

## HLTH AGE 4B03: DEATH AND DYING IN LATER LIFE Winter 2019

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**Lecture:** Thursdays 11:30 – 2:20pm

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### **Course Description**

This course explores an array of practices and beliefs related to death and dying as a progression of aging. Students begin by investigating beliefs of death and dying and how / whether these are integrated into contemporary society. Lectures, guest speakers,



tours and case studies serve to broaden our understanding of the social and physical transformations of the aging and dying body, and many of the taboos surrounding its presence among the living. The other half of the course will look at the pivotal role of institutions and clinical medicine in managing the process of death and dying alongside current policies on issues such as physician assisted death, palliative care facilities, and end of life practices. Students will have an opportunity to present their research and interests based on some of the major themes discussed in class.

### **Course Objectives**

Upon successful completion of this course, students will:

- Understand how the body is physically/socially transformed through death and dying
- Define networks that provide for and contribute to end of life care
- Consider the pivotal role of institutions in managing the process of illness and death
- Identify legal, political, and social frameworks that determine end of life policies
- Describe spiritual, religious and cultural practices related to death, burial and mourning

## **Required Materials and Texts**

\*Required readings, lecture points, and case studies will be posted on Avenue to Learn

## **Class Format**

Lectures, Case Studies, Interviews/Surveys, Group and Individual Presentations

## **Course Evaluation – Overview**

1. Participation/Attendance – 10%
2. Group Research/Presentation – 20%
3. Individual Presentation – 20%
4. Tests (2) – 50%

### **Participation/Attendance 10%**

Participation grades are based on the completion of in-class assignments, and student contribution to class and seminar discussions. It is vital that all students come prepared to discuss their readings. Active, engaged, thoughtful reactions to the presentations, topics, lecture material, and films are essential to maintaining a good classroom dynamic. Students who are not presenting will be expected to actively engage with the issues raised by their colleagues.

### **Group Research/Presentation 20% (15 min)**

Students assembled into groups will be assigned a survey topic to present as compiled data to the class. They will have collaborated as teams to come up with a hypothesis, design a survey, collect the information, and consolidate their findings. Team reps must submit a list of 'who-did what' in their group in order to assign a fair grade.

### **Individual Presentation 20% (10 min)**

Each student will present a topic assigned through a case study series. This presentation should provide a brief overview of the article, the issue, and some primary research data gathered by the student [relevant to the topic]. This can consist of interviewing individuals, discussing personal/impersonal experiences, and/or analyzing media, film, or literature. Students will be graded on their comprehension of the issue, the quality of their presentation, the materials used, and their level of engagement with the class.

NB. There is no paper to hand-in, as students are graded during the presentation itself.

*Please refer to the grading rubric below for specific expectations.*

**Presentation Evaluation Rubric**

Clarity 1 2 3 4 5

Eye Contact 1 2 3 4 5

Engagement 1 2 3 4 5

References 1 2 3 4 5

Visuals 1 2 3 4 5



**Weekly Course Schedule and Required Readings**

*The contents and structure of the outline are subject to change. Thank you for your patience!*

**Week 1 (Jan 10)**

**Introduction – Course Overview**

Lecture – *Death Defined: Physiological/Medico-Legal – “The Dead Brain Syndrome”*

Giacomini (1997)

**Week 2 (Jan 17)**

**Death and Dying**

Lecture – *Death Defined: Spiritual/Religious Realms – Universalities in non-Western/Western Beliefs and Practices*

**Week 3 (Jan 24)**

**Human Remains: Handling, Procurement, and Movement**

Lecture – *Medico-legal vs. Religious [in Skeletal Biology Lab TBD]*

**Week 4 (Jan 31)**

**Anxiety / Mortality / Intervention [AMI]**

Discussion and Assignment on Constructing Models:

Tomer and Eliason (1996); TMT – Ernest Becker

**Week 5 (Feb 7)**

**Terror Management Theories in AMI**

Generating Interviews and Surveys

**Week 6 (Feb 14)**

**Reading Week**

**Week 7 (Feb 21)**

**Anatomy Lab Tour TBD**

**Week 8 (Feb 28)**

**Test #1**

Anxiety / Mortality / Intervention – Consolidating the Data

**Week 9 (Mar 7)**

**Group 1 &2 AMI Presentations**

**Death as/in Clinical Medicine**

*Case studies assigned: TBD* Cesari et al (2017); Flaherty et al (2017); Woo (2017); Sanford (2017); Landi et al (2017); Khaw and Visvanathan (2017); Grossberg et al (2017); Hines and Babrow (2001); Wilson et al (2007); Fougère et al (2017)

**Week 10 (Mar 14)**

**Case Studies – Discussions [CM]**

+ Review for Test #2

**Week 11 (Mar 21)**

**Test #2**

Lecture – *Physician Assisted Death: Policies and Practices*

**Week 12 (Mar 28)**

CM Student Presentations

**Week 13 (Apr 4)**

CM Student Presentations

**Course Policies**

**NB.** Information on the structure and content of presentations, readings, requirements and expectations, will be posted on Avenue to Learn.

## **Grades**

Grades will be based on the McMaster University grading scale:

<b>MARK</b>	<b>GRADE</b>
90-100	A+
85-90	A
80-84	A-
77-79	B+
73-76	B
70-72	B-
67-69	C+
63-66	C
60-62	C-
57-59	D+
53-56	D
50-52	D-
0-49	F

## **Late Assignments**

Due to the presentation content and testing requirements of the course, all concerns and issues regarding lateness can be brought to my attention directly.

## **Requests for Relief for Missed Academic Term Work**

### **McMaster Student Absence Form (MSAF)**

In the event of an absence for medical or other reasons, students should review and follow the Academic Regulation in the Undergraduate Calendar “Requests for Relief for Missed Academic Term Work”.

## **Avenue to Learn**

In this course we will be using Avenue to Learn. Students should be aware that, when they access the electronic components of this course, private information such as first and last names, user names for the McMaster e-mail accounts, and program affiliation may become apparent to all other students in the same course. The available information is dependent on the technology used. Continuation in this course will be deemed consent to this disclosure. If you have any questions or concerns about such disclosure please discuss this with the course instructor.

## **Course Modification**

The instructor reserves the right to modify elements of the course during the term. If any modification becomes necessary, reasonable notice and communication with the students will be given with explanation and the opportunity to comment on changes. It is the responsibility of the student to check his/her McMaster email and course websites weekly during the term and to note any changes.

## **University Policies**

### **Academic Integrity Statement**

You are expected to exhibit honesty and use ethical behavior in all aspects of the learning process. Academic credentials you earn are rooted in principles of honesty and academic integrity.

Academic dishonesty is to knowingly act or fail to act in a way that results or could result in unearned academic credit or advantage. This behavior can result in serious consequences, e.g. the grade of zero on an assignment, loss of credit with a notation on the transcript (notation reads: “Grade of F assigned for academic dishonesty”), and/or suspension or expulsion from the university.

It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty. For information on the various types of academic dishonesty please refer to the [Academic Integrity Policy](#), located at [www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity](http://www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity).

The following illustrates only three forms of academic dishonesty:

- Plagiarism, e.g. the submission of work that is not one’s own or for which credit has been obtained.
- Improper collaboration in group work.
- Copying or using unauthorized aids in tests and examinations.

### **Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities**

Students who require academic accommodation must contact [Student Accessibility Services \(SAS\)](#) to make arrangements with a Program Coordinator. Academic accommodations must be arranged for each term of study. [Student Accessibility Services](#) can be contacted by phone 905-525-9140 ext. 28652 or e-mail [sas@mcmaster.ca](mailto:sas@mcmaster.ca). For further information, consult McMaster University’s [Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities](#) policy.

If you require this course outline in an alternate/accessible format, please contact the Department of Health, Aging & Society (ext. 27227 | e-mail: [hasdept@mcmaster.ca](mailto:hasdept@mcmaster.ca)).

### **Academic Accommodation for Religious, Indigenous or Spiritual Observances (RISO)**

Students requiring academic accommodation based on religious, indigenous or spiritual observances should follow the procedures set out in the RISO policy. Students requiring a RISO accommodation should submit their request to their Faculty Office normally within 10 working days of the beginning of term in which they anticipate a need for accommodation or to the Registrar’s Office prior to their examinations. Students should also contact their instructors as soon as possible to make alternative arrangements for classes, assignments, and tests.

### **Faculty of Social Sciences E-mail Communication Policy**

Effective September 1, 2010, it is the policy of the Faculty of Social Sciences that all e-mail communication sent from students to instructors (including TAs), and from students to staff, must originate from the student's own McMaster University e-mail account. This policy protects confidentiality and confirms the identity of the student. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that communication is sent to the university from a McMaster account. If an instructor becomes aware that a communication has come from an alternate address, the instructor may not reply at his or her discretion.

### **Extreme Circumstances**

The University reserves the right to change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances (e.g., severe weather, labour disruptions, etc.). Changes will be communicated through regular McMaster communication channels, such as McMaster Daily News, A2L and/or McMaster email.