



RSOC200 – Death and Dying

Master Course Syllabus

Course Overview (QM Standards 1.2)

Course description: This course provides a comprehensive overview of the study of death and dying, covering the key issues and questions in the field. 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. We look at the personal and social attitudes regarding death, dying and the dead in the U.S. society as well as those of other cultures and times. This class takes an interdisciplinary approach which combines sociological, psychological, anthropological, historical, medical, and spiritual perspectives to investigate the course subject.

Course Goals:

- Identify and discuss key issues and questions in the field of death and dying both on an individual (i.e., personal confrontations of morality) and a societal level (i.e., larger scale encounters with death such as disaster, crime, and war).
- Describe the personal and social attitudes regarding death, dying and the dead in the U.S. society.
- Analyze historical and cultural differences associated with dying, death, bereavement, and loss.
- Examine the importance of sociology to critically assess the complexities of dying, death, bereavement, and loss as personal and social experiences.
- Apply sociological concepts and theories to issues related to death and dying and discuss sociocultural dimensions of human experience of death and dying.
- Write to explore your thoughts and feelings about death and dying, and how death and dying affect lives of living people.

Pre-Requisites (QM Standard 1.6)

There are no course prerequisites for this course other than being an RBA (Regents Bachelor of Arts) student.

Minimum Technical Requirements and Online Resources (QM Standards 1.5 & 1.7)

In addition to a web browser (preferable Firefox) that is Blackboard compatible, you will need the other WVROCKS supported technologies outlined in the student policies section. You should know how to access and use Internet, WVROCKS, and Microsoft Office programs, and you will need to have consistent access to these technologies. You should know how to use email with attachments. You will also need a flash drive.

Online Resources: This course makes use of many online resources. I have made every effort to make sure the links I have are up-to-date. However, due to the changing nature of the web, you may find that a

resource is temporarily unavailable or has been removed. If this should happen, please send me an email and I will find an alternative resource or modify the assignment accordingly.

Instructor Information (QM Standards 1.8 & 5.3)

Individual instructors complete this information.

Virtual Office Hours

I am available in my virtual office by appointment only. Send me an email to set up an appointment.

Personal Commitment

My personal commitments to you as a participant include:

- I will reply to course mail messages within 24 hours;
- I will read all discussion postings and will reply where appropriate within 3 days
- I will acknowledge my receipt of every course mail message immediately upon reading it. If I am unable to respond to the request or concern at the time of initial reply, I will give you an estimated time for my next reply.
- If I am going to be away from the course space for more than a day or two, I will send a message to you indicating the length of my absence.
- I will regularly update information regarding due dates in the course announcements.

Optional/Required Course Materials (QM Standard 4.6)

Required:

The Last Dance: Encountering Death and Dying (10th edition) by Lynne DeSpelder and Albert Strickland, McGraw Hill.

Grading Policy (QM Standard 3.2)

- 1. Reading:** One chapter for one week (see the course schedule below).
- 2. Reading Assignment Assessments (RAAs):** The purpose of this assessment is to maximize your learning by making sure you complete your reading assignments and you engage yourself in the course material. Therefore, independent reading is an imperative part of this online course.
 - RAA has the same format as a regular multiple-choice question quiz, but it is an open-book assessment. You should READ & FIND answers from the readings rather than use your intuition or experiential knowledge.
 - Total thirteen RAAs in this course.
 - Each RAA is worth 100 points.
- 3. Resource Sharing Assignment (RSA):** You are expected to share one short video clip, movie, documentary film, book, news article or blog post that is related to the weekly class chapter reading.
 - You are required to complete ten of the total thirteen assignments.
 - Each RSA assignment will be worth 40 points each.
- 4. Exam:** At the end of the course, there will be a written essay exam.

Final grades are absolutely non-negotiable and will be assigned according to the following scale.

Composition of grades:	Points	Weight	Grade Scale
• Thirteen RAAs	1300	65%	A = 1790 ---- 2000 pts (89.5%----100%)
• Ten RSs	400	20%	B = 1590 – 1788 pts (79.5%----89.4%)
• Exam	300	15%	C = 1390 – 1588 pts (69.5%----79.4%)
			D = 1190 – 1388 pts (59.5%----69.4%)
TOTAL	2000	100%	F = 990 pts ---- below (59.4%---- below)

Proposed Schedule

Module 1:

Readings

- Ch. 1 Attitudes Toward Death: A Climate of Change
- Ch. 2 Learning about Death: Socialization

Module 2:

Readings

- Ch. 3 Perspectives on Death: Historical and Cultural
- Ch. 4 Death Systems: Mortality and Society

Module 3:

Readings

- Ch. 5 Health Care Systems
- Ch. 6 End-of-life issues and decisions

Module 4:

Readings

- Ch. 7 Facing Death: Living with Life-Threatening Illness
- Ch. 8 Funerals and Body

Module 5:

Readings

- Ch. 9 Survivors: Experience of Loss
- Ch.10 Death in the lives of Children and Adolescents

Module 6:

Readings

- Ch.11 Death in the Lives of Adults
- Ch.12 Suicide

Module 7:

Reading

- Ch. 14 Beyond Death / After Life
- Ch. 16 The Path Ahead: Personal and Social Choices

Module 8:

Final Exam