HDFS 4800: Grief, Loss, and Bereavement*
Tuesdays/Thursdays 5:30 pm – 6:50 pm

*Required course to pursue certification as a Certified Child Life Specialist through the Association of Child Life Professionals.

Instructor: Anondah R. Saide, PhD

Course Description: This course will focus on gaining knowledge of death, loss, and bereavement across the lifespan (i.e., infants through late adulthood), along with interventions for the bereaved. Students will be prepared to interact with and assess the needs of individuals and families who have experienced different types of loss (e.g., sudden, anticipated loss, ambiguous) and targets of loss (e.g., sibling, spouse). This course will assist students in exploring their own perspectives on death and bereavement to gain a greater understanding of how their own perspectives impact their responses to others. Consideration will also be given to how faith, culture, religion, and the sociohistorical context impact everyone's understanding of death and bereavement.

Three lecture hours a week. Credit: Three Hours.

Course Learning Objectives/Outcomes:
Students will:
1. Be able to articulate the impact of sociohistorical, cultural, spiritual, and religious perspectives on death, loss, and bereavement.
2. Gain knowledge about death, loss, and bereavement across the lifespan; as well as end-of-life care and other related issues.
3. Be able to identify and articulate the different types of loss, contexts of loss, and theories of grief.
4. Become more knowledgeable about their own perspectives on death, loss, and bereavement; and how those perspectives impact their interactions with others.
5. Explore methods for offering support for grieving individuals and families; and methods for reflecting on that work (e.g., self-care).

Required Text:
- Additional readings and/or links to relevant videos will be made available through Canvas weekly.

COURSE POLICIES & UNT RESOURCES

Email. If you need to contact the instructor outside of lecture or office hours, please email them (anondah.saide@unt.edu). The instructor will email you back within two (2) business days.

Instructor’s Office Hours. Please see announcement on our course Canvas page. The instructor will have availability during the day and evening.

Make up policy. If you miss an exam or an in-class assignment for an acceptable reason (see explanation below under “attendance”), you must notify and provide documentation to the instructor within three (3)
business days from the time the exam or assignment was given to the class. If the reason is considered acceptable, it will be your responsibility to set-up a plan for making up the assignment. Writing assignments have to be turned in by the day noted on the syllabus because they are turned in electronically and you can turn them in before the day, they are due. Please do not wait until the last minute to upload your paper, make sure that you upload with enough time to account for any unexpected technical issues. Due dates are posted on the course calendar and your instructor sends out weekly reminders.

**Attendance.** Students are expected to attend all classes regularly and punctually. If you no longer wish to be in the class, YOU have to drop the class via the UNT portal or by contacting the Registrar's Office for guidance. The instructor does not drop/withdraw students from the course.

There are “acceptable” reasons for missing class, including: (a) ill health, (b) jury duty or mandatory court appearances, or (c) religious holidays. In order for the absence to be excused so that you can make-up an exam, you have to provide verifiable documentation that you were unable to make it to class. Absences in observance of religious holidays are authorized only if you have notified your instructor in writing within the first 2 weeks of the semester per university policy. If the absence is due to a medical/health-related concern, you must provide a note from a doctor or medical institution confirming you were sick. The instructor does not need to know what your ailment is (that is your own private information), just confirmation that you were unable to attend the class.

**Academic Integrity.** It is the responsibility of each student to be familiar with UNT's Policy on Academic Integrity. Plagiarism, copying, cheating, or giving assistance to other students during examinations is a violation of academic integrity. Cases of suspected cheating or plagiarism will be reported to the Dean of Students office. Any and all work submitted in order to meet the requirements of this course must be originally created for this course. You may not turn in anything submitted for another course and/or section of this course you have previously taken.

University Policy 06.003 states, “UNT promotes the integrity of learning processed and embraces the core values of trust and honesty. Academic integrity is based on educational principles and procedures that protect the rights of all participants in the educational process and validate the legitimacy of degrees awarded by the university. In the investigation and resolution of allegations of student academic dishonesty, the university’s actions are intended to be corrective, educationally sound, fundamentally fair, and based on reliable evidence.” Here is the link to additional information on this policy: [https://policy.unt.edu/sites/default/files/06.003.pdf](https://policy.unt.edu/sites/default/files/06.003.pdf)

For more information on what constitutes plagiarism, as well as tips on citing your resources, visit [www.plagiarism.org](http://www.plagiarism.org) and check out this article: [https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5122250/](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5122250/)

**If you require clarification on what counts as academic dishonesty, it is your responsibility to ask the instructor of the course. Ignorance is not an excuse for academic dishonesty.**

**Technology Use.** Using electronic recording or any other communications devices (e.g., MP3 players, cell phones, pagers, recording devices) in the classroom to record lectures or during exams without the explicit permission of the instructor is strictly prohibited. If you are caught doing so, you will be asked to leave the classroom and will not be granted points for any assignments or exams that are associated with that day. Exceptions will be made for students that have a note from the Office of Disability Access and have discussed this with the instructor. This policy is in place for the benefit of the entire class community.

**Academic Accommodations.** The University of North Texas makes reasonable academic accommodation for students with disabilities. Students seeking accommodation must first register with the Office of Disability Access (ODA) to verify their eligibility. If a disability is verified, the ODA will provide you with an accommodation letter to be delivered to faculty to begin a private discussion regarding your specific
needs in a course. You may request accommodations at any time; however, ODA notices of accommodation should be provided as early as possible in the semester to avoid any delay in implementation. Students must obtain a new letter of accommodation for every semester and must meet with each faculty member prior to implementation in each class. For additional information go to the Office of Disability Access website (http://disability.unt.edu) or contact them by phone (940) 565-4323.

Emergency Notification and Procedures. UNT uses a system called Eagle Alert to quickly notify you with critical information in the event of an emergency (i.e., severe weather, campus closing, and health and public safety emergencies like chemical spills, fires, or violence). The system sends voice messages (and text messages upon permission) to the phones of all active faculty staff, and students. Please make certain to update your phone numbers at http://www.my.unt.edu. Some helpful emergency preparedness actions include (1) knowing the evacuation routes and severe weather shelter areas in the buildings where your classes are held, (2) determining how you will contact family and friends if phones are temporarily unavailable, and (3) identifying where you will go if you need to evacuate the Denton area suddenly. In the event of a university closure, please refer to Canvas for contingency plans for course materials.

Retention of Student Records. Student records pertaining to this course are maintained in a secure location by the instructor of record. All records such as exams, answer sheets (with keys), and written papers submitted during the duration of the course are kept for at least one calendar year after course completion. Course work completed via the Canvas online system, including grading information and comments, is also stored in a safe electronic environment for one year. You have a right to view your individual record; however, information about your records will not be divulged to other individuals without the proper written consent. You are encouraged to review the Public Information Policy and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) laws and the university’s policy in accordance with those mandates at the following link: http://essc.unt.edu/registrar/ferpa.html

Respect for Others. The University of North Texas values diversity and individuality as part of advancing ideals of human worth, dignity and academic excellence. Diverse viewpoints enrich open discussion, foster the examination of values and exposure of biases, help educate people in rational conflict resolution, responsive leadership and prepare us for the complexities of a pluralistic society. As such, the University of North Texas is committed to maintaining an open, welcoming atmosphere that attracts qualified students, staff, and faculty from all groups to support their success. It is expected that students listen to and respect each other’s insights during class.

Grade Disputes. If students are concerned about the grade they received on an exam or assignment, they should feel comfortable talking to their instructor about it. Students must submit a typed request explaining the rationale for the grade change. Students must dispute their grade within five (5) business days of receiving it or the instructor will not consider the dispute. Students can view their grades and grade-related feedback on Canvas (please see the announcement on Canvas for how to access instructor feedback). Decisions regarding grade disputes are made at the discretion of the instructor.

Canvas. We will be using Canvas in this course. Your grades, the syllabus, course announcements, and assignment rubrics will all be posted on our course Canvas page. As a student, it is your responsibility to check Canvas on a regular basis (i.e., at least once per week) for course updates.

Succeed at UNT: The University of North Texas endeavors to offer you a high-quality education and to provide a supportive environment. Here’s how to succeed at UNT: Show up. Find support. Get advised. Be prepared. Get involved. Stay focused. To learn more about campus resources and information on how you can achieve success, go to https://success.unt.edu/

Additional Information on Meeting Basic Needs. Any student who has difficulty affording groceries or accessing sufficient food to eat every day, or who lacks a safe and stable place to live and believes this may affect their performance in the course, is urged to contact the Dean of Students for support. Furthermore,
please notify me if you are comfortable doing so. This will enable me to provide any resources that I may possess. Information on the UNT food pantry can be found at http://deanofstudents.unt.edu/resources/food-pantry

How to contact Dean of Students Office:
Office of the Dean of Students
University Union, Suite 409
(940) 565-2648 | deanofstudents@unt.edu

COURSE STRUCTURE/ ASSIGNMENTS

Grading. The final grade students receive in this class will be based upon the following:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade Component</th>
<th>Points</th>
<th>%</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Course Quizzes</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quiz #1</td>
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<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Quiz #2</td>
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<td>Participation Activities</td>
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<td>Module #1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Writing Assignments</td>
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<td>WA #1</td>
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<td>Total</td>
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Grading Scale:
- A = 90 to 100%
- B = 80 to 89%
- C = 70 to 79%
- D = 60 to 69%
- F = Below 60%

Quizzes. Please see the course calendar for when these are scheduled. Students will be given four (4) quizzes during the semester. Each will consist of 15 to 20 multiple-choice, fill in the blank, and/or, true/false type questions. The quizzes will be based on material from: (a) the readings, (b) supplemental material provided in the lectures, and (c) participation activities. Each quiz is time-limited: you will have 30 minutes to take the quiz via Canvas. The quiz will open on Canvas at 5 pm on the date noted on the syllabus and close at 11:59 pm. You will need to download LockDown Browser to take the quiz. I will provide a practice test (ungraded) for you to try LockDown Browser ahead of time.

Class Participation. Participation will be a significant component of the course which is why you are expected to come to class on a regular basis. We will do activities every week, so come prepared to participate. These assignments are designed to help you apply course material to real-life examples and give you an opportunity to collaborate with your instructor and classmates. Participation will be graded on a 3-point scale (2 = Complete, 1 = Notable Issues/Incomplete, 0 = Missing) for each assignment, but you will only receive a participation score for each course module.

Writing Assignments. In addition to any reflection assignments we may do in class, you will have three major writing assignments to work on outside of class that correspond to our course modules. Assignment instructions will be discussed in class and posted on Canvas. All writing assignments are due by class time (5:30 pm) on Tuesday, the week it is noted on the syllabus. Writing assignments constitute a significant portion of your grade, I strongly encourage you to seek out assistance from the Writing Center (https://writingcenter.unt.edu/) and to meet with me during my office hours to talk through your drafts.
Module #1 Writing Assignment: Creation of a Living Will (Five Wishes) and Reflection on Death-related Cultural Practices

Module #2 Writing Assignment: Assess the Biological/Physiological, Psychological, Socioemotional, & Sociohistorical Factors Impacting Conceptions of Death

Module #3 Writing Assignment: Case Study: Propose Interventions and Supports that are Developmentally Appropriate and Culturally Responsive

COURSE CALENDAR

Module 1 Socio-Historical Foundations and Perceptions of Death
Module 2 Death Across the Lifespan: Causes and Conceptions
Module 3 Coping with Grief and Bereavement

*We will have guest speakers (e.g., hospice worker, pastor) during module 3 to be announced later in the semester.

**See Canvas Page for updated weekly course schedule.