

SAULT COLLEGE OF APPLIED ARTS AND TECHNOLOGY

SAULT STE. MARIE, ONTARIO



COURSE OUTLINE

COURSE TITLE: Balancing Life, Loss and Grief
CODE NO. : NSA214 **SEMESTER:** 3
PROGRAM: Native Community Worker
AUTHOR: Lisa Piotrowski
DATE: Sept/04 **PREVIOUS OUTLINE DATED:** Sept/03
APPROVED:

| | _____ | _____ |
|-------------------------|-------------|-------------|
| | DEAN | DATE |
| TOTAL CREDITS: | 4 | |
| PREREQUISITE(S): | None | |
| HOURS/WEEK: | 3 | |

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For additional information, please contact the Dean
School of Health and Human Services
(705) 759-2554, Ext. 603/689

I. COURSE DESCRIPTION:

Loss is a constant in everyone's life. Grief, bereavement and mourning, although a highly individualized experience, can be better understood and assist us in our own personal journey, as well as supporting and advocating for the bereaved in our lives. Accepting death as an integral part of the life cycle opens our options and opportunities for life. This course will attempt to open up the topic and the inevitable reality of this part of all of our lives.

II. LEARNING OUTCOMES AND ELEMENTS OF THE PERFORMANCE:

Upon successful completion of this course, the student will demonstrate the ability to:

1. Identify, explain and utilize related terminology, attitudes, multicultural and historical perspectives of death, grief and mourning in examining related research and literature.

Potential Elements of Performance:

- Differentiate Between Loss, Grief, Mourning and Bereavement
- Communicate Physical and Symbolic Losses as a Constant in Life
- Demonstrate awareness of various attitudes and awareness of death
- Relate an understanding and awareness of cross-cultural and historic perspectives of death

2. Identify and relate an understanding of the experience of loss in examining personal wellness and supporting the bereaved.

Potential Elements of Performance:

- Explain the influence of sociocultural forces on the experience of loss
- Apply the various models of grief to individual, family and community experiences
- Identify how grief affects people in a holistic way(psychologically, socially, physically and spiritually)
- Communicate the Phases/Tasks of Grief in a non-judgmental and informative manner
- Categorize and differentiate the various factors affecting grief (including gender differences)

3. Utilize community resources to address legal and social expectations after death.

Potential Elements of Performance:

- Identify key legal issues related to death and other losses(organ donation, wills, power of attorney) and community resources available to assist
- Understand issues related to funerals and body disposition and identify community resources available to assist

4. Compare and contrast the issues and impact of different forms of death.

Potential Elements of Performance:

- Identify issues and concerns related to different modes of death (anticipated, sudden, suicide, homicide)
- Internalize the specific dynamics and grief work associated with loss of a parent, child, life-companion, self, death of a role, relationship or pet to more effectively support and advocate for the bereaved in their individualized situations

5. Support and advocate for the bereaved in their adaptation and reintegration journey.

Potential Elements of Performance:

- Identify and communicate the circumstances and concerns surrounding unresolved or complicated grief
- Apply knowledge of tools for grief work and resources for support and information
- Aid the bereaved in creation of environment and attitude to work on personal bereavement rituals
- Understand and communicate key concepts surrounding a variety of beliefs about the afterlife including traditional concepts, multi-spiritual perspectives and personal paths.

6. Identify the impact of grief on children of different developmental levels and adopt appropriate and effective helping tools for this bereaved population.

Potential Elements of Performance:

- Differentiate between the understanding of death at different developmental levels
- Identify and understand Post Traumatic Play
- Apply tools and resources to assist and support the bereaved child (use of creative play, activities, metaphors, stories, etc)

- Discuss children as survivors of loss and close death and circumstances surrounding these events
- Discuss religious beliefs, death, funeral customs with children of differing developmental levels
- Explain how classmates can welcome back a grieving child
- Assist children in healing and finding closure

7. Understand the significance of and work toward helper wellness and personal understanding of death and grieving in our own lives.

8. Research and educate on issues relevant to grief and loss.

Potential Elements of Performance:

- Independently locate a variety of areas related to grief and loss
- Identify, research and organize a paper on grief and loss issues
- Effective utilization of teaching circles and peer learning

III TOPICS:

1. Terminology, Attitudes and Perspectives on Death, Grief and Loss
2. Legal and Social Expectations After Death (and the resources available)
3. Understanding the Experience (and the work) of Loss
4. Different Forms of Death and Survival of Loss
5. Adaptation and Reintegration After Significant Life Losses
6. Children and Grief
7. Concepts and Beliefs About the Afterlife

IV. REQUIRED RESOURCES/TEXTS/MATERIALS:

Course Text: The Last Dance: Encountering Death And Dying; author: Lynne DeSpelder and Albert Lee Strickland; McGraw-Hill; Sixth Edition

Materials: each student must obtain a small book suitable for journal writing prior to the first class

V. EVALUATION PROCESSING/GRADING SYSTEM:

| <u>ASSIGNMENT/EXAM</u> | <u>WORTH</u> | <u>DUE (Tentative)</u> |
|------------------------|--------------|----------------------------|
| Community Resource | | |
| Research/Presentation | 10% | Oct. 6 |
| Video Report | 15% | Nov. 10 |
| Research Paper | 20% | Dec. 1 |
| Circle Participation | 10% | Weekly |
| Personal Journal | 5% | Weekly |
| Exam #1 | 20% | Oct. 13 |
| Exam #2 | 20% | Dec. 15 |
| TOTAL: | 100% | |

Community Resource Research: students will research and create a brief presentation on one resource: related agencies, legal advocates, palliative care, support groups etc. located in the Algoma District for personal use and client referral. Adjunct web sites to services may also be included. Information will include services/programs provided, contact information for staff, students' reaction to interview and identification of type of loss(es) dealt with by organization. Brief 1 page paper accompanies presentation.

Video Report: students will produce a 3-5 page, double-spaced, normal font paper on personal reaction and application of course material to a film viewed in class. Specifics to be provided by instructor.

Research Paper: students will research a topic related to grief and loss of their choice (from topics offered) and produce a 4-6 double-spaced, normal font paper following format provided by the Instructor. Students may choose from:

| | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Loss of Life-Companion | Loss of Pet |
| Adult Loss of a Parent | Issues re:Job Loss |
| Loss of a Child | Losses for Children/Teens |
| Adult Loss of a Sibling | Loss of an Infant, Stillborn, |
| Divorce/Separation | Miscarriage, or Abortion(pick |
| Losses Related to Health | one or a comfortable |
| | combination for you for this |
| | particular topic cluster) |

Circle Participation: brief presentation and discussion of individual research paper topics in the teaching circle format and individual participation in ongoing discussion circles throughout the course is an essential component of the learning path.

5% for Teaching Circle Presentation on Research
5% for Participation (Respectful Presence) in Ongoing Discussion Circles (80% of Classes)

Personal Journals: each student is required to keep a personal journal related to topics, research, discussion, and reflection on course information. Time will be allotted each week, if possible, for journal writing. Content is not evaluated, effort is required. Journals to be handed in on date of mid-term and final test, evaluated during testing and returned same night.

Exams: There will be two exams during the semester to cover course material. Exam #1 will cover material and topics covered up to that date. Exam #2 will then cover the material taken after Exam#1 until the end of the course. Exams cannot be re-written for a higher grade. Students who miss the exam, without making prior arrangements with the instructor, will be given a zero on the exam.

The following semester grades will be assigned to students in post-secondary courses:

| <u>Grade</u> | <u>Definition</u> | <u>Grade Point Equivalent</u> |
|--------------|--|-------------------------------|
| A+ | 90 – 100% | 4.00 |
| A | 80 – 89% | 3.00 |
| B | 70 - 79% | 3.00 |
| C | 60 - 69% | 2.00 |
| D | 50 – 59% | 1.00 |
| F (Fail) | 49% and below | 0.00 |
| CR (Credit) | Credit for diploma requirements has been awarded. | |
| S | Satisfactory achievement in field /clinical placement or non-graded subject area. | |
| U | Unsatisfactory achievement in field/clinical placement or non-graded subject area. | |
| X | A temporary grade limited to situations with extenuating circumstances giving a student additional time to complete the requirements for a course. | |
| NR | Grade not reported to Registrar's office. | |
| W | Student has withdrawn from the course without academic penalty. | |

Note: For such reasons as program certification or program articulation, certain courses require minimums of greater than 50% and/or have mandatory components to achieve a passing grade.

It is also important to note, that the minimum overall GPA required in order to graduate from a Sault College program remains 2.0.

VI. SPECIAL NOTES:

Attendance

Significant learning takes place in the classroom through an interactive learning approach; therefore, ALL students must attend 60% of the classes to obtain a passing grade.

Assignments

ALL assignments are to be handed in on the due date and must be typewritten for full marks. Any late assignments will be deducted 1% per day late up until five days. After that time, the instructor will no longer accept the assignment.

Special Needs:

If you are a student with special needs (e.g. physical limitations, visual impairments, hearing impairments, or learning disabilities), you are encouraged to discuss required accommodations with your instructor and/or the Special Needs office. Visit the Special Needs office, Room E1101 or call 759-2554, ext. 703 so that support services can be arranged for you.

Retention of course outlines:

It is the responsibility of the student to retain all course outlines for possible future use in acquiring advanced standing at other postsecondary institutions.

Plagiarism:

Students should refer to the definition of “academic dishonesty” in *Student Rights and Responsibilities*. Students who engage in “academic dishonesty” will receive an automatic failure for that submission and/or such other penalty, up to and including expulsion from the course/program, as may be decided by the professor/dean. In order to protect students from inadvertent plagiarism, to protect the copyright of the material referenced, and to credit the author of the material, it is the policy of the department to employ a documentation format for referencing source material.

Course outline amendments:

The Professor reserves the right to change the information contained in this course outline depending on the needs of the learner and the availability of resources.

Substitute course information is available in the Registrar's office.

VII. PRIOR LEARNING ASSESSMENT:

Students who wish to apply for advanced credit in the course should consult the professor. Credit for prior learning will be given upon successful completion of a challenge exam or portfolio.

VIII. DIRECT CREDIT TRANSFERS:

Students who wish to apply for direct credit transfer (advanced standing) should obtain a direct credit transfer form from the Dean's secretary. Students will be required to provide a transcript and course outline related to the course in question.