Social Work 692
Loss, Grief, and Bereavement

3 Units

“When we come close to those things that break us down, we touch those things that also break us open.” — Wayne Muller

Instructor: Dawn Joosten-Hagye, PhD, LCSW, GC-C
E-Mail: joosten@usc.edu
Office Hours: TH 9:30-10am; 11:30-12 or by appointment
Course Day: TH
Course #: 67373D/67374D
Course Time: 10:15-11:30am; 12:00-1:15pm

I. COURSE PREREQUISITES
SOWK 506 and SOWK 544

II. CATALOGUE DESCRIPTION
Focus on the experiences of loss, death and bereavement as it is viewed by individuals, families and loved ones.

III. COURSE DESCRIPTION
Issues pertaining to loss and grief are core in nearly every clinical situation that social workers address. Loss occurs throughout the life cycle. Loss and grief issues include, but are not limited to, dying and bereavement. Issues such as divorce, loss of a job, effects of a disaster, declines in functional health, acute illnesses, chronic & life threatening diseases are all examples of losses other than death. This course will focus on the experiences of loss, grief and bereavement as it is viewed by individuals, families and loved ones. How we cope with grief shapes our lives, challenges our responses to change and can determine how we form, maintain, and let go of relationships. This course will examine theories on grief and loss across the lifespan. In addition, we will consider how social factors i.e., culture, ethnicity/race, gender, class and sexual orientation may impact the grieving process. Further, the role of spirituality and coping will be explored and discussed to increase the clinician’s ability to work with this content.
in therapy. We will look at ethical debates in right-to-die issues as well as social issues about quality of life. We will examine evidence-based interventions and best practices across the lifespan and develop skills for assessing cultural and spirituality, collaborative and interprofessional interventions at end-of-life, and the role of the social worker in intervening effectively with individuals, families and groups.

In our clinical work with clients, we confront aspects of loss on a daily basis. This course will address the role of the therapist and effective use of self with clients and their families in diverse settings and different modalities.

IV. COURSE OBJECTIVES

The Loss, Grief, and Bereavement course (SOWK 692) will:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objective #</th>
<th>Objectives</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Teach stage-based and other theoretical models and concepts related to grief, loss, and bereavement responses and provide opportunities to apply theoretical knowledge to clinical practice.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Facilitate understanding of the variety and complexity of grief reactions to losses people experience across the life course and evidence-informed interventions to promote coping, adaptation and adjustment.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Explain ways in which culture, race, and spirituality impacts both grief, loss, and bereavement responses and decision-making for end of life care.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Help students become knowledgeable in recognizing conflicts in values among stakeholders that create ethical dilemmas in end of life care and help them learn to recognize how to manage their own personal values to allow professional values to guide practice.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

V. COURSE FORMAT / INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS

The class format will consist of didactic instruction as well as large and small group discussions. Case vignettes, videos, guest speakers, experiential exercises, site visits, and other learning aids will complement the course instruction as deemed instructionally appropriate. The instructor may include additional readings to enhance the course topics.
VI. STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

The following table lists the nine Social Work core competencies as defined by the Council on Social Work Education’s 2015 Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Social Work Core Competencies</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Engage in Diversity and Difference in Practice *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Advance Human Rights and Social, Economic, and Environmental Justice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Engage in Practice-informed Research and Research-informed Practice</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Engage in Policy Practice</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. Engage with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities *</td>
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<tr>
<td>7. Assess Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities</td>
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<tr>
<td>8. Intervene with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities</td>
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<tr>
<td>9. Evaluate Practice with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations and Communities</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Highlighted in this course

The following table shows the competencies highlighted in this course, the related course objectives, student learning outcomes, and dimensions of each competency measured. The final column provides the location of course content related to the competency.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Competency</th>
<th>Objectives</th>
<th>Behaviors</th>
<th>Dimensions</th>
<th>Content</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Competency 2 – Engage Diversity and Difference in Practice</strong></td>
<td>3. Explain ways in which culture, race, and spirituality impacts both grief, loss, and bereavement responses and decision-making for end of life care. 4. Help students become knowledgeable in recognizing conflicts in values among stakeholders that create ethical dilemmas in end of life care and help them learn to recognize how to manage their own personal values to allow professional values to guide practice.</td>
<td>2a. Recognize and communicate understanding of how diversity and difference characterize and shape the human experience and identity. 2b. Evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of multiple theoretical perspectives through an intersectionality framework.</td>
<td>Values</td>
<td>Units: 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Exercise of judgement</td>
<td>Assignments: 1, 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Competency</td>
<td>Objectives</td>
<td>Behaviors</td>
<td>Dimensions</td>
<td>Content</td>
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<tr>
<td>Competency 6: Engage with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities</td>
<td>1. Teach stage-based and other theoretical models and concepts related to grief, loss, and bereavement responses and provide opportunities to apply theoretical knowledge to clinical practice. 2. Facilitate understanding of the variety and complexity of grief reactions to losses people experience across the life course and evidence-informed interventions to promote coping, adaptation and adjustment. 4. Help students become knowledgeable in recognizing conflicts in values among stakeholders that create ethical dilemmas in end of life care and help them learn to recognize how to manage their own personal values to allow professional values to guide practice.</td>
<td>6a. Recognize the primacy of the relationship when engaging with others in integrated care settings. 6b. Use empathy and other interpersonal skills to engage and intervene with others using brief evidence based interventions in multi-disciplinary settings.</td>
<td>Values</td>
<td>Units: 1-15  Assignments: 1,2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Social workers in health, behavioral health and integrated care settings value and understand the primacy of relationships in the engagement process. Social workers practicing with adults and older adults understand that engagement involves the dynamic, interactive, and reciprocal processes. Social workers understand theories of human behavior and the social environment, and critically evaluate and apply this knowledge along with knowledge of practice theories (models, strategies, techniques, and approaches) to facilitate engagement with individuals, families and groups. Social workers understand strategies to engage diverse clients and constituencies to advance practice effectiveness. Social workers understand how their personal experiences and affective reactions may impact their ability to effectively engage with diverse clients and constituencies.
VII. COURSE ASSIGNMENTS, DUE DATES & GRADING

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
<th>% of Final Grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assignment 1: Midterm</td>
<td>Unit 7</td>
<td>45%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assignment 2: Part 1 - Special Topic Paper</td>
<td>Unit 14</td>
<td>35%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assignment 2: Part 2 - Special Topic Presentation</td>
<td>Units 14-15</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class Participation</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>10%</td>
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</table>

Assignments are due by midnight on the day of class. Extensions will be granted only for extenuating circumstances, and is left to the discretion of the course instructor. If the assignment is late without permission, the grade will be affected accordingly.

A final grade of “Incomplete” can only be given under extreme circumstances.

Assignments must adhere to the citation and referencing standards put forth in the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (6th ed.). Each of the major assignments is described below.

Assignment 1: Midterm Assignment

The purpose of this midterm assignment is to allow you to integrate the concepts and theories on grief and loss explored up to the due date. This is intended to give you the opportunity to gain a broader understanding of your own thoughts and feelings toward grief, loss, death, and dying; the appreciation of their origins, and the application of material from the professional literature and insights gained from course that have broadened your understanding. Your personal attitudes significantly influence your approach to grief, loss, death and dying on both a personal and professional level. One’s earliest experiences with loss and death result in beliefs, feelings and attitudes that are carried throughout life. To prevent being controlled by our unconscious and conscious reactions to past experiences, and to better understand the significance of the loss, it is important to recognize and explicitly state how these experiences influence us.

Please discuss the following in your paper:

1) Discuss an experience you have had with death or grief and loss? How old were you when it occurred? Where were you when you learned of the loss? Who did it involve? Describe what happened. The paper should include identifying information of the individual and their relationship to you. What were the physical, emotional and cognitive reactions you were aware of in yourself following the loss? (define, cite, and describe normal grief reactions and type(s) of grief you were experiencing at the time).

2) How did the people around you respond to the loss? How did they respond to your reactions? (Incorporate relevant literature/information from course readings/discussions here).

3) Discuss how death and loss were addressed within your family, e.g. ignored, openly discussed, etc. Relate how these experiences might be related to your ethnicity/race/religion/philosophical perspective. (incorporate literature on diversity/intersectionality here)

4) Discuss the first funeral or grief ritual you attended, or if there was a funeral or grief ritual attached to the above loss, identify how you were prepared for it, your memories and
feelings about the experience and its impact on you. If you were discouraged from attending grief rituals, discuss your understanding of the rational for this. Discuss any rituals that may relate to loss and that may be pertinent to your family as they relate to ethnicity/culture/race/religion. Incorporate relevant information from course readings/discussions about death anxiety, disenfranchised grief, anticipatory grief.

5) Identify how your beliefs and experiences may affect you in interacting and working with the bereaved. Also, include potential transference and countertransference reactions (define and cite both transference and countertransference) and how you can effectively manage them. Incorporate relevant course content about the grief process and the various theorists that relates to this self-examination.

6) Discuss how you will know if you are experiencing compassion fatigue, compassion satisfaction, or vicarious trauma (define and cite each before applying) (what symptoms, such as, physical symptoms, behaviors, thoughts and/or feelings may arise for each).

7) Given your experience with loss, identify factors that assist your coping capacities with loss/grief. (Comment on relevant course content/ readings here)

Incorporate these reflections into a paper which demonstrates a thoughtful, well-organized analysis of your experiences toward loss and your socio-cultural, ethnic, and religious/philosophical attitudes toward death and loss/grief. Include and cite appropriate course readings (minimum of 8) that address these issues. Be sure your citations include references to ethnicity, culture, death and loss, and religiosity/spirituality. Apply at least one theory from this class to your loss in any of the above sections.

Length: Approximately 7 ½ -8 typed, not including a reference page in APA format, double spaced, 1” margins.

Due: (Unit 7)

This assignment relates to course objectives 1-4.

Assignment 2: Part 1- Special Topic Assignment

Students may form small groups of up to 3 students or write their papers individually. Each student/group will write a 7-8 page (does not include cover page or References pages) paper on a Special Topic related to a Grief, Loss, or Bereavement issue of his/her choice, use Time New Roman 12 pt, double spaced. You may select from the Grief, Loss, or Bereavement Issue from the topics covered throughout the course (topics not listed in course materials require instructor approval). Students are encouraged to identify topics by searching databases with empirical and scholarly articles from social work. The paper will include EACH of the following:

(1) Provide an introduction and conclusion paragraph

(2) identify and define the specific grief, loss, or bereavement issue effecting a population
   a. describe the population effected by the issue (i.e., veterans, older adults, caregivers, children, adolescents, young adults, etc.); include prevalence on the population
   b. identify and define the specific grief, loss, or bereavement issue effecting the population
      i. include: the type(s) of grief that best characterize the populations grief, loss, or bereavement issue (include and available information on prevalence/incidence of the issue for the population), and
ii. the normal grief reactions associated with the grief, loss, or bereavement issue
(3) identify a theoretical perspective from the course that provides the best fit as a framework for the issue (define, cite, and apply each of the stages or tasks of the theory; or provide a comprehensive review of the literature and application of how either meaning-making or continuing bonds theory applies to the issue for the population/issue. Do not use systems, ecological, biopsychosocial, person-in-environment or lifecourse theories from HBSE foundation course)
(4) discuss implications for social work practice giving a specific intervention(s).
   a. What specific interventions and evidence-based intervention(s) is/are appropriate to address the issue with this population

Due: (Unit 14)

This assignment relates to course objectives 1-4.

Assignment 2: Part 2- Special Topic Presentation

Students may form small groups of up to 3 students or present individually. Each student/group will give a brief presentation (10-12 minutes) of their Special Topic Assignment related to a Grief, Loss, or Bereavement issue of his/her choice, the presentation will cover the three key areas of the assignment: (1) identify and define the specific grief, loss, or bereavement issue, (2) identify a theoretical perspective from the course that provides the best fit as a framework for the issue, and (3) suggest implications for social work practice giving a specific intervention. You may use role playing, video clips to illustrate an issue, YouTube videos, PowerPoint, handouts, be creative! Students will provide a handout to the class listing key points and references.

Due: (Units 14-15)

This assignment relates to course objectives 1-4.

Class Participation (10% of Course Grade)

It is expected that each student will maintain confidentiality with classroom sharing.

Class attendance and participation are critical to student's learning and to the success of this course. Accordingly, students are expected to attend, be prepared, and make constructive contributions to the course.

Grading

Class grades will be based on the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class Grades</th>
<th>Final Grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3.85 – 4</td>
<td>A</td>
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<tr>
<td>3.60 – 3.84</td>
<td>A-</td>
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<tr>
<td>3.25 – 3.59</td>
<td>B+</td>
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<tr>
<td>2.90 – 3.24</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.60 – 2.89</td>
<td>B-</td>
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<tr>
<td>2.25 – 2.59</td>
<td>C+</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>93 – 100 A</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>90 – 92 A-</td>
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<td></td>
<td>87 – 89 B+</td>
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<td>83 – 86 B</td>
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<td></td>
<td>80 – 82 B-</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>77 – 79 C+</td>
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</table>
Within the USC Suzanne Dworak-Peck School of Social Work, grades are determined in each class based on the following standards which have been established by the faculty of the School:

1. Grades of A or A- are reserved for student work which not only demonstrates very good mastery of content but which also shows that the student has undertaken a complex task, has applied critical thinking skills to the assignment, and/or has demonstrated creativity in her or his approach to the assignment. The difference between these two grades would be determined by the degree to which these skills have been demonstrated by the student.

2. A grade of B+ will be given to work which is judged to be very good. This grade denotes that a student has demonstrated a more-than-competent understanding of the material being tested in the assignment.

3. A grade of B will be given to student work which meets the basic requirements of the assignment. It denotes that the student has done adequate work on the assignment and meets basic course expectations.

4. A grade of B- will denote that a student’s performance was less than adequate on an assignment, reflecting only moderate grasp of content and/or expectations.

5. A grade of C would reflect a minimal grasp of the assignments, poor organization of ideas and/or several significant areas requiring improvement.

6. Grades between C- and F will be applied to denote a failure to meet minimum standards, reflecting serious deficiencies in all aspects of a student’s performance on the assignment.

As a professional school, class attendance and participation is an essential part of your professional training and development at the USC Suzanne Dworak-Peck School of Social Work. You are expected to attend all classes and meaningfully participate. For Ground courses, having more than 2 unexcused absences in class may result in the lowering of your grade by a half grade. Additional absences can result in additional deductions. For VAC courses, meaningful participation requires active engagement in class discussions and maintaining an active screen. Having more than two unexcused absences in class may result in the lowering of your grade by a half grade. Additional absences in the live class can result in additional deductions. Furthermore, unless directed by your course instructor, you are expected to complete all asynchronous content and activities prior to the scheduled live class discussion. Failure to complete two asynchronous units before the live class without prior permission may also lower your final grade by a half grade. Not completing additional units can result in additional deductions.
VIII. REQUIRED AND SUPPLEMENTARY INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS & RESOURCES

Required Textbooks

Joosten-Hagye, D. (2019). *Social work practice with older adults: An evidence-based approach*. San Diego, CA: Cognella Academic Publishing. [Note: this is an abridged version of the text with chapters that are required readings]

This textbook is available in e-book and print formats directly from Cognella Academic Publishing.


Recommended Textbooks


Course Reader, None for this class. Required Readings will be available through ARES.

Recommended Guidebook for APA Style Formatting


Recommended Websites


*Note*: Additional required and recommended readings may be assigned by the instructor throughout the course.
# Course Overview

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit</th>
<th>Topics</th>
</tr>
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</table>
| **1** | Introduction to Grief, Loss, & Bereavement in Western Society; Contextual Thinking  
  - Theoretical frameworks I  
  - Types of grief  
  - Normal grief reactions  
  - Meaning making, Continuing bonds, and Resilience  
  - Attachment, loss, and grief experience  
  - Abnormal grief reactions: Complicated mourning  
  - Skill development: Recognizing types of grief and grief responses- In class activity: Tuesdays with Morrie |
| **2** | Introduction to death and dying  
  - Theoretical frameworks II  
  - End-of-life care options  
  - Bioethical principles  
  - Evidence-based interventions: Respecting Choices, Advance care planning, Reminiscence therapy, Dignity therapy, Mindfulness  
  - Skill development: Advance Care planning |
| **3** | Role of the Social Worker  
  - Biopsychosocial & Grief and loss assessment/interventions  
  - Mediators and tasks of mourning  
  - Professional standards and ethics  
  - Interdisciplinary/collaborative care  
  - Tasks of mourning and Dual process model  
  - Evidence-based interventions and best practices  
  - Recognizing Compassion fatigue, Compassion satisfaction and Vicarious trauma  
  - Skill development: Grief & loss assessment, Differential diagnosis with DSM-5, Recognizing mediators of mourning |
| **4** | Diversity: Grief & Bereavement  
  - Culture: grief rituals, beliefs & attitudes  
  - Intersectionality & perspectives on death  
  - Vulnerable & marginalized populations  
  - Skill development: cultural assessment |
| **5** | Spirituality: Grief & Bereavement  
  - Spirituality: grief and death customs, beliefs & attitudes  
  - Meaning-making and Continuing bonds  
  - Existential anxiety  
  - Spirituality & role of social worker  
  - Skill development: Spiritual assessment |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit</th>
<th>Topics</th>
<th>FALL RECESS SCHEDULE TH/FRI classes only</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Infancy thru Elementary School Age Children</td>
<td>Unit 6 and Unit 7 covered unit 6</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▼ Developmental stage &amp; understanding of death</td>
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<td></td>
<td>▼ Normative and non-normative losses</td>
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<td></td>
<td>▼ External factors influencing grief responses</td>
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<td></td>
<td>▼ Dual process theory</td>
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<td>▼ Death of a sibling, parent, grandparent</td>
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<td></td>
<td>▼ Introduction to interventions with children ages birth to 12: TF-CBT, expressive arts, play therapy, grief camps, bibliotherapy, school-based grief groups</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Adolescents</td>
<td>Unit 8 to be covered Unit 7</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▼ Developmental stage &amp; understanding of death</td>
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<td></td>
<td>▼ Normative and non-normative losses</td>
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<td></td>
<td>▼ External factors influencing grief responses</td>
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<td>▼ Resilience</td>
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<td>▼ Introduction to evidence-based and best practices with grieving adolescents: school-based, expressive arts, individual and group grief and trauma-informed interventions</td>
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<td></td>
<td>▼ Grieving special types of losses: death of a parent, sibling or friend; suicide, military deployment of a parent, addiction, chronic or life threatening illness, mental health, divorce</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▼ Special Treatment for refugee minors in the United States</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Young Adults</td>
<td>FALL RECESS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▼ Developmental stage, grief responses &amp; understanding of death</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▼ Normative and non-normative losses</td>
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<td></td>
<td>▼ Disenfranchised grief</td>
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<td></td>
<td>▼ Grieving special types of losses: death of a child, sudden death, SIDs, miscarriages, stillbirths, abortion, anticipatory grief, military deployment &amp; death, addiction, chronic or life threatening illness, mental health, divorce</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▼ Introduction to evidence-based interventions and best practices in grief, loss and bereavement practices with adults</td>
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<tr>
<td>Unit</td>
<td>Topics</td>
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| 9    | Middle Adulthood  
  - Developmental stage & impact of a death  
  - Normative and non-normative losses  
  - Strengths-based approaches  
  - Mourning special types of losses: caregiving, death, chronic and/or life threatening condition, loss of employment, divorce, relocation or loss of home, transformation of identity, child leaving the home  
  - Introduction to evidence-based interventions and best practices in grief, loss and bereavement practices with middle age adults |
| 10   | Older Adults  
  - Developmental stage & impact of a death  
  - Normative and non-normative losses  
  - Loneliness, Depression, Dementia, Delirium  
  - Mourning special types of losses: aging in a prison system or long-term care setting, death of a child, death of a spouse, retirement, chronic and life threatening conditions, co-morbidity  
  - Introduction to evidence-based interventions and best practices in grief, loss and bereavement practices with older adults: Dignity therapy, Reminiscence therapy, CBT, grief counseling and grief therapy, complicated grief treatment, long-term care planning, problem solving therapy  
  - Skill development: long-term care planning |
| 11   | Interventions-Individuals  
  - Grief counseling  
  - Grief therapy  
  - Complicated grief treatment  
  - Evidence-based interventions and best practices in grief, loss and bereavement practices with individuals  
  - Clinical practice and collaborative/interprofessional care  
  - Skill development: Grief counseling and Grief therapy |
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<tr>
<th>Unit</th>
<th>Topics</th>
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| 12   | Interventions-Families  
|      | ▼ Grief, loss and bereavement in families  
|      | ▼ The context of family in grief, loss, and bereavement  
|      | ▼ Introduction to trauma-informed and grief focused family interventions  
|      | ▼ Military families  
|      | ▼ Skill development: Family-focused grief therapy |
| 13   | Interventions-Groups  
|      | ▼ Support groups  
|      | ▼ Group psychotherapy, expressive and visual arts  
|      | ▼ Forming a grief, loss and bereavement group  
|      | ▼ Skill development: Short-term group therapy for uncomplicated and complicated grief |
| 14   | Special Topic Presentations  
|      | ▼ Student presentations |
| 15   | Special Topic Presentations & Course Wrap up  
|      | ▼ Student Presentations |

**STUDY DAYS / NO CLASSES**
**Course Schedule—Detailed Description**

**Unit 1: Introduction to Grief, Loss, & Bereavement in Western Society; Contextual Thinking**

Topics
- Introduction to Grief, Loss, & Bereavement in Western Society; Contextual Thinking
  - Theoretical frameworks I
  - Types of grief
  - Normal grief reactions
  - Meaning making, Continuing bonds, and Resilience
  - Attachment, loss, and grief experience
  - Abnormal grief reactions: Complicated mourning
- Skill development: Recognizing types of grief and grief responses
  - In class activity: Tuesdays with Morrie

This Unit relates to course objective 1.

**Required Readings**


**Recommended Readings**


Unit 2: Introduction to Death and Dying

Topics
- Theoretical frameworks II
- End-of-life care options
- Bioethical principles
- Evidence-based interventions: Respecting Choices, Advance care planning, Reminiscence therapy, Dignity therapy, Mindfulness
- Skill development: Advance Care planning

This Unit relates to course objectives 1 and 4.

Required Readings


Recommended Readings


Unit 3: Role of the Social Worker

Topics
- Biopsychosocial & Grief and loss assessment/interventions
- Mediators and tasks of mourning
- Professional standards and ethics
- Interdisciplinary/collaborative care
- Tasks of mourning and Dual process model
- Evidence-based interventions and best practices
- Recognizing Compassion fatigue, Compassion satisfaction and Vicarious trauma
- Skill development: Grief & loss assessment, Differential diagnosis with DSM-5, Recognizing mediators of mourning

This Unit relates to course objectives 1-4.

Required Readings


Recommended Readings


**Unit 4: Diversity: Loss, Grief & Bereavement**

**Topics**
- Culture: grief rituals, beliefs & attitudes
- Intersectionality & perspectives on death
- Vulnerable & marginalized populations
- Skill development: cultural assessment

This Unit relates to course objectives 1-4.

**Required Readings**


**Recommended Readings**


Unit 5: Spirituality: Loss, Grief & Bereavement

Topics
- Spirituality: grief and death customs, beliefs & attitudes
- Meaning-making and Continuing bonds
- Existential anxiety
- Spirituality & role of social worker
- Skill development: Spiritual assessment

This Unit relates to course objectives 1-4.

Required Readings


**Recommended Readings**


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**Unit 6: Grief, Loss & Bereavement: Infants thru School Age Children**

**Topics**

- Developmental stage & understanding of death
- Normative and non-normative losses
- External factors influencing grief responses
- Dual process theory
- Transgender identity development
- Death of a sibling, parent, grandparent
- Introduction to interventions with children ages birth to 12: TF-CBT, expressive arts, play therapy, grief camps, bibliotherapy, school-based grief groups

This Unit relates to course objectives 1-4.

**Required Readings**


**Recommended Readings**


Unit 7: Grief, & Loss: Adolescents

Topics
- Developmental stage & understanding of death
- Normative and non-normative losses
- External factors influencing grief responses
- Resilience
- Introduction to evidence-based and best practices with grieving adolescents: school-based, expressive arts, individual and group grief and trauma-informed interventions
- Grieving special types of losses: death of a parent, sibling or friend; suicide, military deployment of a parent, addiction, chronic or life threatening illness, mental health, divorce
- Special Treatment for refugee minors in the United States

This Unit relates to course objectives 1-4.

Required Readings


Recommended Readings


Layne, C. M., Kaplow, J. B., Oosterhoff, B., Hill, R. M., & S Pynoos, R. (2017). The interplay between posttraumatic stress and grief reactions in traumatically bereaved adolescents:

### Unit 8: Grief & Loss: Young Adults

**Topics**
- Developmental stage, grief responses & understanding of death
- Normative and non-normative losses
- Disenfranchised grief
- Grieving special types of losses: death of a child, suicide, sudden death, SIDs, miscarriages, stillbirths, abortion, anticipatory grief, military deployment & death, addiction, chronic or life threatening illness, mental health, divorce
- Introduction to evidence-based interventions and best practices in grief, loss and bereavement practices with adults

This Unit relates to course objectives 1-4.

**Required Readings**


**Recommended Readings**


**Unit 9: Grief & Loss: Middle Adulthood**

**Topics**
- Developmental stage & impact of a death
- Normative and non-normative losses
- Strengths-based approaches
- Mourning special types of losses: caregiving, death, chronic and/or life threatening condition, loss of employment, divorce, relocation or loss of home, transformation of identity, child leaving the home
- Introduction to evidence-based interventions and best practices in grief, loss and bereavement practices with middle age adults

This Unit relates to course objectives 1-4.

**Required Readings**


Recommended Readings


Unit 10: Grief & Loss: Older Adults
Topics
- Developmental stage & impact of a death
- Normative and non-normative losses
- Loneliness, Depression, Dementia, Delirium
- Mourning special types of losses: aging in a prison system or long-term care setting, death of a child, death of a spouse, retirement, chronic and life threatening conditions, co-morbidity
- Introduction to evidence-based interventions and best practices in grief, loss and bereavement practices with older adults: Dignity therapy, Reminiscence therapy, CBT, grief counseling and grief therapy, complicated grief treatment, long-term care planning, problem solving therapy
- Skill development: long-term care planning

This Unit relates to course objectives 1-4.

Required Readings


Recommended Readings


Unit 11: Interventions—Individuals

Topics
- Grief counseling
- Grief therapy
- Complicated grief treatment
- Evidence-based interventions and best practices in grief, loss and bereavement practices with individuals
- Clinical practice and collaborative/interprofessional care
- Skill development: Grief counseling and Grief therapy

This Unit relates to course objectives 1-4.

Required Readings


Recommended Readings


**Unit 12: Interventions—Families**

**Topics**
- Grief, loss and bereavement in families
- The context of family in grief, loss, and bereavement
- Introduction to trauma-informed and grief focused family interventions
- Military families
- Skill development: Family-focused grief therapy

This Unit relates to course objectives 1-4.

**Required Readings**


**Recommended Readings**


**Unit 13: Interventions—Groups**

Topics
- Support groups
- Group psychotherapy, expressive and visual arts
- Forming a grief, loss and bereavement group
- Skill development: Short-term group therapy for uncomplicated and complicated grief

This Unit relates to course objectives 1-4.

**Required Readings**


Recommended Readings


### Unit 14: Special Topic Presentations

**Topics**

- Special Topic Presentations

This Unit relates to course objectives 1, 2, and 4.

### Unit 15: Special Topic Presentations & Course Wrap-Up

**Topics**

- Special Topic Presentations

This Unit relates to course objectives 1, 2, and 4.

**Required Readings**

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**STUDY DAYS / NO CLASSES**

**FINAL EXAMINATIONS**

Due by Noon
University Policies and Guidelines

IX. Attendance Policy

Students are expected to attend every class and to remain in class for the duration of the unit. Failure to attend class or arriving late may impact your ability to achieve course objectives which could affect your course grade. Students are expected to notify the instructor by email (xxx@usc.edu) of any anticipated absence or reason for tardiness.

University of Southern California policy permits students to be excused from class for the observance of religious holy days. This policy also covers scheduled final examinations which conflict with students' observance of a holy day. Students must make arrangements in advance to complete class work which will be missed, or to reschedule an examination, due to holy days observance.

Please refer to Scampus and to the USC School of Social Work Student Handbook for additional information on attendance policies.

X. Academic Conduct

Plagiarism – presenting someone else's ideas as your own, either verbatim or recast in your own words – is a serious academic offense with serious consequences. Please familiarize yourself with the discussion of plagiarism in Scampus in Part B, Section 11, "Behavior Violating University Standards" https://policy.usc.edu/scampus-part-b/. Other forms of academic dishonesty are equally unacceptable. See additional information in Scampus and university policies on scientific misconduct, http://policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct.

XI. Support Systems

Student Counseling Services (SCS) – (213) 740-7711 – 24/7 on call
Free and confidential mental health treatment for students, including short-term psychotherapy, group counseling, stress fitness workshops, and crisis intervention. engemannshc.usc.edu/counseling

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline – 1 (800) 273-8255
Provides free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org

Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention Services (RSVP) – (213) 740-4900 – 24/7 on call
Free and confidential therapy services, workshops, and training for situations related to gender-based harm. engemannshc.usc.edu/rsvp

Sexual Assault Resource Center
For more information about how to get help or help a survivor, rights, reporting options, and additional resources, visit the website: sarc.usc.edu

Office of Equity and Diversity (OED)/Title IX Compliance – (213) 740-5086
Works with faculty, staff, visitors, applicants, and students around issues of protected class. equity.usc.edu

Bias Assessment Response and Support
Incidents of bias, hate crimes and micro aggressions need to be reported allowing for appropriate investigation and response. studentaffairs.usc.edu/bias-assessment-response-support

The Office of Disability Services and Programs
Provides certification for students with disabilities and helps arrange relevant accommodations. dsp.usc.edu
USC Support and Advocacy (USCSA) – (213) 821-4710
Assists students and families in resolving complex issues adversely affecting their success as a student EX: personal, financial, and academic. studentaffairs.usc.edu/ssa

Diversity at USC
Information on events, programs and training, the Diversity Task Force (including representatives for each school), chronology, participation, and various resources for students. diversity.usc.edu

USC Emergency Information
Provides safety and other updates, including ways in which instruction will be continued if an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible. emergency.usc.edu

USC Department of Public Safety – UPC: (213) 740-4321 – HSC: (323) 442-1000 – 24-hour emergency or to report a crime. Provides overall safety to USC community. dps.usc.edu

XII. ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Students enrolled in the Virtual Academic Center can access support services for themselves and their families by contacting Perspectives, Ltd., an independent student assistance program offering crisis services, short-term counseling, and referral 24/7. To access Perspectives, Ltd., call 800-456-6327.

XIII. STATEMENT ABOUT INCOMPLETES

The Grade of Incomplete (IN) can be assigned only if there is work not completed because of a documented illness or some other emergency occurring after the 12th week of the semester. Students must NOT assume that the instructor will agree to the grade of IN. Removal of the grade of IN must be instituted by the student and agreed to be the instructor and reported on the official “Incomplete Completion Form.”

XIV. POLICY ON LATE OR MAKE-UP WORK

Papers are due on the day and time specified. Extensions will be granted only for extenuating circumstances. If the paper is late without permission, the grade will be affected.

XV. POLICY ON CHANGES TO THE SYLLABUS AND/OR COURSE REQUIREMENTS

It may be necessary to make some adjustments in the syllabus during the semester in order to respond to unforeseen or extenuating circumstances. Adjustments that are made will be communicated to students both verbally and in writing.

XVI. CODE OF ETHICS OF THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SOCIAL WORKERS (OPTIONAL)

Approved by the 1996 NASW Delegate Assembly and revised by the 2017 NASW Delegate Assembly https://www.socialworkers.org/About/Ethics/Code-of-Ethics/Code-of-Ethics-English

Preamble

The primary mission of the social work profession is to enhance human well-being and help meet the basic human needs of all people, with particular attention to the needs and empowerment of people who are vulnerable, oppressed, and living in poverty. A historic and defining feature of social work is the profession's focus on individual well-being in a social context and the well-being of society. Fundamental to social work is attention to the environmental forces that create, contribute to, and address problems in living.
Social workers promote social justice and social change with and on behalf of clients. "Clients" is used inclusively to refer to individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers are sensitive to cultural and ethnic diversity and strive to end discrimination, oppression, poverty, and other forms of social injustice. These activities may be in the form of direct practice, community organizing, supervision, consultation, administration, advocacy, social and political action, policy development and implementation, education, and research and evaluation. Social workers seek to enhance the capacity of people to address their own needs. Social workers also seek to promote the responsiveness of organizations, communities, and other social institutions to individuals' needs and social problems.

The mission of the social work profession is rooted in a set of core values. These core values, embraced by social workers throughout the profession's history, are the foundation of social work's unique purpose and perspective:

- Service
- Social justice
- Dignity and worth of the person
- Importance of human relationships
- Integrity
- Competence

This constellation of core values reflects what is unique to the social work profession. Core values, and the principles that flow from them, must be balanced within the context and complexity of the human experience.

XVII. ACADEMIC DISHONESTY SANCTION GUIDELINES

Some lecture slides, notes, or exercises used in this course may be the property of the textbook publisher or other third parties. All other course material, including but not limited to slides developed by the instructor(s), the syllabus, assignments, course notes, course recordings (whether audio or video) and examinations or quizzes are the property of the University or of the individual instructor who developed them. Students are free to use this material for study and learning, and for discussion with others, including those who may not be in this class, unless the instructor imposes more stringent requirements. Republishing or redistributing this material, including uploading it to web sites or linking to it through services like iTunes, violates the rights of the copyright holder and is prohibited. There are civil and criminal penalties for copyright violation. Publishing or redistributing this material in a way that might give others an unfair advantage in this or future courses may subject you to penalties for academic misconduct.

XVIII. COMPLAINTS

If you have a complaint or concern about the course or the instructor, please discuss it first with the instructor. If you feel cannot discuss it with the instructor, contact the chair of the [xxx]. If you do not receive a satisfactory response or solution, contact your advisor and/or Associate Dean and MSW Chair Dr. Leslie Wind for further guidance.

XIX. TIPS FOR MAXIMIZING YOUR LEARNING EXPERIENCE IN THIS COURSE (OPTIONAL)

- Be mindful of getting proper nutrition, exercise, rest and sleep!
- Come to class.
- Complete required readings and assignments BEFORE coming to class.
- BEFORE coming to class, review the materials from the previous Unit AND the current Unit, AND scan the topics to be covered in the next Unit.
- Come to class prepared to ask any questions you might have.
- Participate in class discussions.
✓ AFTER you leave class, review the materials assigned for that Unit again, along with your notes from that Unit.
✓ If you don’t understand something, ask questions! Ask questions in class, during office hours, and/or through email!
✓ Keep up with the assigned readings.

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Don’t procrastinate or postpone working on assignments.