<td>Chapters 6 &amp; 7</td>
<td>Discussion Assignment: Terminology Assignment: Interview paper due Quiz: Chpt 6 &amp; 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Last Rites &amp; Understanding the Experience of Loss</td>
<td>Chapters 8 &amp; 9</td>
<td>Discussion Assignment: Terminology Assignment: Cemetery Visit Quiz: Chpt 8 &amp; 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Death in the Lives of Children and Adolescents</td>
<td>Chapter 10</td>
<td>Discussion Assignment: Terminology Assignment: Loss and Grief on Children/Adolescent paper due Quiz: Chpt 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Death in the Lives of Adults</td>
<td>Chapter 11</td>
<td>Discussion Assignment: Terminology Quiz: Chpt 11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Suicide</td>
<td>Chapter 12</td>
<td>Discussion Assignment: Terminology Assignment: Cemetary Visit Presentation due Assignment: Begin Thanatography Quiz: Chpt 12 Begin Questionnaire: You and Death</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Threats of Horrendous Death</td>
<td>Chapter 13</td>
<td>Discussion Assignment: Terminology Assignment: Elizabeth Kübler Ross Quiz: Chpt 13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Beyond Death/After Life &amp; Personal and Social Choices</td>
<td>Chapters 14 &amp; 15</td>
<td>Discussion Assignment: Terminology Assignment: Thanatography Due Assignment: Write Your Own Obituary Quiz: Chpt 14 &amp; 15 Questionaire Due</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Finals</td>
<td>All Remaining Work Due</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Course Policies

Discussion Participation
Students are expected to participate in all graded discussions. While there is great flexibility in online courses, this is not a self-paced course. You will need to participate in discussions.

Ground Rules for Online Communication and Participation
- Online threaded discussions are public messages, and all writing in this area will be viewable by the entire class or assigned group members. If you prefer that only the instructor see your communication, send it by email, and be sure to identify yourself and the class.
- Posting of personal contact information is discouraged (e.g. telephone numbers, address, personal website address).
- I will check email frequently and will respond to course-related questions.
- Observation of “Netiquette”, that is all your online communications needs to be composed with fairness, honesty and tact.
- Spelling and grammar are very important in an online course. What you put into an online course reflects on your level of professionalism.
- Using only CAPITOL LETTERS, may be interpreted as speaking too loud, or shouting.
- Construct your work in an attractive manner and easy for everyone to read.

The discussion board is your space to interact with your colleagues related to current topics or responses to your colleague’s statements. It is expected that each student will participate in a mature and respectful manner. You may actively participate in the discussions after you have completed the readings and given thought about the content being discussed. Pay attention to what your classmates write (post) in their online comments. Ask clarifying questions when appropriate. These questions are meant to probe, and expand the subject, shedding new light, not to minimize or devalue comments. Assume the best of others in the class and expect the best from each other. Value the diversity of the class, we will all bring differences due to individual experiences and cultural customs. This will add to the value and richness of the fluid and learning enjoyment of the course. Be open to be challenged and confronted on your prior ideas or prejudices.

Check into the Discussion Board a minimum of two original posts, for each Chapter/Topic assigned for that week, to research and interact with other students with two responses. You will need 2 original posts and 2 responses to other students (2 for 2). Do not post all your postings in one sitting, allow a day or two between postings, the first posting to be done by Wednesday of each week, the remainder to follow through the week, using time to plan and think about your responses. This gives everyone time to read and mull, and it doesn’t congest the board with posts from the same day.

You can respond directly to the posted questions or broaden your research by referring to the text or the web. You are encouraged to respond to a classmate’s posting, this is developing our classroom experience, but these posts are meant for interacting and communication, only your posts (2 original posts) will be graded, your post must have documentation, either from the text or the web. Also, add 2 more posts to two other students. You may "cut and paste", but conclude with what you gained from this study, and document source.
In either case, posts must be substantive and address our readings week by week by “substantive,” I mean posts that reflect well-developed thinking. This cannot be accomplished in a sentence or two, a short paragraph or two is expected, followed by “why” you choose what you did, and what you learned. Please post in complete sentences and proofread your writing before you post. Do not wait until the last day of the week to post, plan ahead. I will give you a “participation” grade, discussion posts cannot be made up.

This course utilizes individual and group exercises to improve skills in self-awareness, communication, values clarification, individual problem-solving, learning strategies are encouraged in this course. Remember, this discussion tool is intended to help you with the content of this course: thus keep your conversation related to the chapter content. It is expected that students will earn the full 30 points for discussion each week if the above guidelines are followed. Two original posts, (10) points each, and two responses to two other students (5) points each. Remember 2+2.

This course works on the principle that we don’t learn in a vacuum, we learn best by interacting with others. While I help focus discussions and organize materials, we will all participate as students and teacher. A strong suggestion is to keep a notebook nearby to write down your thoughts prior to posting an entry.

I do not comment on each post, they are primarily intended as discussion, but I will jump into the conversation and sometimes offer a response to a specific post, offering a response to the whole class, or remaining silent to let others discuss the issues. I’m interested in seeing you all engage in conversation about the subjects posted for the week with enthusiasm, to share your views and observations.

Integrate research and documentation to support your postings. Keep your postings reasonably short, one to two paragraphs, remember, we all have only so much time for reading.

**Assignments**
- All assignments are to be typed and double-spaced.
- It is always a good idea to keep a copy of your paper for your own record keeping.
- All assignments should follow the conventions of standard written English: that includes spelling, punctuation, good sentence structure, grammar, capitalization in proper setting.

**Late Work Policy**
Assignments are due on the date indicated on the syllabus and the course calendar (online). Late submissions will be accepted, but will not receive full credit.

**Makeup Exams**
Makeup exams will be given only for missed exams excused in advance by the instructor. Excused absences will not be given for airline reservations, routine illness (colds, flu, stomach aches), or other common ailments. Excused absences will generally not be given after the absence has occurred, except under very unusual circumstances.
Incompletes
Incompletes are granted according to College policy. “An instructor may give an Incomplete when, in instructors judgment, you have not finished a minor portion of the required class work although you have logged in and posted in the class regularly, an assignment or exam may have been missed due to unusual circumstances beyond the students control.

Guidelines for a Productive and Effective Online Classroom
Students are expected to conduct themselves in the course (e.g., on discussion boards, email) in compliance with the university’s regulations regarding civility. Civility is an essential ingredient for academic discourse. All communications for this course should be conducted constructively, civilly, and respectfully. Differences in beliefs, opinions, and approaches are to be expected. In all you say and do for this course, be professional. Please bring any communications you believe to be in violation of this class policy to the attention of your instructor.

Active interaction with peers and your instructor is essential to success in this online course, paying particular attention to the following:
- Unless indicated otherwise, please complete the readings and view other instructional materials for each week before participating in the discussion board.
- Read your posts carefully before submitting them.
- Be respectful of others and their opinions, valuing diversity in backgrounds, abilities, and experiences.
- Challenging the ideas held by others is an integral aspect of critical thinking and the academic process. Please word your responses carefully, and recognize that others are expected to challenge your ideas. A positive atmosphere of healthy debate is encouraged.

Statement Regarding Students with Disabilities
Accommodations for students with disabilities are determined and approved by Disability Access Services (DAS). If you, as a student, believe you are eligible for accommodations but have not obtained approval, please contact DAS immediately at 541-737-4098 or at http://ds.oregonstate.edu. DAS notifies students and faculty members of approved academic accommodations and coordinates implementation of those accommodations. While not required, students and faculty members are encouraged to discuss details of the implementation of individual accommodations.

Accessibility of Course Materials
All materials used in this course are accessible. If you require accommodations please contact Disability Access Services (DAS).

Additionally, Canvas, the learning management system through which this course is offered, provides a vendor statement certifying how the platform is accessible to students with disabilities.

Expectations for Student Conduct
This course is offered through Oregon State University Extended Campus. For more information visit: http://ecampus.oregonstate.edu.
Student conduct is governed by the university’s policies, as explained in the Student Conduct Code. Students are expected to conduct themselves in the course (e.g., on discussion boards, email postings) in compliance with the university's regulations regarding civility.

**Academic Integrity**

Students are expected to comply with all regulations pertaining to academic honesty. For further information, visit Student Conduct and Community Standards, or contact the office of Student Conduct and Mediation at 541-737-3656.

OAR 576-015-0020 (2) Academic or Scholarly Dishonesty:

a) Academic or Scholarly Dishonesty is defined as an act of deception in which a Student seeks to claim credit for the work or effort of another person, or uses unauthorized materials or fabricated information in any academic work or research, either through the Student’s own efforts or the efforts of another.

b) It includes:

i) CHEATING - use or attempted use of unauthorized materials, information or study aids, or an act of deceit by which a Student attempts to misrepresent mastery of academic effort or information. This includes but is not limited to unauthorized copying or collaboration on a test or assignment, using prohibited materials and texts, any misuse of an electronic device, or using any deceptive means to gain academic credit.

ii) FABRICATION - falsification or invention of any information including but not limited to falsifying research, inventing or exaggerating data, or listing incorrect or fictitious references.

iii) ASSISTING - helping another commit an act of academic dishonesty. This includes but is not limited to paying or bribing someone to acquire a test or assignment, changing someone's grades or academic records, taking a test/doing an assignment for someone else by any means, including misuse of an electronic device. It is a violation of Oregon state law to create and offer to sell part or all of an educational assignment to another person (ORS 165.114).

iv) TAMPERING - altering or interfering with evaluation instruments or documents.

v) PLAGIARISM - representing the words or ideas of another person or presenting someone else's words, ideas, artistry or data as one's own, or using one's own previously submitted work. Plagiarism includes but is not limited to copying another person's work (including unpublished material) without appropriate referencing, presenting someone else's opinions and theories as one's own, or working jointly on a project and then submitting it as one's own.

c) Academic Dishonesty cases are handled initially by the academic units, following the process outlined in the University's Academic Dishonesty Report Form, and will also be referred to SCCS for action under these rules.

**Tutoring and Writing Assistance**

NetTutor is a leading provider of online tutoring and learner support services fully staffed by experienced, trained and monitored tutors. Students connect to live tutors from any

This course is offered through Oregon State University Extended Campus. For more information visit: http://ecampus.oregonstate.edu.
computer that has Internet access. NetTutor provides a virtual whiteboard that allows tutors and students to work on problems in a real time environment. They also have an online writing lab where tutors critique and return essays within 24 to 48 hours. Access NetTutor from within your Canvas class by clicking on the Tools button in your course menu.

The Oregon State Online Writing Lab (OWL) is also available for students enrolled in Ecampus courses.

**TurnItIn**
Your instructor may ask you to submit one or more of your writings to Turnitin, a plagiarism prevention service. Your assignment content will be checked for potential plagiarism against Internet sources, academic journal articles, and the papers of other OSU students, for common or borrowed content. Turnitin generates a report that highlights any potentially unoriginal text in your paper. The report may be submitted directly to your instructor or your instructor may elect to have you submit initial drafts through Turnitin, and you will receive the report allowing you the opportunity to make adjustments and ensure that all source material has been properly cited. Papers you submit through Turnitin for this or any class will be added to the OSU Turnitin database and may be checked against other OSU paper submissions. You will retain all rights to your written work. For further information, visit [Academic Integrity for Students: Turnitin – What is it?](http://ecampus.oregonstate.edu).

**Student Evaluation of Courses**
The online Student Evaluation of Teaching system opens to students the Monday of dead week and closes the Monday following the end of finals. Students receive notification, instructions and the link through their ONID. They may also log into the system via Online Services. Course evaluation results are extremely important and used to help improve courses and the online learning experience for future students. Responses are anonymous (unless a student chooses to “sign” their comments, agreeing to relinquish anonymity) and unavailable to instructors until after grades have been posted. The results of scaled questions and signed comments go to both the instructor and their unit head/supervisor. Anonymous (unsigned) comments go to the instructor only.