

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

Course Number: SW 393R 18

Instructor: Elaine Cavazos, LCSW
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Unique Number: 61610

Office: 3.124

Semester: Summer 2017

Phone: 512-537-4882 (cell)

Meeting Time/Place: Mondays,
11:30am -2:30 pm
Room 2.112

Office Hours: Monday, 9:30-11:00a
Other times by appt.

GRIEF COUNSELING

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.

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.

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.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Neimeyer, Robert A. (2012). *Techniques of Grief Therapy: Creative Practices for Counseling the Bereaved*. New York, NY: Taylor Francis Pub.

Social Work Desk Reference, 3rd Edition (required by the MSSW program)

Recommended:

Rando, T.A. (1993). *Treatment of Complicated Mourning*. Champaign, IL: Research Press.

Course Assignments:

The course assignments are listed below. Detailed instructions for each assignment will be given to students during class well in advance of the due date. The due dates for each assignment are listed both on Canvas and the course schedule (below).

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|-------------------------------------|-----------|
| 1. Personal Loss Autobiography | 40 points |
| 2. Non-Death Loss Literature Review | 60 points |
| 3. Grief Assessment Paper | 80 points |
| 4. Attendance/Class Participation | 20 points |

Total	200 points
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GRADES

94.0 and Above	A
90.0 to 93.999	A-
87.0 to 89.999	B+
84.0 to 86.999	B
80.0 to 83.999	B-
77.0 to 79.999	C+

74.0 to 76.999	C
70.0 to 73.999	C-
67.0 to 69.999	D+
64.0 to 66.999	D
60.0 to 63.999	D-
Below 60.0	F

CLASSROOM POLICIES

Professional Accountability/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 sometimes we will not agree with the ideas expressed by others. However, the professor does require that students engage one another with respect and professionalism.

Part of professional accountability includes treating others with respect and courtesy. Within the class this entails listening to the opinions and concerns of others with openness, offering suggestions and ideas in a positive and respectful manner, and being willing to promote group cohesiveness in the learning environment.

The student is expected to bring any concerns directly to the professor on an individual basis, if the issue is not appropriate to be discussed in class. Students should be prepared to discuss the concern openly, with willingness to accept feedback, and offer possible solutions.

Please turn off cell phones and laptops during class. Avoid side conversations. A description of proper classroom etiquette will be provided.

Time Management: Students will lose 5% of the total point value per calendar day that an assignment is late. Assignments are due on Canvas by the beginning of class on the due date (unless otherwise specified). Papers turned in after class begins are considered late. On subsequent days, papers must be submitted before 5:00 p.m. to avoid an additional penalty. The student should email the professor to indicate that the assignment has been submitted.

Class Participation Points will be deducted per absence in the following manner:

Attendance is mandatory and three or more absences may result in the student being dropped from the course. Points will be deducted from the Class Participation/Attendance grade for each unexcused absence. Late arrivals will be noted if the student is more than 10 minutes after the start of class. Three late arrivals will count as one unexcused absence.

Classroom exercises, discussions, role-plays, guest speakers and other class experiential exercises are essential for the students' professional learning and continued development of self-awareness. This form of learning cannot be "made up" once missed. Students will be expected to

contact their peers to secure any missed notes or handouts. The student may schedule an office visit with the professor if they wish to discuss missed classroom material in more detail.

Students are to notify the instructor prior to class at the given office number if they cannot attend class due to an illness or emergency.

The professor will evaluate each student's class participation based upon their willingness to engage in class discussions, group activities, attentiveness to lectures and guest speakers, and behaviors that reflect presence and readiness to learn. Students who are engaged in side conversations or appear to be using their electronic devices for non-class related activities will have their participation grade lowered accordingly and may be asked to meet with the professor to discuss appropriate classroom behavior.

Contacting the Professor: The professor is available to discuss any issues that arise related to class during office hours or by appointment. Additionally, the student can email the professor via Canvas with questions regarding assignments and/or concerns. The student should be prepared that it could take 24-48 hours for the professor to respond.

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 AND CIVILITY IN THE CLASSROOM. The professor expects students to act as 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. A course brings together a group of diverse individuals with various backgrounds. Students are influenced and shaped by such factors as ethnicity, gender, sex, physical abilities, religious and political beliefs, national origins, and sexual orientations, among others. We expect to learn from each other in an atmosphere of positive engagement and mutual respect. Social Work also deals with complex and controversial issues. These issues may be challenging and uncomfortable, and it would be impossible to offer a substantive classroom experience that did not include potentially difficult conversations relating to challenging issues. In this environment, we will be exposed to diverse ideas and opinions, and sometimes we will not agree with the ideas expressed by others. Nevertheless, the professor requires that students engage one another with civility, respect, and professionalism.

UNANTICIPATED DISTRESS. Students may experience unexpected and/or distressing reactions to course readings, videos, conversations, and assignments. If so, students are encouraged to inform the professor. The professor can be responsive and supportive regarding students' participation in course assignments and activities, but students are responsible for communicating clearly what kind of support is desired. If counseling is needed, students may

contact a service provider of their choosing, including the UT Counseling Center at [512-471-3515](tel:512-471-3515) or online at <https://cmhc.utexas.edu/>.

POLICY ON SOCIAL MEDIA AND PROFESSIONAL COMMUNICATION. Public social networks are not private. Even when open only to approved or invited members, users cannot be certain that privacy will exist among the general membership of sites. If social work students choose to participate in such forums, please assume that anything posted can be seen, read, and critiqued. What is said, posted, linked to, commented on, uploaded, subscribed to, etc., can be accessed and archived, posing potential harm to professional reputations and prospective careers.

Social work students who use social media (i.e. Facebook, Twitter, etc.) and other forms of electronic communication (i.e. blogs, etc.) must be mindful of how their communication may be perceived by clients, colleagues, faculty, and others. Social work students are expected to make every effort to minimize material which could be considered inappropriate for a professional social worker in training. Because of this, social work students are advised to manage security settings at their most private levels and avoid posting information/photos or using any language that could jeopardize their professional image.

Students are asked to consider the amount of personal information posted on these sites and are obliged to block any client access to involvement in the students' social networks. Client material should not be referred to in any form of electronic media, including *any* information that might lead to the identification of a client or compromise client confidentiality in *any* way. Additionally, students must critically evaluate any material that is posted regarding community agencies and professional relationships, as certain material could violate the standards set by the School of Social Work, the Texas Code of Conduct for Social Workers, and/or the NASW Code of Ethics.

Social work students should consider that they will be representing professional social work practice as well as The University of Texas at Austin School of Social Work program while in the classroom, the university community, and the broader area communities.

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://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/sjs/>.

USE OF COURSE MATERIALS. The materials used in this course, including, but not limited to exams, quizzes, and homework assignments, are copyright protected works. Any unauthorized duplication of the course materials is a violation of federal law and may result in disciplinary action being taken against the student. Additionally, the sharing of course materials without the specific, express approval of the professor may be a violation of the University's Student Honor Code and an act of academic dishonesty, which could result in further disciplinary action. This sharing includes, among other things, uploading class materials to websites for the purpose of distributing those materials to other current or future students.

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). A student should present the letter to the professor at the beginning of the semester so that needed accommodations can be discussed and followed. The student should remind the professor of any testing accommodations no later than five business days before an exam. For more information, visit: <http://diversity.utexas.edu/disability/>.

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, examination, work assignment, or 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.

TITLE IX REPORTING. In accordance with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, the University of Texas at Austin is committed to maintaining a learning environment that is free from discriminatory conduct based on gender. Faculty, instructors, staff, and/or teaching assistants in their supervisory roles are mandated reporters of incidents of sex discrimination, sexual harassment, sexual violence, or sexual misconduct. Students who report such incidents will be informed of University resources. Incidents will be reported to the University's Title IX Coordinator and/or the Title IX Deputy for the SSW, Professor Tanya Voss. Students, faculty and staff may contact Professor Voss to report incidents or to obtain information. Further information, including student resources related to Title IX, may also be found at <http://socialwork.utexas.edu/dl/files/academic-programs/other/qrg-sexualharassment.pdf>.

CAMPUS CARRY POLICY. The University's policy on concealed fire arms may be found here: <https://campuscarry.utexas.edu>. You also may find this information by accessing the Quick Links menu on the School's website.

CLASSROOM CONFIDENTIALITY. Information shared in class about agencies, clients, and personal matters is considered confidential per the NASW Code of Ethics on educational supervision and is protected by regulations of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) as well. As such, sharing this information with individuals outside of the educational context is not permitted. Violations of confidentiality could result in actions taken according to the policies and procedure for review of academic performance located in sections 3.0, 3.1, and 3.2 of the Standards for Social Work Education.

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 for keeping the university informed about a change of 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 between 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](tel: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 in the classroom and the building. Remember that the nearest exit door may not be the one you used when entering 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 are given instructions by the Austin Fire Department, the UT Austin Police Department, or the Fire Prevention Services office.

COURSE SCHEDULE

9/11/17	Introduction to Grief Terminology And the Ethical Obligation of Self-Care	<p>Assigned Readings: Counseling Strategies for Loss and Grief, Chapters 1 and 2 (scanned and posted on Canvas), Techniques of Grief Therapy, pp. 359-361</p> <p>Listen to: “0: Sad Nora and the Secret Baby,” From the podcast “Terrible, Thanks for Asking.”</p> <p>Optional Reading: Chapter 1, Trauma Stewardship</p>
9/18/17	Theoretical Perspectives and Relational Skills	<p>Assigned Readings: Techniques of Grief Therapy, Part 1, pp. 1-25, Rando, Chapter 2 (scanned and on Canvas under “modules”)</p> <p>Listen to: https://storycorps.org/listen/dennis-and-buelah-apple/</p> <p>Assignment: Personal Loss Autobiography Due</p>
9/25/17	Theoretical Perspectives and Relational Skills, Continued	<p>Assigned Readings: Counseling Strategies for Loss and Grief, Chapter 4 (scanned and posted on Canvas) and Techniques of Grief Therapy Part IX, pp. 179-196</p> <p>Listen to: “1: In Love and Memory,” From the podcast, “Terrible, Thanks for Asking.”</p>
10/02/17	Funeral Practices and Grief Assessment Tools Guest Speaker: Brandi Combs, LCSW Hospice Austin	<p>Assigned Readings: Techniques of Grief Therapy, Part XVI, pp. 341-356, “Predictors of grief following the death of one's child: the contribution of finding meaning,”</p> <p>Listen to: https://storycorps.org/listen/father-michael-duffy/</p>
10/09/17	Perinatal Loss: Interventions from the hospital to home Guest Speaker: Mary Jane Philpy-Dollins, MSN, MA, RN	<p>Assigned Readings: “Anticipatory Guidance: A Hospital-Based Intervention for Adolescents with Perinatal Loss,” “Development and Preliminary Evaluation of a Cognitive-Behavioral Intervention for Perinatal Grief” both found on Canvas in “modules,” and Techniques of Grief Therapy, Ch. 63, pp. 243-246</p> <p>Listen to: http://www.npr.org/2009/07/27/111063912/parents-of-stillborn-babies-find-joy-in-grief</p>

10/16/17	Grief and Cultural/Gender Differences	<p>Assigned Readings: “An Exploration of Lesbian Maternal Bereavement,” and “Exploring the Impact of Sexual Orientation on Experiences and Concerns about End of Life Care and on Bereavement for Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual Older People,” found on Canvas under “modules” and Techniques of Grief Therapy Part XII, pp. 251-281</p> <p>Listen to: https://storycorps.org/listen/bill-jones-and-stu-maddux-150220/</p>
10/23/17	Ambiguous and Disenfranchised Grief Non-Death Losses	<p>Assigned Readings: “Disenfranchised grief following a non-fatal road traffic incident: A case study exploring a mother’s experience,” “Children removed from home by court order: Fathers' disenfranchised grief and reclamation of paternal functions,” located on Canvas under “modules” and Techniques of Grief Therapy Part VIII, pp. 159-175</p> <p>Listen to: https://storycorps.org/listen/robert-patterson-and-his-wife-karen/</p>
10/30/17	Clinical Skill Development: Professional Use of Self and Assessment	<p>Assigned Readings: Counseling Strategies for Loss and Grief, Chapter 5 and 9, pp. 147-171 and pp. 213-218, located on Canvas under “modules” and Techniques of Grief Therapy, Part II, pp. 25-50</p> <p>Listen to: http://socialworkpodcast.blogspot.com/2014/09/shared-trauma.html and https://storycorps.org/listen/father-noel-hickie-and-marcia-hilton-170728/</p>
11/06/17	Complicated Grief Guest Speaker: Brittany Neece, LPC-LMFT	<p>Assigned Readings: Techniques of Grief Therapy, Part IV, pp. 83-108 and Part VI, pp. 125-142</p> <p>Watch: https://youtu.be/yGqwRbIH3JA</p> <p>Assignment: Non-Death Loss Lit Review</p>
11/13/17	Unexpected Loss: Homicide, Suicide and Crisis Intervention Guest Speaker: Connie Geerhart, LCSW, Travis Co. Victim Services	<p>Assigned Readings: TBD</p> <p>Listen to: https://storycorps.org/listen/leslie-hurd/</p>

11/20/17	Clinical Skill Development: Exploring Resistance	Assigned Readings: Techniques of Grief Therapy, Part VII, pp. 149-177, Part V, pp. 109-120 and Part XIII, pp. 287-298
11/27/17	Clinical Issues: Social Justice and Environmental Factors	<p>Assigned Readings: “The Rhetoric of Shared Grief: An Analysis of Letters to the Family of Michael Brown,” and “Bereavement Following Substance Misuse: <i>A Disenfranchised Grief</i>,” found on Canvas under “modules” and Techniques of Grief Therapy, pp. 315-318 and 329-332</p> <p>Listen to: https://storycorps.org/listen/nicholas-heyward-sr/</p> <p>Optional Reading: “Disenfranchised Grief Following African American Homicide Loss: An Inductive Case Study,” found on Canvas under “modules”</p>
12/04/17	Art Therapy in Grief Work and Working with Children Guest Speaker: Rachel Saffer, LMSW Austin Center for Grief and Loss	Assigned Readings: Techniques of Grief Therapy, Part X, pp. 201-228 and as assigned TBD
12/11/17	Last Class/Wrap Up	Final Paper Due: Grief Assessment Paper

The bibliography for this course will be posted on Canvas.