PSYCH 35 DEATH & DYING

CABRILLO COLLEGE

Wednesdays 6-9 pm (#90020)
Room 426 3 units

Thursdays 2:10-5:15 (#90019)
Room 426 3 units

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Cabrio website: http://www.cabrillo.edu/~ldespelder/
10e website: www.mhhe.com/despelder10e

PURPOSE OF THE COURSE:

This course provides a comprehensive overview of the study of death and dying, covering the key issues and questions in the field. We look at the personal and social attitudes regarding death in our society as well as those of other cultures and times. This class draws upon sociological, psychological, anthropological, historical, medical, and spiritual investigations into the subject of death. As you review your textbook, you will find coverage of death-related issues ranging from personal confrontations with mortality to the study of large-scale encounters with death such as disaster and terrorism.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES:

1. Analyze historical, psychological, and cultural differences in death, dying, bereavement, and loss.
2. Critically assess the psychological complexities of human responses to death, dying, bereavement, and loss.

REQUIRED TEXT:

The Last Dance: Encountering Death and Dying, 10th ed., by Lynne Ann DeSpelder and Albert Lee Strickland (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2015). ISBN: 9780078035463. This is the primary text for the course. It is imperative that you get the correct edition of the text; older editions are NOT compatible with this course. You also will use the text’s website located on McGraw’s server.

Beware buying a used hard copy online from a private seller. Make sure that you are purchasing the 10th edition of The Last Dance. Former students have been ripped off by sellers who say that there is no difference between earlier editions – just the color of the cover. Also, digital copies of the text are problematic at this time. There are no downloads that have easy access to the notes that you will need to use.

RECOMMENDED TEXT:

The Path Ahead: Readings in Death and Dying, edited by Lynne Ann DeSpelder and Albert Lee Strickland (Mountain View, Calif.: Mayfield Publishing Co., 1995). This companion reader supplements the primary text and is recommended for in-depth study. The recommended readings from The Path Ahead are listed by week and can be found on my Cabrillo website.
Both publications are available from the Cabrillo Bookstore, although there may be limited copies of *The Path Ahead: Readings in Death and Dying* since it is out of print.

Sample *Lossographies/Deathographies* and other readings of interest as well as a copy of your texts are on reserve (2-hour limit, no overnight) at the circulation desk in Cabrillo's Main Library (479-6473).

Your reading assignments from *The Last Dance* are listed here by week. Place the date for each week in the blank provided. Readings and assignments are to be completed BEFORE class meets each week. Bring your textbook to class with you. *Last Dance* readings are listed by chapter and pages.

**THE SCHEDULE OF REQUIRED Last Dance READINGS, ASSIGNMENT DUE DATES, FIELD TRIP, AND TESTS IS AS FOLLOWS:**

**Week ONE**
Introduction: FAQs Text, and Reader, Course preview. **ASSIGNMENT:** Review Deathographies collection at the reserve desk in the library.

**Week TWO**
Front Matter, Prologue and Ch. 1, Attitudes Toward Death: A Climate of Change pp. vii-47

**Week THREE**
Ch. 2, Learning about Death: The Influence of Sociocultural Forces, pp. 48-87

**Week FOUR**
Ch. 3, Perspectives on Death: Cross-Cultural and Historical pp. 88-137. **LOSSOGRAPHIES DUE**

**Week FIVE**
Ch. 4, Death Systems: Matters of Public Policy, pp. 138-173; Ch. 5, Health Care Systems: Patients, Staff, and Institutions pp. 174-211.

**Week SIX**
Ch. 6, Facing Death: Living with Life-Threatening Illness pp. 212-257; Ch. 7, End-of-Life Issues and Decisions: pp. 258-293;

**Week SEVEN**
Ch. 8, Last Rites: Funerals and Body Disposition, pp. 294-339; Ch. 9, Survivors: Understanding the Experience of Loss pp. 340-383

**Week EIGHT**
FIELD TRIP: Mortuary visit.

**Week NINE**
TEST #1 Chapters 1-7

**Week TEN**
Ch. 10, Death in the Lives of Children and Adolescents pp. 384-415;

**Week ELEVEN**
Ch. 11, Death in the Lives of Adults pp. 416-445. **LOSSOGRAPHY READING ASSIGNMENT DUE**

**Week TWELVE**
Ch. 12, Suicide: pp. 448-487; Ch. 13, Risks, Perils, and Traumatic Death, pp. 488-529.

**Week THIRTEEN**
Ch. 14, Beyond Death/After Life: pp. 530-567.

**Week FOURTEEN**
Ch. 15, The Path Ahead: Personal and Social Choices pp. 569-582. **TEST #2: The Last Dance: Ch. 8-15 Review**
ACTIVITIES AND ASSIGNMENTS

1. **Begin to collect Jokes, Cartoons, Children’s Cartoons, Films and Music.** Review the assignment and text file on BlackBoard (BB) after the first week of class. This assignment is due in the hard copy format, provided on BB, at the last class meeting. It is worth 5 points when completed and turned in on time. Check now to make sure you can use the posted Word file.

2. **LOSSOGRAPHY/DEATHOGRAPHY:** At the reserve reading desk, you will find a hard copy collection of Lossographies/Deathographies from previous semesters. Pick any semester and read a number of former students’ papers. This activity will give you an idea of how you wish to prepare your own lossography that is due week #4. BlackBoard posting information regarding the assignment will be available the third week of class in order to limit participants to those students currently registered.

3. **BLACKBOARD DISCUSSIONS and Assignments:** Your participation in the discussion(s) on BlackBoard will earn you points. Make sure you follow the directions — post early; check back, post again, etc. In order to access assignments, handouts, links, and information that will be posted during the semester on BlackBoard, go to http://www.cabrillo.edu/ and at the right of the home page, you will find a pull down menu of the “most sought” pages on the sites. Click on BlackBoard and follow the login information. You must log in to BlackBoard at the beginning of each new semester. If you have troubles logging in check the login troubleshooting page or Cabrillo BlackBoard Help. You can also call the Helpline at 831-477-3241. (Helpdesk hours are Mon-Thurs 8:30am-5pm, Fri 9am-1pm.) You MUST be logged in to BB after the second class.

Be prepared to check BB three to four times during a week for assignments and more repeatedly for discussions. Check email frequently during each day including weekends.

HOW GRADES ARE DETERMINED: EVALUATION OF STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

**Credit:** You can take this course for credit on a pass/fail basis whereby upon completion of the course you will receive three credits with no grade attached. Requirements for passing the course include:

1. **Attendance and written work during all regularly scheduled class meetings.** Involves completion of 15 short assignments or group activities. (30 points total / 2 points each - only 1 point if leaving at the break.) Blackboard Activities and Discussions instead of class must be complete by the deadline listed on the assignment.

2. **Assignment: Lossography/Deathography — DUE:** Briefly review the experiences with death, dying, and loss in your life. Reflect or get a handle on how these experiences influence your attitudes, beliefs, and values concerning death and dying. You
can begin by identifying the death experiences you believe to be most important. Length: Approximately 2,000 words posted to BlackBoard by the deadline. A full description of the assignment and activities to complete before writing your lossography are posted on BB. (10 points for on time submission to BlackBoard - 2 points deducted for each day late.)

3. Lossography/Deathography Reading Assignment — DUE: ____________________
   (20 points for on time submission in hard copy – 2 points deducted for each day late.) assemble your hard copy package with the cover sheet finalized. Be sure to turn in late papers to the drop box outside the HASS Division Office Room 420 with your name, my name, and class.

4. Final I learned paper — DUE: ____________________
   (5 points graded in hard copy—2 points deducted for each day late.) Be sure to turn in late papers to the drop box outside HASS Division Office Room 420.

   Downloaded from BB and prepared in typed format with cut and paste for all items. (5 points graded in hard copy 2 points deducted for each day late.) Be sure to turn in late papers to the drop box outside HASS Division Office Room 420.

6. Passing grade on scheduled objective exams. You will need two ABF-A200 (alpha) ACCU-SCAN ADVANTAGE two-sided blue answer sheets available at the bookstore and a #2 pencil. Keep these answer sheets flat for use – the machine will kick out bent or folded ones.

7. BlackBoard Discussions Up to 10 points — You will participate in 2 or 3 BB discussions. Dates and requirements for the number of points will be posted with the discussion.

Summary for grade/credit:

  In-class activities / Attendance 30  
  Lossography (on time submission) 10  
  Lossography Reading Assignment (on time submission) 20  
  Final I learned paper (graded) 5  
  Jokes, cartoons, children’s cartoons films, music (graded) 5  
  BlackBoard discussions 10  
  Tests  
    #1 10  
    #2 10  
  TOTAL POINTS 100

Letter Grade: Requirements for letter grade include those for credit. Grade is based upon all categories above including exam results. Extra-credit projects are available. All completed work is due on the dates indicated.

Extra Credit work is described in a handout posted on BlackBoard. It can only be submitted electronically to lydespel@cabrillo.edu. Your work for extra credit will be DUE by 11:59 PM on ____________________ No late extra credit will be counted toward final score. Keep track of your points to determine if you wish to turn in extra credit.

VERY IMPORTANT NOTE: Depending on the class averages, grades usually are translated from total POINTS (unlike other classes this is NOT calculated by percent) as follows:
A = 95-100  B = 94-89  C = 88-83  D = 82-76  F = 75 and below

Letter grade  100 Maximum
Credit/pass fail  >75 points total

Click here to access the website, also called an Online Learning Center (OLC), for the 10th edition of The Last Dance or use the link at the beginning of this syllabus. This link will take you to the home page where you can find an overview, information about the authors, and access to pdfs of The Last Dance chapters 1 & 2 without notes. This problem affects all the digital materials now available, although some have notes in a separate file. Below the information center is the link to the Student Edition. This link will take you to materials for the course. Use each chapter’s resources on the web when reading your text and again for exam review.

Also, the website has extensive study aids including flash cards for learning the definitions of terms and sample quizzes to give you an idea of how you are mastering the material in each chapter. Be sure to complete the online quizzes before each of your tests. All tests are open notes, either handwritten or typed - no limit. You may use your study guides. Printouts from the website are not allowed.

Be prepared to login to BB at least three or four times week for assignments and more frequently for discussions. Make sure you have an email account that you check daily.

My Cabrillo Website has information you need to read and review at the start of the semester. Remember this is a class where submission of coursework must be as directed depending on the assignment. I DO NOT accept assignments by email nor do I open attachments. Extra credit work comes in the body of an email.

LAST WORDS

In summary, I am unlike other instructors you have had regarding assignments, tests, and final scores by points. Remember papers are either posted to BB or in a couple of cases submitted in hard copy, grades are based upon points not percentages, I do not open attachments, I expect that you will login to BB for your assignments, and also have an email address that you check email daily. Cabrillo has resources for printing and use of computers. Plan ahead. The statement: “My __________ didn’t (isn’t) work (ing) “ doesn’t excuse you from deadlines in this class.

Students from previous semesters have said, “I wish that I followed your directions and read the Lossographies for the assignment earlier rather than leaving it to the last minute because by then it was impossible to complete on time.”

Continuing Education Credit: Students taking this course for continuing education credit (CE credit) must do all the work for credit and may complete the course for a letter grade. Official Cabrillo coursework reports will be available at the end of the semester. In applying for license renewal, specify the course (PSYCH 35 Death and Dying), the number of hours (3 units = 52.8 hours), the institution (Cabrillo College), and the provider number (00379). Keep your official Cabrillo record slips in case you are audited; thus, no official papers are sent with your license renewal coursework, only the information above.

Accommodations for disabilities: Student needing accommodations should inform me. Veterans may have injuries that entitle accommodations to ensure equal opportunity for students with verified disabilities. To determine if you qualify or to obtain assistance contact Disabled Student Services, Room 810 479-6379, or the Learning Skills Program, Room 1073, 479-6220