

RELIGIOUS STUDIES 2N03 DEATH & DYING: THE WESTERN EXPERIENCE 2020 Spring/Summer--DRAFT

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Lecture: Online

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Course Description

Death and dying are pervasive themes in the Western religious traditions. This course will use historical, sociological and anthropological methods to explore how ideas and practices related to death and dying in the Western world have developed over time, paying attention both to broad historical trends and the particularities unique to various localized contexts.

Course Objectives

By the end of the course students should be able to:

- Examine and understand how death is managed, symbolized, and experienced by different groups and individuals
- Gain an awareness of all the different factors that shape death and dying in the modern world
- Investigate modern dying and grieving and the distinctive ways it interacts with culture, environment, economic (in)security, and national history
- Identify national differences in death practices
- Critically evaluate how key factors (ex. money, technology, family, etc.) operate in their own country or society and to understand how their own society manages death
- Engage in debates and discussions about death and dying

Required Materials and Texts

- Tony Walter, *Death in the Modern World* (Sage Publications, 2020)
- Additional readings will be made available by the instructor

Class Format

Online

Course Evaluation – Overview

1. Discussion Forums – 30%
2. Quizzes – 40%, (4 x 10% each)
3. Final Exam – 30%

Course Evaluation – Details

Discussion Forums (30%), due n/a

Students will be graded based on their participation on the Avenue discussion boards. You will find 2 discussion questions every week. These questions relate to course readings, lectures, and current events. Each week, you are expected to contribute an initial post to each of the 2 questions and then comment on the answers of other

students in your group. In addition to your 2 initial posts, you are required to respond at least twice per discussion question. That means you should be posting a minimum of six (6) times each week (3 posts, one initial and 2 replies, per discussion question).

You are expected to post thoughtful answers to each question. Your answers should be insightful and include reference to the course material. Your language should be conversational yet professional. You are welcome to agree or disagree with other students, but you must elaborate on your view and your comments to others should be constructive.

Initial posts are due on Wednesdays. Responses are due on Fridays.

Quizzes (40%)

Four online quizzes will be posted on Avenue.

Final Exam (30%)

Take-home exam (cumulative)

Weekly Course Schedule and Required Readings

Week 1 (May 4 - 10)

Module 1: Modernity

Reading: Walter, "Introduction: Death's Jigsaw" AND Walter, Chapters 1 & 2

Notes: Discussion Forums, initial posts due 6 May, replies due 8 May

Week 2 (May 11 - 17)

Module 1: Modernity

Reading: Walter, Chapters 3, 4 & 5

Notes: Discussion Forums, initial posts due 13 May, replies due 15 May

Quiz #1 May 14-17

Week 3 (May 18 - 24)

Module 2: Risk

Reading: Walter, Chapters 6 & 7

Notes: Discussion Forums, initial posts due 20 May, replies due 22 May

Quiz #2 May 21-24

Week 4 (May 25 - 31)

Module 3: Culture

Reading: Walter, Chapters 8 & 9

Notes: Discussion Forums, initial posts due 27 May, replies due 29 May

Week 5 (June 1 - 7)

Module 3: Culture

Readings: Walter, Chapters 10

Notes: Discussion Forums, initial posts due 3 June, replies due 5 June

Quiz #3 June 4-7

Week 6 (June 8 - 14)

Module 4: Nation

Readings: Walter, Chapter 11, 12 & 13

Notes: Discussion Forums, initial posts due 10 June, replies due 12 June

Quiz #4 June 11-14

Week 7 (June 15 - 19)

Module 5: Globalization

Readings: Walter, Chapters 14 & 15

Notes: Discussion Forums, initial posts due 17 June, replies due 19 June

Final exam, 18-20 June

Course Policies

Submission of Assignments

All assignment will be submitted through Avenue to Learn.

Grades

Grades will be based on the McMaster University grading scale:

MARK	GRADE
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+

MARK	GRADE
53-56	D
50-52	D-
0-49	F

Late Assignments

Late assignment will be penalized 3% a day (weekends will count as one day).

Absences, Missed Work, Illness

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”. Please note these regulations have changed beginning Spring/Summer 2015. The timeframe within which the MSAF is valid has been reduced from 5 days to 3 days. The upper limit for which an MSAF can be submitted has been reduced from ‘less than 30%’ to ‘less than 25%’ of the course weight. As per the policy, students must immediately follow up with their instructors to request accommodation for any missed academic work. Failure to do so may negate their relief. If you have any questions about the MSAF, please contact your Associate Dean’s office. MSAF is now available in MOSAIC Student Center (in the drop-down menu under Academics).

Privacy Disclaimer: By using this tool you understand that some personal information will be submitted to your Faculty Office. If you find it necessary to submit the MSAF during this course you must arrange for an extension for any work missed. I do not redistribute grades for missed assignments.

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.

Turnitin.com

In this course we will be using a web-based service (Turnitin.com) to reveal plagiarism. Students will be expected to submit their work electronically to Turnitin.com and in hard copy so that it can be checked for academic dishonesty. Students who do not wish to submit their work to Turnitin.com must still submit a copy to the instructor. No penalty will be assigned to a student who does not submit work to Turnitin.com. All submitted work is subject to normal verification that standards of academic integrity have been upheld (e.g., on-line search, etc.). To see the Turnitin.com Policy, please to go www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity.

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.

The following illustrates only three forms of academic dishonesty:

1. Plagiarism, e.g. the submission of work that is not one's own or for which credit has been obtained.
2. Improper collaboration in group work.
3. 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. For further information, consult McMaster University's Policy for [Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities](#).

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.

Course Modification

The instructor and university reserve the right to modify elements of the course during the term. The university may change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances. If either type of 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.

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.