

**THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN  
SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK**

<b>Course Number:</b>	SW 393R	<b>Instructor's name:</b>	Beth Pomeroy, Ph.D. bpomeroy@mail.utexas.edu
<b>Unique Number:</b>	63430	<b>Office Number:</b>	SSW 2.112
<b>Semester:</b>	Fall, 2014	<b>Office Phone:</b>	232-3405
<b>Meeting Time/Place:</b>	Thursdays 2:30-5:15 p.m.	<b>Office Hours:</b>	5:30 Thurs. and by appt.

**GRIEF COUNSELING**

**I. Standardized Course Description**

The framework for this course involves theories of grief and loss and assessment and intervention with children, adolescents, adults, and families. The interplay between normal grief and bereavement and clinical syndromes are analyzed for the purpose of developing empirically-based interventions grounded in social work values and the ethical decision making process. Childhood, adolescence, adulthood and aging, as distinct life stages, require different knowledge and skills to assess and treat varied grief reactions. Students will develop an advanced understanding of the grief process for people from diverse backgrounds, affirming, and respecting their strengths and differences. This course is designed for students to engage clients in appropriate working relationships and identify needs, resources, and assets for coping with grief reactions. Students will examine, in depth, their own responses and reactions to grief work.

**II. Standardized Course Objectives**

Upon completion of this course, the students will be able to:

1. Demonstrate an in-depth understanding of the concept of loss and its implications for individuals during the life span;
2. Demonstrate the ability to assess, through empirical means, the physical and psychological responses to loss (both typical and atypical), coping mechanisms, and available support systems as they pertain to individuals and intergenerational families;
3. Demonstrate an advanced clinical knowledge of the relationship between adaptive mechanisms and counseling strategies of the grief processes of children, adolescents, adults and elders as they relate to the strengths, capacities and resources of those individuals and families.
4. Demonstrate the ability to adapt assessment models of normal and traumatic grief to reflect an understanding of persons from diverse backgrounds, including (but not limited to) race,

ethnicity, culture, class, gender, sexual orientation, religion, physical or mental ability, age, and national origin;

5. Demonstrate an ability to evaluate outcomes and effectiveness of grief interventions;
6. Demonstrate advanced knowledge of social work values and the ethical decision making processes as they relate to ethical dilemmas in grief work and practice.
7. Identify and evaluate counselor loss and grief, burnout, and healthy adaptation.

### **III. Teaching Methods**

A variety of teaching methods will be utilized, including: lectures, class discussions, case examples, video presentations, role plays, group role plays, and guest speaker with information addressing diverse populations, including ethnicity, culture, gender, age, sexual orientation, and the economically and/or socially disadvantaged.

### **IV. Required and Recommended Texts, and Materials**

#### REQUIRED TEXT:

Pomeroy, E.C. & Garcia, R. B. (2009). *The Grief Assessment and Intervention Workbook*. Belmont, CA: Brooks/Cole-Cengage Pub.

Levers, L. L. (Ed.) (2012). *Trauma Counseling: Theories and Interventions*. Springer Publishing.

Klott, J. (2009). *Suicide & Psychological Pain: Prevention that Works*. Eau Claire WI: Premier Publishing and Media. Can be obtained on Amazon.

#### REQUIRED COURSE PACKET

Other articles and handouts that will be provided in class or On Canvas:.

### **V. Course Requirements**

#### **1. Participation/Attendance**

Attendance and quality of contribution (demonstrated by student preparation level and active participation in discussion, role plays, small group discussions and other class activities) will determine this portion of the grade. Students are expected to complete readings prior to class and be prepared to participate in an interactive framework between students and with the professor. Failure on the part of the student to demonstrate in class discussion comprehension of the material (or at minimum, a strong attempt to understanding) will be considered in the assigning of the final grade which will be assessed by the professor at the end of the course. Students will be treated with the respect given to professional social workers and therefore, will be expected to act in a professional manner. This is an advanced graduate level class and students are expected to be responsible for their own learning (the definition of a professional). (20 points)

## **2. Grief and Loss Interview**

Students will be expected to conduct an interview with another individual regarding issues related to a loss and issues related their experience of grief and/or depression, anxiety or other emotional ramifications of the loss. Students are expected to use one or a combination of structured interview questions found in the Grief Assessment and Intervention Workbook. The individual being interviewed should have experienced the loss at least a year ago (and preferably longer). More details will be provided in class about this assignment. The paper will be 10-15 pages long and will be worth 100 points. (Due Nov. 3<sup>rd</sup>)

## **3. Psychosocial Grief Assessment Paper**

**One Psychosocial Grief Assessment Paper on ONE of the Following Books:**

- *The Last Lecture*, (Randy Pausch)
- *The Year of Magical Thinking* (Joan Didion)
- *Dream New Dreams* (Jai Pausch)
- *The Glass Castle* (Jeannette Walls)
- *Free Fall* (Amber Lea Easton)
- *Let's Take the Long Way Home* (Gail Caldwell)

Each student will complete a 6-8 page clinical assessment of the main character in one of the above books, using the outline provided in “The Grief Assessment and Intervention Workbook.” Include a description/ assessment of the family situation. In the final section of the paper, write a summary of how this individual and family affected you personally and in your role as a social worker (i.e. what were your initial reactions to this person’s disorder; what were your reactions to the family and/or friends’ ability to handle this illness; what were the most difficult parts of the story for you to deal with emotionally; what kinds of questions did it create for you; how did you feel about this person and those impacting him/her at the conclusion of the story; as a social worker, did you feel there were other things that could’ve been done to assist this person and their family or friends). The paper is worth 100 pts.

### **Panel Presentation:**

Each student will sign up for a topic and find one article that they will present in a panel discussion. This is NOT a group project but you will need to consult with your topic presenters in order to choose a variety of articles. Each student will take 5 minutes (maximum) to present the article to the class. This assignment is worth 5 points.

### **Homework Assignments:**

A critical piece to this class is practicing your new assessment skills throughout the semester. Prepared vignettes taken from your *Grief Assessment and Intervention Workbook* (Pomeroy & Garcia, 2009) will allow you to immediately apply and practice your understanding of the

readings for that week. Ten case assessments will be assigned throughout the course (see syllabus). These will be graded on the accuracy and thoroughness of not only your assessments, but the short answers provided for each case vignette. This is an extremely valuable and important way for you to explain the reasoning for your answers. **Complete the short answers thoroughly!** These assignments are carefully evaluated as a way of making sure everyone is understanding the material. (Each case will be worth 3 points each for a total of 30 points).

The cases must be turned in **on time at the beginning of class** to be given points. Late homework assignments will not be accepted without prior approval.

### **Final Integration Paper**

4. Final Integration Paper- The final integration paper will be your integration of the material and activities covered in this course. You should write this paper to demonstrate your comprehensive understanding and reflection of the major topics of grief and trauma. More details will be provided in an in class handout. (100 points).

Final grades:

Final grades will be assigned based on a possible 350 points earned using the following scales:

A = 332.5-350 points  
A- = 315-331 points  
B+ = 304.5-314 points  
B = 294-303 points  
B- = 280-293 points  
C+ = 269.5-279 points  
C = 259 – 268 points

Graduate students must earn a minimum grade **of C in the course** for credit; also, graduate students must maintain an overall B average.

### **VI. Class Policies**

1. It is important for students to be punctual in both attendance and in meeting deadlines. Therefore, class attendance is expected, as is handing in assignments on time. Any assignments handed in late will subtract 5 points per week from the assignment due date. Students have one unexcused absence per semester in this course. Students missing more than 2 classes, unexcused, will lose a letter grade. Another letter grade will be lost after 3 unexcused absences. Each unexcused absence, beyond the first one, should include a physician's note. A death in the primary family is also a reasonable excuse if instructor is informed beforehand.
2. Students are treated as responsible professionals. Therefore, feedback about the course is welcome and the course will be viewed as a joint effort between students and the instructor. Feedback should be constructive rather than entitled.

3. Social work practitioners assume responsibility for themselves. Therefore, it is expected that work handed in will be your own. Scholastic dishonesty, including plagiarism and cheating during examinations, violates social work values and will result in recommendation for dismissal from the social work program and a referral to the Dean of Student's Office.
4. Information shared in class is considered to be covered by the NASW Code of Ethics regarding the sharing of information. Complete confidentiality is expected.
4. Social work practitioners respect others. Therefore, differences in values, opinions, and feelings of class members and guest speakers will be respected.

### **Class Attendance**

One of the goals of the program is to provide students with a curriculum that will adequately prepare them for beginning professional careers. In order to model ethically appropriate practice, please treat coming to classes as you would treat working at a job. Given the requirements for professional behavior, attendance for all classes is required. More than one unexcused absence, excessive tardiness, or patterns of leaving early may result in a reduction of the final grade. Students must present a written excuse from a health care provider for excused absences due to illness or other documentation as requested by the instructor for excused absences. If a student misses more than 3 classes - whether or not there is a documented, excused absence – the student may receive a failing grade. Except in the case of emergencies, and then only with the permission of the instructor, late assignments will not be accepted without penalty. Students are expected to turn in all required assignments on the Scheduled due date at the beginning of class. Students will lose 3 points for each day that an assignment is late. If the due date is a problem, the student must see the instructor and negotiate another due date at least 24 hours PRIOR to the regularly scheduled date.

### **Participation and Professionalism**

A crucial component of professional college education relates to an understanding of and adherence to a set of values and work ethics. Active participation in the classroom setting facilitates clarification and understanding of these values and ethics, as well as your comprehension of the materials the class covers. Given that you are attending one of the top rated colleges in the country, students must practice professional behavior in class. This includes participating constructively in class. Students can demonstrate constructive participation in a variety of ways:

1. Physical attendance at classes;
2. Verbal involvement in class and group discussions;
3. Active participation in role plays or other group exercises;
4. Initiating discussion or bringing in information from assigned readings, other readings and/or experiences;

5. One-to-one dialogue with the instructor, inside or outside of class;
6. Written dialogue (email or paper);
7. Timely submission of assignments.

When considering the quantity and quality of participation, the following issues should be considered:

- An appropriate level of participation from each student is related to the number of students in the class, the format of the class (e.g., lecture versus workshop), and the desirability of conciseness;
- Respect the rights of others in the class, including privacy and safety (physical and emotional);
- Good questions can include admitting one's lack of knowledge about a subject (if one person is feeling self-conscious about asking a question that may be seen as "stupid", there are probably several others in the class who want to know the same thing);
- Students do not need to agree with statements made by the instructor or other students, however, respect for differences should be shown. Students are encouraged to think for themselves, ask challenging questions (in a respectful manner), and arrive at their own understandings;
- Questions/comments which are not relevant to the class or which are stated clearly in the materials can detract from the class and consume valuable time (e.g., before asking, "Is that single-spaced or double-spaced?" and "When is the assignment due?", please check to see if these types of questions are covered in the Course Syllabus).
- Students should respect for the dignity and self-worth of all individuals, regardless of ethnicity, culture, nationality, race, religion, sexual orientation, gender, disability, political belief, or other aspects of diversity.
- If a student is away due to illness or other reason, it is that student's responsibility to obtain notes, handout material, etc. from another student. The student may also suggest ways that they can make up for time lost (e.g., if you miss a class and you want to propose an extra assignment, such as a journaling exercise, to make up for not being able to participate in the class).
- If you have concerns about the class, or recommendations for it, please make these suggestions early so that they can be addressed and incorporated as early as possible.

### **Classroom Conduct**

**a. Arriving on time for class; returning from break in a timely fashion.** It is important to demonstrate to your clients or colleagues that they are important to you. Being prompt for all appointments is one way to demonstrate this professional behavior. You should therefore be prompt for class.

**b. Being prepared for class.** As a professional you should be prepared for all appointments and meetings. You can begin to demonstrate this ability to be prepared by always being prepared for class.

c. **Paying attention in class.** As a professional you need to be an active listener to appropriately understand the needs of your clients. This skill can be demonstrated by being an active listener in class as well.

d. **Remaining in class until the class is over or until the professor announces a break.** As a professional you are committed to treating your colleagues with respect and courtesy. This can be demonstrated in class by treating faculty and fellow students with respect and courtesy by remaining in class while it is in session.

e. **Handing in assignments in a timely fashion.** It is of vital importance to your clients that you meet deadlines. This can be demonstrated in class by completing the required readings by the dates listed in the syllabus and turning in papers and projects by the expected due dates.

f. **Demonstrating respect for the opinions of others.** Professionals should be tolerant of different points of view. In practice, this applies to clients and colleagues. In the classroom, this can be demonstrated by the manner in which we respect the opinions of faculty and fellow students.

### **Academic Irregularities**

The following shall constitute academic irregularities:

1. The use of materials and devices such as notes, books, calculators, etc., while taking an examination, unless specifically authorized by the instructor from or to other persons while taking an examination unless specifically authorized by the instructor--acts defined as cheating.
2. The presentation of works or ideas from any other source as ones own--an act defined as plagiarism.
3. Unauthorized obtaining, distributing or receiving material which is purported to be an examination, or part of an examination, without the consent of the instructor.
4. Taking of an examination for another person or having another person take an examination.
5. Other activities that interfere with the academic mission within the classroom.
6. Submission of the same or essentially the same paper, project, assignment or finished project to an instructor which has been submitted to another instructor unless specifically authorized by both instructors.

### **Incomplete Policy**

A grade of Incomplete will be considered by the instructor to be a privilege, not a right. Therefore, it must be earned and the following criteria met:

1. The student must be performing a least C-level work on all assignments due to date at the time that the Incomplete is requested.

2. In addition, evidence of adult responsibility on the student's part will be considered in evaluating the request.
3. The student and faculty must complete an Incomplete Contract.
4. Following the completion of the semester, it will be the student's responsibility to complete the agreed upon assignments in a timely manner, following the contract stipulations.

## **University Policies**

### **The University of Texas Honor Code**

The core values of The University of Texas at Austin are learning, discovery, freedom, leadership, individual opportunity, and responsibility. Each member of the university is expected to uphold these values through integrity, honesty, trust, fairness, and respect toward peers and community.

### **Professional Conduct in Class**

The professor expects students to act like professionals in class. This means students should arrive on time for class, be prepared to participate in the class discussion, and show respect for one another's opinions. We will not, nor should we, always agree with one another. In this environment we should be exposed to diverse ideas and opinions, and sometime we will not agree with the ideas expressed by others. However, the professor does require that students engage one another with respect and professionalism.

### **Policy on Scholastic Dishonesty**

Students who violate University rules on scholastic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary penalties, including the possibility of failure in the course and/or dismissal from the University. Since such dishonesty harms the individual, all students, and the integrity of the University, policies on scholastic dishonesty will be strictly enforced. For further information, the student may refer to the Web Site of the Student Judicial Services, Office of the Dean of Students (<http://www.utexas.edu/depts/dos/sjs/>).

### **Documented Disability Statement**

Any student who requires special accommodations must obtain a letter that documents the disability from the Services for Students with Disabilities area of the Division of Diversity and Community Engagement (471-6259 voice or 471-4641 TTY for users who are deaf or hard of hearing). Present the letter to the professor at the beginning of the semester so that needed accommodations can be discussed. The student should remind the professor of any testing accommodations no later than five business days before an exam. For more information, visit <http://www.utexas.edu/diversity/ddce/ssd/>.

### **Religious Holidays**

By UT Austin policy, students must notify the professor of a pending absence at least fourteen days prior to the date of observance of a religious holy day. If the student must miss a class, an examination, a work assignment, or a project in order to observe a religious holy day, the professor will give the student an opportunity to complete the missed work within a reasonable time after the absence.



### **Use of E-Mail for Official Correspondence to Students**

Email is recognized as an official mode of university correspondence; therefore, students are responsible for reading their email for university and course-related information and announcements. Students are responsible to keep the university informed about changes to their e-mail address. Students should check their e-mail regularly and frequently—daily, but at minimum twice a week—to stay current with university-related communications, some of which may be time-sensitive. Students can find UT Austin’s policies and instructions for updating their e-mail address at <http://www.utexas.edu/its/policies/emailnotify.php>.

### **Safety**

As part of professional social work education, students may have assignments that involve working in agency settings and/or the community. As such, these assignments may present some risks. Sound choices and caution may lower risks inherent to the profession. It is the student's responsibility to be aware of and adhere to policies and practices related to agency and/or community safety. Students should notify the professor regarding any safety concerns.

### **Behavior Concerns Advice Line (BCAL)**

If students are worried about someone who is acting differently, they may use the Behavior Concerns Advice Line to discuss by phone their concerns about another individual’s behavior. This service is provided through a partnership among the Office of the Dean of Students, the Counseling and Mental Health Center (CMHC), the Employee Assistance Program (EAP), and The University of Texas Police Department (UTPD). Call 512-232-5050 or visit <http://www.utexas.edu/safety/bcal>.

### **Emergency Evacuation Policy**

Occupants of buildings on the UT Austin campus are required to evacuate and assemble outside when a fire alarm is activated or an announcement is made. Please be aware of the following policies regarding evacuation:

- Familiarize yourself with all exit doors of the classroom and the building. Remember that the nearest exit door may not be the one you used when you entered the building.
- If you require assistance to evacuate, inform the professor in writing during the first week of class.
- In the event of an evacuation, follow the professor’s instructions.
- Do not re-enter a building unless you’re given instructions by the Austin Fire Department, the UT Austin Police Department, or the Fire Prevention Services office.

### **Use of Canvas in Class**

In this class the professor uses Canvas—a Web-based course management system with password-protected access at <http://courses.utexas.edu>—to distribute course materials, to communicate and collaborate online, to post grades, to submit assignments. Students can find support in using Blackboard at the ITS Help Desk by calling 475-9400, Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. Please plan accordingly.

## Course Schedule

Date	Description	Assignment/Readings Due	Additional Optional Readings
August 27 Class 1	Class Introduction An Overview of Ethics and Grief		<b>On Canvas:</b> Rothschild, "First Do No Harm"
September 3 Class 2	Introduction to Grief & Loss Theories behind Grief & Loss Expected and Complicated Bereavement DSM Overview of Grief	<b>Pomeroy &amp; Garcia</b> Ch. 1, Ch. 2  <b>Case 1.1, 1.2 done in class (bring workbook)</b>	Levers Ch. 5
September 10 Class 3	Introduction to Trauma Theories behind Trauma Counseling DSM Overview of Trauma  <b>Receive Case Scenarios</b>	<b>Levers</b> Ch. 1, Ch. 3	Levers Ch. 2  <b>On Canvas:</b> Scaer, "The Dissociation Capsule" Luxenberg, Spinazzola, & van der Kolk, "Complex Trauma and DESNOS Diagnosis"
September 17 Class 4	Overview of Assessment and Interventions for Adults with Grief, Loss, & Trauma  <b>Practice assessment using case scenarios</b>	<b>Pomeroy &amp; Garcia</b> Ch. 3  <b>Levers</b> Ch. 10, Ch.27, Ch.28  <b>Narrative of Case due</b>	<b>On Canvas:</b> Steel, Dunlavy, Stillman, & Pape, "Measuring depression & PTSD after trauma"
September 24 Class 5	Issues related to Grief, Loss, & Trauma for Women and Gender  Guest Speakers: Diane Rhodes  <b>Panel Presentations</b>	<b>Levers</b> Ch. 7  <b>On Canvas:</b> Schen, "When Mothers Leave their Children Behind"  <b>Case Study 7.3 due</b>	Levers Ch. 18  <b>On Canvas:</b> Goelitz & Stewart-Kahn, "Intimate Partner Violence"

October 1 Class 6	Interventions for Working with Women and Gendered Grief, Loss, & Trauma  Guest Speaker: Brittany Neece	<b>Levers</b> Ch. 11  <b>On Canvas::</b> Korn, "EMDR and the Treatment of Complex PTSD: A Review" Shapiro, "EMDR Treatment of Recent Trauma"  <b>Case Study 4.4 due</b>	<b>On Canvas:</b> Shapiro, "What is EMDR? Invited Response"
October 8 Class 7	Working with Children and Adolescents Attachment related to Grief and Loss  Guest Speaker: Barbara Jones on Working with Children and Cancer  <b>Panel Presentations</b>	<b>Levers</b> Ch. 8, Ch. 9  <b>On Canvas::</b> Ford & Courtois, "Relational Trauma and Disorganized Attachment"  <b>Case Study 5.3 due</b>	<b>On Canvas:</b> Crenshaw, "An Interpersonal Neurobiological Informed-Treatment Model for Childhood Traumatic Grief"
October 15 Class 8	Interventions for working with Children/ Adolescents in Grief, Loss, & Trauma  Guest Speaker: Erin Spalding	<b>Pomeroy &amp; Garcia</b> Ch. 5  <b>Levers</b> Ch. 20, Ch. 21  <b>Case Study 5.4 due</b>  <b>Grief Assessment due</b>	<b>On Canvas:</b> Wheeler & Austin, "The Loss Response List" Cohen, "Psychosocial Intervention for Maltreated and Violence-Exposed Children"
October 22 Class 9	Guest Speaker: Renee Garcia	<b>On Canvas:</b> Pomeroy & Garcia, "Grief and Youth in Crisis"	

<p>October 29 Class 10</p>	<p>Specialized Populations: <i>Older Adults, Disabilities, Terminal Illness, Parents,</i></p> <p>Guest Speaker: David Zuniga</p> <p><b>Panel Presentations</b></p>	<p><b>Pomeroy &amp; Garcia</b> Ch. 6, Ch. 7</p> <p><b>On Canvas:</b> Damianakis &amp; Marzaili, "Older adults' response to the loss of a spouse"</p> <p><b>Case Study 6.2 &amp; Case Study 6.4 due</b></p>	<p>Levers Ch. 12</p>
<p>November 5 Class 11</p>	<p>Specialized Populations: <i>Incarcerated individuals, immigrants, military, LGBTQ</i></p> <p>Guest Speaker: Julia Chaitin</p> <p><b>Panel Presentations</b></p>	<p><b>Levers</b> Ch. 25</p> <p><b>On Canvas:</b> Miller, "I am not who I thought I was" Fenge, "Developing Understanding of Same- Sex Partner Bereavement" Wilson, "Category C Prisoners"</p> <p><b>Case 3.3 due</b></p>	<p><b>On Canvas:</b> Goelitz &amp; Stewar- Kahn, "Vulnerable Populations" Hendry "Incarceration and the tasks of grief"</p>
<p>November 12 Class 12</p>	<p>Interventions on Complex Grief</p> <p>Guest Speaker: Susan De Luca</p>	<p><b>Pomeroy &amp; Garcia</b> Ch. 4</p> <p><b>Levers</b> Ch. 15</p> <p><b>Klot, Suicide &amp; Psychological Pain, Ch. 1</b></p> <p><b>Case Study 4.2 due</b></p> <p><b>Psychosocial Assessment due</b></p>	<p>Levers Ch. 13, Ch. 14</p> <p><b>On Canvas:</b> Winokuer &amp; Harris, "When Grief goes Awry"</p>

November 19 Class 13	Complex Grief Counseling Spirituality and Grief  Guest Speakers: Allan Cole  <b>Panel Presentations</b>	<b>Levers</b> Ch. 29  <b>Klot</b> Ch. 2, 3, 4  <b>On Canvas:</b> Dyer & Hagedorn, "Navigating Bereavement with Spirituality-Based Interventions: Implication for Non- Faith-Based Counselors"	<b>On Canvas:</b> Martin & Doka, "Men Don't Cry"  Meichenbaum, "Trauma, Spirituality, and Recovery"
November 26 Class 14	NO CLASS	NO CLASS	NO CLASS
December 3 Class 15	Secondary Trauma and Self-Care	<b>Pomeroy &amp; Garcia</b> Ch. 8 <b>Levers</b> Ch. 31  <b>Final Integration Paper due</b>	<b>On Canvas:</b> Goelitz & Stewart- Kahn, "You can be affected too"

**VII. Bibliography: Available On Canvas**