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CURRICULUM PROPOSAL COVER SHEET
University-Wide Undergraduate Curriculum Committee

LSC Use Only
Number <u>LS-109</u>
Action <u>Approved</u>
Date <u>10-26-89</u>

UWUCC Use Only
Number _____
Action _____
Date _____

I. TITLE/AUTHOR OF CHANGE

COURSE/PROGRAM TITLE Psychology of Death & Dying
DEPARTMENT Psychology
CONTACT PERSON Gordon Thornton

II. THIS COURSE IS BEING PROPOSED FOR:

- Course Approval Only
- Course Approval and Liberal Studies Approval
- Liberal Studies Approval only (course previously has been approved by the University Senate)

III. APPROVALS

Wayne Zovich
Department Curriculum Committee

Douglas A. Kos
College Curriculum Committee

Charles O. Schmidt
Director of Liberal Studies
(where applicable)

Earl Schindler
Department Chairperson

Anne Harris Katz
College Dean*

Provost
(where applicable)

*College Dean must consult with Provost before approving curriculum changes. Approval by College Dean indicates that the proposed change is consistent with long range planning documents, that all requests for resources made as part of the proposal can be met, and that the proposal has the support of the university administration.

IV. TIMETABLE

Date Submitted to LSC _____	Semester/Year to be implemented _____	Date to be published in Catalog _____
to UWUCC _____		

Revised 5/88

[Attach remaining parts of proposal to this form.]

LIBERAL STUDIES COURSE APPROVAL FORM

About this form: Use this form only if you wish to have a course included for Liberal Studies credit. The form is intended to assist you in developing your course to meet the university's Criteria for Liberal Studies, and to arrange your proposal in a standard order for consideration by the LSC and the UWUCC. If you have questions, contact the Liberal Studies Office, 353 Sutton Hall; telephone, 357-5715.

Do not use this form for technical, professional, or pre-professional courses or for remedial courses, none of which is eligible for Liberal Studies. Do not use this form for sections of the synthesis course or for writing-intensive sections; different forms will be available for those.

PART I. BASIC INFORMATION

A. For which category(ies) are you proposing the course? Check all that apply.

LEARNING SKILLS

- First English Composition Course
- Second English Composition Course
- Mathematics

KNOWLEDGE AREAS

- Humanities: History
- Humanities: Philosophy/Religious Studies
- Humanities: Literature
- Fine Arts
- Natural Sciences: Laboratory Course
- Natural Sciences: Non-laboratory Course
- Social Sciences
- Health and Wellness
- Non-Western Cultures
- Liberal Studies Elective

B. Are you requesting regular or provisional approval for this course?

- Regular Provisional (limitations apply, see instructions)

C. During the transition from General Education to Liberal Studies, should this course be listed as an approved substitute for a current General Education course, thus allowing it to meet any remaining General Education needs? yes no

If so, which General Education course(s)? _____

PART II. WHICH LIBERAL STUDIES GOALS WILL YOUR COURSE MEET? Check all that apply and attach an explanation.

All Liberal Studies courses must contribute to at least one of these goals; most will meet more than one. As you check them off, please indicate whether you consider them to be primary or secondary goals of the course. [For example, a history course might assume "historical consciousness" and "acquiring a body of knowledge" as its primary goals, but it might also enhance inquiry skills or literacy or library skills.] Keep in mind that no single course is expected to shoulder all by itself the responsibility for meeting these goals; our work is supported and enhanced by that of our colleagues teaching other courses.

	Primary	Secondary
A. Intellectual Skills and Modes of Thinking:		
1. Inquiry, abstract logical thinking, critical analysis, synthesis, decision making, and other aspects of the critical process.	X	_____
2. Literacy--writing, reading, speaking, listening	_____	X
3. Understanding numerical data	_____	_____
4. Historical consciousness	_____	X
5. Scientific inquiry	X	_____
6. Values (ethical mode of thinking or application of ethical perception)	_____	X
7. Aesthetic mode of thinking	_____	_____
B. Acquiring a Body of Knowledge or Understanding Essential to an Educated Person	X	_____
C. Understanding the Physical Nature of Human Beings	_____	_____
D. Certain Collateral Skills:		
1. Use of the library	_____	_____
2. Use of computing technology	_____	_____

PART III. DOES YOUR COURSE MEET THE GENERAL CRITERIA FOR LIBERAL STUDIES? Please attach answers to these questions.

- A. If this is a multiple-section, multiple-instructor course, there should be a basic equivalency (though not necessarily uniformity) among the sections in such things as objectives, content, assignments, and evaluation. Note: this should not be interpreted to mean that all professors must make the same assignments or teach the same way; departments are encouraged to develop their courses to allow the flexibility which contributes to imaginative, committed teaching and capitalizes on the strengths of individual faculty.

What are the strategies that your department will use to assure that basic equivalency exists? Examples might be the establishment of departmental guidelines, assignment of responsibility to a coordinating committee, exchange and discussion of individual instructor syllabi, periodic meetings among instructors, etc.

- B. Liberal Studies courses must include the perspectives and contributions of ethnic and racial minorities and of women wherever appropriate to the subject matter. **If your attached syllabus does not make explicit that the course meets this criterion, please append an explanation of how it will.**

- C. Liberal Studies courses must require the reading and use by students of at least one, but preferably more, substantial works of fiction or nonfiction (as distinguished from textbooks, anthologies, workbooks, or manuals). **Your attached syllabus must make explicit that the course meets this criterion.**

[The only exception is for courses whose primary purpose is the development of higher level quantitative skills; such courses are encouraged to include such reading, but are not expected to do so at the expense of other course objectives. If you are exercising this exception, please justify here.]

- D. If this is an introductory course intended for a general student audience, it should be designed to reflect the reality that it may well be the only formal college instruction these students will have in that discipline, instead of being designed as the first course in a major sequence. That is, it should introduce the discipline to students rather than introduce students into the discipline. **If this is such an introductory course, how is it different from what is provided for beginning majors?**

E. The Liberal Studies Criteria indicate six ways in which all courses should contribute to students' abilities. To which of the six will your course contribute? Check all that apply and attach an explanation.

- 1. Confront the major ethical issues which pertain to the subject matter; realize that although "suspended judgment" is a necessity of intellectual inquiry, one cannot live forever in suspension; and make ethical choices and take responsibility for them.
- 2. Define and analyze problems, frame questions, evaluate available solutions, and make choices
- 3. Communicate knowledge and exchange ideas by various forms of expression, in most cases writing and speaking.
- 4. Recognize creativity and engage in creative thinking.
- 5. Continue learning even after the completion of their formal education.
- 6. Recognize relationships between what is being studied and current issues, thoughts, institutions, and/or events.

PART IV. DOES YOUR COURSE MEET THE CRITERIA FOR THE CURRICULUM CATEGORY IN WHICH IT IS TO BE LISTED?

Each curriculum category has its own set of specific criteria in addition to those generally applicable. The LSC provides copies of these criteria arranged in a convenient, check-list format which you can mark off appropriately and include with your proposal. The attached syllabus should indicate how your course meets each criterion you check. If it does not do so explicitly, please attach an explanation.

CHECK LIST -- LIBERAL STUDIES ELECTIVES

Knowledge Area Criteria which the course must meet:

- Treat concepts, themes, and events in sufficient depth to enable students to appreciate the complexity, history, and current implications of what is being studied; and not be merely cursory coverages of lists of topics.
- Suggest the major intellectual questions/problems which interest practitioners of a discipline and explore critically the important theories and principles presented by the discipline.
- Allow students to understand and apply the methods of inquiry and vocabulary commonly used in the discipline.
- Encourage students to use and enhance, wherever possible, the composition and mathematics skills built in the Skill Areas of Liberal Studies.

Liberal Studies Elective Criteria which the course must meet:

- Meet the "General Criteria Which Apply to All Liberal Studies Courses."
- Not be a technical, professional, or pre-professional course.

Explanation: Appropriate courses are to be characterized by learning in its broad, liberal sense rather than in the sense of technique or professional proficiency. For instance, assuming it met all the other criteria for Liberal Studies, a course in "Theater History" might be appropriate, while one in "The Craft of Set Construction" probably would not; or, a course in "Modern American Poetry" might be appropriate, while one in "New Techniques for Teaching Writing in the Secondary Schools" probably would not; or, a course on "Mass Media and American Society" might be appropriate, while one in "Television Production Skills" probably would not; or, a course in "Human Anatomy" might be appropriate, while one in "Strategies for Biological Field Work" probably would not; or, a course in "Beginning French" might be appropriate, while one in "Practical Methods for Professional Translators" probably would not.

Course Syllabus

Psychology of Death & Dying - PC 378

Gordon Thornton

Texts: DeSpelder & Strickland. The Last Dance: Encountering Death and Dying (2nd ed.). Palo Alto, CA: Mayfield.
Articles listed in the attached reference sheet.

<u>Topic</u>	<u>DeSpelder</u>	<u>Articles</u>
CONCEPTS OF DYING AND DEATH		
American attitudes toward death	Chapter 1	Aries
Death anxiety		
Cross cultural viewpoint	Chapter 2	Corcos & Krupka
Philosophical & religious viewpoint	Chapter 14	
DISCUSSION: Concept of death		
Development of concept of death	Chapter 3	Nagy
DISCUSSION: Children's death literature		Culig et al.
Children and death	Chapter 8	Zwartjes et al.
TEST		
THE DYING PROCESS		
Reactions to the dying process	Chapter 5	Pattison
DISCUSSION: Should we tell?		Kubler-Ross
Family reaction		
Institutional reactions to the dying	Chapter 4	Sage
Deadly illnesses		Salisbury
Hospice		Saunders
DISCUSSION: Euthanasia		Veatch
Determination of death	Chapter 10	Jackson et al.
TEST		
BEREAVEMENT		
Grief process	Chapter 7	Lindemann
Coping with bereavement		Carey
Funeral rituals	Chapter 6	
DISCUSSION: Grief process		
Death in the life of adults	Chapter 9	
Death and the law	Chapter 11	
TEST		
SOCIAL, PSYCHOLOGICAL ISSUES		
Suicide	Chapter 13	Shneidman
DISCUSSION: Suicide		
Encounters with death	Chapter 12	McLeod
Stress		Maier et al.
Factors in longevity		Ornstein et al.
Death education & new directions	Chapter 15	Leviton
TEST		

The six discussions are worth 10 points each. The grade is based on written answers to the questions and participation in the discussion.

Homework exercises, attendance for class guest speakers, and field trips are 5 points. Class participation is worth up to 40 points. Class participation will involve class exercises, class (not group) discussion, and questions to guests.

REQUIRED READINGS FOR PSYCHOLOGY OF DEATH & DYING (PC 378)

- Aries, P. (1982). The hour of our death (Five variations on four themes, pp 603-614). New York: Vintage Books.
- Corcos, A., & Krupka, L. (1983-84). How death came to mankind: Myths and legends. Omega: Journal of Death and Dying, 14, 187-199.
- Nagy, M. (1948). The child's theories concerning death. Journal of Genetic Psychology, 73, 3-27.
- Culig, R., Thornton, G., & Robertson, D.U. (1986). The effect of the personality of the deceased on the development of concept of death in children. In R.A. Pacholski (Ed.), Re-Searching death: Selected essays in death education and counseling. Lakewood, Ohio: Forum for Death Education and Counseling.
- Zwartjes, G.J., Zwartjes, W.J., & Spilka, B. (1981, Nov-Dec). Students with cancer. Today's Education, pp. 20-25.
- Pattison, E.M. (1977). The experience of dying. In E. Pattison (Ed.), The experience of dying (pp. 43-60). Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.
- Kubler-Ross, E. (1972). On death and dying. Journal of the American Medical Association, 221, 174-179.
- Sage, M.W. (1983, Nov-Dec). A time to die. Home Healthcare Nurse, pp. 39-41.
- Salisbury, D.M. (1986). AIDS: Psychosocial implications. Journal of Psychosocial Nursing. 24, 13-16.
- Saunders, C. (1977). Dying they live: St. Christopher's Hospice. In H. Feifel (Ed.), New meanings of death (pp. 154-179). New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Veatch, R. (1984). Brain death. In E.S. Shneidman (Ed.), Death: Current perspectives (3rd ed.). Palo Alto: Mayfield.
- Jackson, D., & Younger, S. (1980). Patient autonomy and "Death with Dignity": Some clinical caveats. In E.S. Shneidman (Ed.), Death: Current perspectives (2nd ed.). Palo Alto: Mayfield.

- Lindemann, E. (1944). Symptomatology and management of acute grief. American Journal of Psychiatry, 101, 166-181.
- Carey, R.G. (1979-80). Weathering widowhood: Problems and adjustments of the widowed during the first year. Omega: Journal of Death and Dying, 10, 163-174.
- Shneidman, E.S. (1980). Self-destruction: Suicide notes and tragic lives. In E. Shneidman (Ed.), Death: Current Perspectives (2nd ed.) (pp. 467-491). Palo Alto: Mayfield.
- Leviton, D. (1977). Death Education. In H. Feifel (Ed.), New Meanings of death (pp. 254-271). New York: McGraw-Hill.
- McLeod, B. (1984, October). In the wake of disaster. Psychology Today, pp. 54-57. (on reserve in library)
- Maier, S.F., & Laudenslager, M. (1985, August). Stress and health: Exploring the links. Psychology Today, pp. 44-49.
- Ornstein, R. & Sobel, D. (1987, March). The healing brain. Psychology Today. 48-52.

BOOK REPORT

Choose one of the following books to read. As you read the book keep a log of personal reactions to the material and how the material relates to information from the text and lecture. Be critical in your evaluation of the material where appropriate. The reaction log will be reviewed and graded by the instructor.

- Agee, J. (1965). A death in the family. NY: Avon.
- Alvarez, A. C. (1972). The savage god: A study of suicide. NY: Random House.
- Bluebond-Langner, M. (1978). The private worlds of dying children. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Caine, L. (1974). Widow. NY: Bantam.
- de Beauvoir, S. (1972). A very easy death. NY: Warner.
- Gunther, J. (1949). Death be not proud: A memoir. NY: Harper.
- Jury, M. & Jury, D. (1976). Gramps: A man ages and dies. NY: Grossman.
- LeShan, E. (1978). Learning to say goodbye: When a parent dies. NY: Macmillan.

- McMurtry, L. (1976). Teams of endearment. NY: New American Library.
- Mitford, J. (1963). The American way of death. NY: Simon & Schuster.
- Plath, S. (1971). The bell jar. NY: Harper & Row.
- Schiff, H. S. (1977). The bereaved parent. NY: Penguin.
- Tolstoy, L. The death of Ivan Ilych.

GRADE COMPOSITE

	Percent of course grade
Tests (at 60 points for each of the 4 tests) =	48%
Homework assignments (60 points) =	12%
Small group discussions (60 points)	12%
Book reaction paper (40 points)	8%
Classroom participation (40 points)	8%
Participation with guest speakers and field trip (60 points)	12%
Total points = 500	<u>100%</u>

PART II - LIBERAL STUDIES GOALS

A. Intellectual Skills and Modes of Thinking

A. 1. Death and dying involves many disciplines and thus synthesizes information from various sources. Through questions for reaction and discussion students are forced to critically evaluate their ideas and opinions. The complexity of the human reaction to dying, death and bereavement is detailed in the reading. It is hoped that students will formulate a philosophy(ies) that integrates the knowledge base with the student's personal history and individual personality and the social environment.

A. 2. Writing and speaking are required through classroom discussions and reaction papers (see syllabus).

A. 4. Understanding our current attitudes, behaviors, and reactions to death, dying, and grief necessitates some historical perspective (Aries article is one example).

A. 5. The basic assumption is that death, dying, and bereavement can be studied from an empirical base. The information collected from controlled observation and experimentation is used to evaluate various theories and beliefs about these topics. Concepts, statements, and theories must be supported by a data base. Although the area of thanatology is difficult to study, significant progress has been made. Students will be introduced to some of the methodology as well as critical research issues (i.e. intense emotional arousal of subjects asked sensitive questions).

A. 6. Many issues in death and dying involve questions of values. Students will find that personal values and attitudes affect our reactions and coping with death-related topics. People react in an individual manner to dying and grief that is dependent upon personal history, personality, coping style, situational factors, social context and family dynamics. Religious, ethnic, and cultural values need to be studied because they affect death attitudes. The view toward life (i.e. which is more important the quantity or quality of life) and the right of the individual to choose among conflicting views (right to suicide, to know terminal diagnosis, to end medical treatment) must also be evaluated.

B. Acquiring a Body of Knowledge or Understanding Essential to an Educated Person

B. The course on the Psychology of Death and Dying integrates information from a variety of disciplines. Primary sources of information come from the areas of psychology, sociology, medicine, and nursing. However, information from philosophy, religion, bioethics, law, and anthropology are necessary to understand dying, death, and bereavement. A review of the current text (as specified in the course

outline) reflects this breadth. Many misconceptions and untrue assumptions are challenged through discussion and reading material. The knowledge base has grown substantially in the past 15 years. There are at least 3 scholarly journals devoted to thanatological topics: Death Studies, Omega: Journal of Death & Dying, and Suicide and Life Threatening Behavior. As future consumers of various facets of our death care system (i.e. funerals, wills, health care), it is vital that educated citizens have accurate information about the death system.

PART III - GENERAL CRITERIA FOR LIBERAL STUDIES

A. This has been a single instructor course.

B. Although the course syllabus does not explicitly deal with minority and women's issues, these groups are addressed where appropriate. After all, spousal bereavement and care for terminally ill family members are more likely to befall women than men. Longevity factors point out the disadvantages of poverty, crime, and unhealthy living conditions; i.e., factors that affect minority groups. Studying the diversity of religious beliefs and cross-cultural practices and beliefs about the death system should increase students appreciation for groups other than their own.

C. Students will read a work of fiction or nonfiction which illustrates concepts in a particular area of death and dying (see syllabus). In addition, articles by major authorities in the area will also be required reading.

D. This is not an introductory course. A course in General Psychology is required for admission to this course.

E. 1. Besides the knowledge base, this course will provide a review of many of the critical, legal, medical and moral issues involved in death and dying. Although each individual is responsible for his/her decision on these issues, the course will provide structure and information on the issues so that students may better evaluate the alternatives. Major issues will include topics such as: the right to die, appropriateness of medical and psychological intervention, dilemmas regarding global problems of potential mass destruction (nuclear war and environmental damage), and right to informed consent. Obviously, as our society changes and new technological advances are made issues in death and dying will change. Critical consumer issues regarding wills and other legal matters, funeral customs, and medical treatment are part of this course. Through the course content students should be able to adapt their decision making. In general, it is hoped that students will have a more humane and in depth understanding of the human condition.

E. 2. Readings and class lectures will provide students with definitions and analysis of various problems. Students will be introduced to the various solutions to these problems that others have chosen. Students

will be encouraged to make choices for themselves as they evolve their own philosophy about dying and death. As an example, in a discussion on suicide students will consider whether a person has the right to commit suicide. Other illustrations include exposure of children to death education and death rituals (i.e. taking a child to a funeral), decisions about organ donation/transplantation, alternative funeral rituals, when to end treatment, and alternative modes of care for the terminally ill.

E. 3. Communication will be elicited through a small group discussion format that includes writing and speaking. (See attached article, "Assessment of small group discussions in a death and dying course"). Participation in classroom discussions is expected. Homework assignments will involve some writing. Tests are basically multiple choice but do include essays. The critical book report will be written.

E. 6. Institutions such as hospitals, nursing homes, funeral homes, the legal system and governmental system form part of our "death system". The impact of these institutions on the individual greatly affect dying and grief. Religious systems play a major role in our thinking about death and afterlife. Many current issues such as euthanasia, capital punishment, environmental and work safety, implanted embryos, and abortion deal with an interface between institutions and individuals.

PART IV - THE CRITERIA FOR THE CURRICULUM CATEGORY

Knowledge area criteria

Although some topics are given introductory coverage most of the topics are covered in greater depth.

A review of the course syllabus will demonstrate that the major issues and problems in the area of thanatology are covered.

A major goal of death education is to have students use the terminology of the topic and not to use euphemisms. Research methodology and clinical intervention strategies are presented.

As noted in the syllabus speaking and writing skills are incorporated into the course.