

SOCIAL WORK/SOCIOLOGY 301—SOCIAL INVESTIGATIONS II: END OF LIFE ISSUES AND CARE

Spring 2018; 3 Credits

Tuesdays and Thursdays 11:00-12:15 in CCC 320

INSTRUCTOR

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OFFICE HOURS: Monday-Thursday 12:30-2:00 and by appointment.

COURSE PRE-REQUISITES

SOC 101 or 102 or consent of the instructor

REQUIRED TEXTS

- Gawande, A. (2014). *Being mortal: Medicine and what matters in the end*. New York: Metropolitan Books. (This book is available for purchase at the University Bookstore, other bookstores, and a variety of online vendors).
- Other required readings will be located in the content area of Desire to Learn (D2L).

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course focuses on the provision of end-of-life care within the U.S. medical system, societal attitudes about death and dying, issues faced by dying individuals and their families, professional approaches and programs used to provide care, and self-awareness about death and dying. Upon completion of the course, students will:

1. Demonstrate understanding of professional and ethical behavior with respect to serving dying individuals and their families.
2. Demonstrate understanding of how human diversity affects the dying experience and people's care needs.
3. Demonstrate understanding of the current ethical and social justice issues related to care of dying individuals and their families.
4. Demonstrate understanding of existing policies relevant to end-of-life care, including their strengths and deficiencies.
5. Demonstrate understanding of the structure, strengths, and deficiencies of the U.S. health care system and the contexts in which end-of-life care takes place.
6. Demonstrate understanding of the professional approaches and programs used to serve dying individuals and their families.
7. Demonstrate the ability to engage in personal reflection to generate self-awareness for involvement with dying individuals and their families.

COMMUNICATION IN THE MAJOR (GEP) AND WRITING EMPHASIS (GDR)

This course fulfills the "Communication in the Major" requirement in the UWSP General Education Program. It meets this requirement for both sociology and social work majors. Due to this designation, instruction and practice of writing and oral presentation skills are part of this course. Specifically, we will cover and practice 1) examination of writing done in scholarly/professional journals on death and dying, 2) techniques for conducting a literature review, 3) strategies for writing a quality research paper, and 4) effective oral presentation skills. Students will receive feedback from the instructor and fellow students on their writing and oral communication skills. Upon completion of this course, students will:

1. Apply discipline-specific standards of oral and written communication to compose an articulate, grammatically correct, and organized presentation and piece of writing with properly documented and supported ideas, evidence, and information suitable to the topic, purpose, and audience.
2. Critique others' writing and oral presentations to provide effective and useful feedback to improve their communication.

CLASS FORMAT

Classes include lecture, discussion, in-class exercises, videos, guest speakers, a field trip, and experiential learning.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Students should **attend class** and **read all assignments** before attending the class for which readings are assigned. Students should be prepared to take part in discussion, experiential, and written assignments in class. Students should expect to spend time outside of class completing assignments. Students should regularly access Desire to Learn (D2L) for announcements, to access readings and other course materials, to monitor grades, and to submit assignments.

1. Attendance & Class Participation

a. General (50 points)

- i. Attendance will be taken at each general class session.
- ii. Students are allowed two “free” absences in which points will be earned despite absence.
- iii. Students cannot utilize these “free” absences during designated guest speaker or field trip days.
- iv. The assigned readings will be discussed during each class session. Students must participate in these discussions to earn their participation points for the day. This requires that students read the assigned materials prior to attending class.

b. Discussion Board (10 points each for total of 50 points)

- i. At five times during the semester, the instructor will ask students to post a brief reaction to the discussion board of D2L. This will take place in relation to guest speakers, the funeral home field trip, and a video. Students must be in attendance for these class sessions to subsequently post and earn points.

2. Research Project—described at end of syllabus (150 points)

3. Fact Sheet Presentation—described at end of syllabus (50 points)

4. Final Exam Using Resource Binder (100 points)

Throughout the course, students will collect information/materials/resources (i.e. power points, lecture/reading notes, handouts, fact sheets) on dying and end-of-life care, organize them in a binder, and then use this binder during the open-binder final exam. Students will be allowed to use their binders and the book *Being Mortal* for the final exam. Collecting and organizing materials throughout the semester is very important. The exam is comprehensive, covering any material used during course of semester. It will contain a variety of question types (i.e. multiple choice, true and false, short answer, essay, matching, factual, reflection). The hope is that students will also save their binders for future use.

GRADING SCALE

		Percent
A	=	94-100
A-	=	91-93
B+	=	88-90
B	=	84-87
B-	=	81-83
C+	=	78-80
C	=	74-77
C-	=	71-73
D+	=	68-70
D	=	60-67
F	=	59 and below

ASSISTANCE WITH ASSIGNMENTS

Students are encouraged to meet with the instructor to discuss assignments as needed. This can take place in person, by phone, or by e-mail. Office hours may be utilized, or students can arrange another time with the instructor if needed.

LATE PAPERS/MISSED EXAMS/INCOMPLETES

Students are expected to complete course work by the date that it is due. Students are responsible for contacting the instructor to negotiate for any alternate dates. Students must do this **BEFORE THE DUE DATE**. The same process is necessary to request an incomplete. Requesting an extension does not automatically mean that one will be granted.

PLAGIARISM

Plagiarism—using words or ideas of another person without citation—will result in a failing grade for the course and may lead to other disciplinary action. Any quotation, specific fact, or major idea taken from a book, article, or other source, must be cited with its page number within your paper, as well as being included in your reference list at the end of the paper.

DISABILITIES/SPECIAL NEEDS

Students who have disabilities/special needs affecting their participation in the course may notify the instructor if she/he wishes to have special accommodations considered in either instruction or examination. Students are encouraged to contact the instructor as early in the semester as possible to discuss special needs.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Since personal information may be revealed during the course of this class, confidentiality is of utmost importance. We will be discussing case examples about real people and will be sharing information about ourselves. Students are expected to hold confidential any personal information shared in class. Assignments will be viewed only by the instructor, and personal information will be held confidential unless information shared implies a threat of harm to the student, another person, or reveals academic misconduct.

GROUND RULES FOR CLASS PARTICIPATION

- We all have misinformation, and sometimes prejudices, about groups of people. One of the goals of this class is to learn accurate information that will help us change prejudice and discrimination--our own and that of others. In order to do this, we need to practice changing what we say after we have learned that we have misinformation. We need to practice not blaming people for their positions in life. We need to find accurate information about all people and actively work against myths and stereotypes that exist about people.
- We need to share information about ourselves for this course. No one is expected to be perfect. Everyone is expected to try. This involves some risk taking. I want to make this classroom a safe place to practice this kind of risk taking. Students are expected to assist in attaining this goal.
- Demonstration of ethical behavior is expected in all aspects of academic performance. Professional/ethical behavior is expected to be displayed during class and in the completion of assignments.

RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

For more information on rights and responsibilities associated with being a student at UWSP, please see the UWSP Community Bill of Rights and Responsibilities at <http://www.uwsp.edu/centers/rights/RRBOOKLET8-2005-06.pdf>.

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

Please familiarize yourself with the UW-Stevens Point Emergency Management Plan at www.uwsp.edu/rmgt for details on all emergency response at UW-Stevens Point.

READING ASSIGNMENTS AND CLASS TOPICS FOR: Changes in assignments or dates of assignments will be announced as far ahead of time as possible.

Week 1 (1/23 & 1/25)

- *Introductions, Definitions, and Course Overview*
- *Death and Dying in America*
- **Read: *Being Mortal* Introduction and Chapter 1**

Week 2 (1/30 & 2/1)

- *Death and Dying in America*
- *Models and Contexts of Care*
- **Read: *Week 2 reading posted in D2L***

Week 3 (2/6 & 2/8)

- *Models and Contexts of Care*
- *Research & Writing—Guidelines, Strategies, and Resources*
- **Read: *Week 3 reading posted in D2L* and *Being Mortal* Chapter 2**

Week 4 (2/13 & 2/15)

- *Research Topic Identification*
- *Advance Planning and Decision-Making*
- **Read: *Week 4 reading posted in D2L***
- **Assignment Due: *Topic Statement for Research Paper (Due 2/15 by 5 p.m.)***

Week 5 (2/20 & 2/22)

- *Advance Planning and Decision-Making*
- **Read: *Week 5 reading posted in D2L* and *Being Mortal* Chapter 3**

Week 6 (2/27 & 3/1)

- *Psychosocial Issues in End-of-Life Care*
- *Guest Speaker—Hospice Social Worker*
- *Research Paper Outlines*
- **Read: *Week 6 reading posted in D2L***
- **Assignment Due: *Outline for Research Paper (Due 3/1 by 5 p.m.)***

Week 7 (3/6 & 3/8)

- *Spiritual Aspects of End-of-Life Care*
- *Guest Speaker—Hospice Chaplain*
- *Searching Library Indexes and Databases*
- **Read: *Week 7 reading posted in D2L* and *Being Mortal* Chapter 4**

Week 8 (3/13 & 3/15)

- *The Physical Dying Process and Symptom Management*
- *Guest Speaker—Hospice Nurse*
- *Creating Reference Lists*
- **Read: *Week 8 reading posted in D2L***
- **Assignment Due: *Reference List (Due 3/15 by 5 p.m.)***

Week 9 (3/20 & 3/22)

- *Family Caregiving and Communication*
- *Writing a First Draft*
- **Read: *Week 9 reading posted in D2L* and *Being Mortal* Chapter 5**

Week 10 (4/3 & 4/5)

- Funeral Rituals
- Field Trip—Boston Funeral Home
- **Read: Week 10 reading posted in D2L**
- **Assignment Due: First Draft Submission (Due 4/5 by 5 p.m.)**

Week 11 (4/10 & 4/12)

- The Grieving Process
- Helping Children Understand Death and Dying
- **Read: Week 11 reading posted in D2L and Being Mortal Chapter 6**
- **Assignment Due: Review of Classmate's First Draft (Due 4/12 by 5 p.m.)**

Week 12 (4/17 & 4/19)

- Ethics and Diversity in End-of-Life Care
- Effective Oral Presentations
- **Read: Week 12 reading posted in D2L**

Week 13 (4/24 & 4/26)

- **Read: Being Mortal Chapter 7**
- **Fact Sheet Presentations**

Week 14 (5/1 & 5/3)

- **Fact Sheet Presentations**
- **Assignment Due: Final Research Paper (Due 5/3 by 5 p.m.)**

Week 15 (5/8 & 5/10)

- Concluding Thoughts/Course Take-a-ways
- **Read: Being Mortal Chapter 8 & Epilogue**
- **Fact Sheet Presentations**

Final Exam: Monday, May 14, 2018 12:30-2:30 p.m.

Assignment Detail

Research Project

This assignment allows students to investigate an aspect of death and dying or end-of-life care that is of interest to them. Expectations for this project are as follows:

1. **Topic Statement (10 points).** *There are many topics to investigate related to death and dying and end-of-life care ranging from understanding people with particular diagnoses (e.g. AIDS, cancer, congestive heart failure, dementia), various age groups (e.g. children with terminal illness, young adults, elders), varying spiritual aspects (e.g. Catholics, Buddhists, Hindus), and racial/cultural diversity factors (e.g. African Americans, Hmong, Native American, Hispanic). One might also be interested in a particular social justice or ethical issue, financial/insurance aspects, issues pertaining to gender/sexuality, or how mental health or disability can influence the dying process. For those going into a professional role (i.e. social work, nursing, etc.), one might be interested in examining how a particular aspect of end-of-life care is approached in their particular profession. Options abound for topics that you might examine. We will discuss ways to select an appropriate topic for research.*

Your topic must be very specific. What do you hope to discover? What question(s) do you hope to answer through your research? Submit your topic statement to the dropbox of D2L. The instructor will review it and help you refine it appropriately.

2. **Outline (10 points).** *An important step in writing a research paper is creating an outline. We will discuss how to create an outline to guide your research and writing process. Submit your outline to the dropbox of D2L. The instructor will review it and provide you with feedback.*
3. **Reference List (10 points).** *We will discuss strategies for conducting a quality review of the literature to identify appropriate sources for your paper and you will do this specific to your chosen topic. You will utilize the UWSP Library indexes and databases to gather sources. You will develop a reference list containing at least 10 articles and/or book chapters from academic/peer reviewed sources specific to your topic. Your articles must be from the year 2007 or later. You must use APA format when creating your reference list. Your instructor will review your list and provide feedback.*
4. **First Draft Submission (10 points).** *You will submit a first draft of your research paper to the dropbox of D2L by the date listed in the syllabus. Your draft should be a solid first draft—one that you would consider submitting as a final draft. Your paper must include a title page at the beginning and a reference page at the end. Length of content section must be 7-10 pages, double spaced, 12-point font, one-inch margins. Paper must be divided into sections and subsections as discussed in class. You must use APA format for citations, quotations, and the reference page. **Sources for all quotations, statistics, and major ideas must be cited.** Standard English and nondiscriminatory language should be used. Papers should include complete sentences and appropriate paragraphs. Final papers will be graded on these characteristics as well as accuracy, breadth of content, development of ideas, spelling, and grammar. Your first draft will be reviewed by one of your classmates, who will provide you with feedback.*
5. **Review of Classmate's First Draft (10 points).** *After first drafts are submitted, the instructor will email you one of your classmate's papers for review. You will be asked to review the draft and provide thoughtful feedback within a week. Feedback should relate to grammar, spelling, and formatting issues, as well as content, depth, and flow of the paper.*
6. **Research Paper (100 points).** *You will submit a final draft of your research paper.*

Fact Sheet Presentation

This assignment builds off of your research paper, allowing you to practice your oral presentation skills and share a summary of your findings with the class.

1. **Fact Sheet (25 points).** *Develop a fact sheet/handout that provides the main findings of your research in a useful and interesting fashion. Sample fact sheet to be provided in class by instructor. Sources should be cited at the end of your fact sheet. Your fact sheet should be 2 pages (front and back).*
2. **Presentation (25 points).** *We will discuss strategies for effective oral presentations in class, and you will later conduct a 5-10 minute presentation/discussion of your research findings. Provide each person in class with a copy of your fact sheet. Use your fact sheet as a guide to explain/elaborate on its content. The idea is to provide the class a brief handout, but then to explain it more fully during the presentation. Use of power point is optional. Discussion questions are encouraged. Be prepared to respond to questions from the class and instructor.*