

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN STEVE HICKS SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

Course Number: SW 393R 18
Unique Number: 60040
Semester: Fall 2019
Meeting Time/Place: Mondays,
11:30am -2:30 pm
Room 2.112

Instructor: Elaine Cavazos, LCSW
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Office Hours: Monday, 9:30-11:00a
Other times 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. Exploration of the workers' own responses and reactions to grief work will be examined by the students in depth.

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. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Kosminsky, P. S., & Jordan, J. R. (2016). *Attachment-informed grief therapy: The clinicians guide to foundations and applications* (1st ed.). New York, NY: Routledge/Taylor & Francis Group.

Worden, J. W. (2018). *Grief counseling and grief therapy: A handbook for the mental health Practitioner* (5th ed.). New York, NY: Springer Publishing.

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

Recommended:

Neimeyer, R. A. (2016). *Techniques of Grief Therapy* (1st ed.). New York, NY: Taylor and Francis.

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. Quizzes | 40 points |
| 2. Non-Death Loss Literature Review | 50 points |
| 3. Grief Assessment Videotaped Interview
And Assessment Paper | 100 points |
| 4. Personal Loss History Assignment | 50 points |
| 5. Class Participation Grade | 20 points |

Total	260 points
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V. 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

VI. 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 during class. Laptops may be used for note taking or to assist in researching a particular issue in 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.

Attendance: 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.

VII. 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.

VIII. COURSE SCHEDULE

9/9/19	Review Syllabus and Ethical Obligation of Self-Care	<p>Assigned Readings: The Syllabus</p> <p>Listen to: http://www.insocialwork.org/episode.asp?ep=157</p>
9/16/19	Theoretical Perspectives, Models, and terminology for Grief and Loss Practice	<p>Assigned Readings: Grief Counseling and Grief Therapy, Worden, Ch. 1 and 2</p> <p>Due: Student Questionnaire, complete on Canvas, link found in Modules</p> <p>Watch: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tMX_1yeKNoI</p>
9/23/19	Theoretical Perspectives and Models Continued	<p>Assigned Readings: Attachment-Informed Grief Therapy, Ch. 1 and 2, Worden, Ch. 3</p> <p>Due: Quiz 1, complete on Canvas and link found in Modules</p> <p>Listen to: “1: In Love and Memory,” From the podcast, “Terrible, Thanks for Asking.”</p>
9/30/19	Uncomplicated Grief and Transitions	<p>Assigned Readings: Worden, Ch. 4 and Attachment Informed Grief Therapy, Ch. 3</p> <p>Listen to: https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/grieving-the-loss-of-a-home/id946757971?i=1000381293385</p>
10/7/19	Complex Grief Focus on Reproductive Loss	<p>Assigned Reading: Worden, Ch. 5 and Attachment Informed Grief, Ch. 8</p> <p>Due: Quiz 2, complete on Canvas, link found in Modules</p> <p>Listen to: http://www.npr.org/2009/7/27/111063912/parents-of-stillborn-babies-find-joy-in-grief</p>
10/14/19	Guest Lecturer: Erin Spalding Working with LGBTQ from a grief and loss perspective	<p>Assigned Reading: Attachment Informed Grief Therapy, Chapter 4 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”</p> <p>Due: Non-Death Loss Literature Review</p> <p>Listen to: https://www.ttfa.org/episode/2018/09/11/episode-47-nathan</p>
10/21/19	Non-Death Loss Panel Presentations	<p>Due: Mid-Term Course Evaluation, completed via Canvas, link found in Modules</p>

10/28/19	Disenfranchised and Disoriented Grief	<p>Assigned Readings: Worden, Ch 6 and Attachment Informed Grief Therapy, Ch. 5</p> <p>Listen to: https://storycorps.org/listen/robert-patterson-and-his-wife-karen/ and https://www.nytimes.com/2018/02/08/podcasts/the-daily/hurricane-maria-puerto-rico-mental-health.html</p> <p>Optional Reading: “Disenfranchised grief following a non-fatal road traffic incident: A case study exploring a mother’s experience,” located on Canvas under “modules”</p>
11/4/19	Grief Interventions	<p>Assigned Readings: Worden, Ch. 7 and Attachment Informed Grief Therapy Ch. 9</p> <p>Due: Quiz 3, complete on Canvas, link found in Modules</p> <p>Listen to: https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/grief-and-defense-mechanisms/id946757971?i=1000386192521</p>
11/11/19	Working with Children	<p>Assigned Readings: Readings for this class will be scanned and uploaded to Canvas</p> <p>Listen To: https://www.dougy.org/grief-resources/podcasts/, episode 90</p>
11/18/19	<p>Unexpected Loss: Homicide, Suicide and Crisis Intervention</p> <p>Guest Speaker: Connie Geerhart, LCSW, Travis Co. Victim Services</p>	<p>Assigned Readings: “The Rhetoric of Shared Grief: An Analysis of Letters to the Family of Michael Brown,” found on Canvas under “modules,” Attachment Informed Grief Therapy, Ch. 6 and Worden, Ch. 7</p> <p>Due: Grief Assessment Video and Paper Due</p> <p>Listen to: https://storycorps.org/listen/nicholas-heyward-sr/</p>
11/25/19	Video Tape Review Sessions	<p>Listen To: https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/your-questions-about-holiday-grief-answered/id946757971?i=1000358648590</p>
12/2/19	Caring for the Self in Griefwork	<p>Assigned Readings: Attachment Informed Grief Therapy, Chapter 9 and Worden, Ch. 9</p> <p>Due: Quiz 4, complete via Canvas, link found in Modules</p> <p>Listen to: http://socialworkpodcast.blogspot.com/2014/09/shared-trauma.html</p>

12/9/19		<p>Assigned Readings: Attachment-Informed Grief Therapy, Ch. 10</p> <p>Due: Personal Loss History Assignment</p>
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IX. BIBLIOGRAPHY

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- InSocialWork Podcast #157 - Dr. Joanne Cacciatore and Kara Thieleman: Witness to Suffering: Mindfulness and Compassion Fatigue Among Traumatic Bereavement Professionals and Volunteers. (n.d.). Retrieved from <http://www.insocialwork.org/episode.asp?ep=157>
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