

“Death is a mirror in which the entire meaning of life is reflected.” (The Tibetan Book of Living and Dying)

PSYC-208, Section 003 (Contemporary Topics)

Psychology of Death & Dying

by David King, PhD

Tuesdays and Thursdays 2:00–3:20 PM in SWNG-222

This course explores a wide range of psychological and social issues related to **death, dying, and loss**, including death awareness, death anxiety, the development of attitudes towards death, stages of dying, the mental life of the dying person, grief and bereavement, adjustment to loss, the social and cultural contexts of death, religious factors in death and dying, palliative and hospice care, medically assisted dying (physician assisted suicide), trauma, and death work. Dialogue will consider the experiences of the dying, the bereaved, and those who work with them in formal and informal roles. The purpose of this course is to provide a primarily psychosocial perspective on these topics. **Course format:** *This course consists of lectures accompanied by frequent in-class discussions and activities aimed at stimulating critical thinking. Lectures will be delivered in-person as scheduled by the university. Students will NOT have the option of taking this class online and/or asynchronously.*



YOUR INSTRUCTOR David King, MSc, PhD (he/him/his)

Email: dbking11@psych.ubc.ca (please email me directly)

Office: Room 2011, Douglas Kenny (Psychology), 2136 West Mall

Website: www.davidbking.net | **Blog:** thestateofus.net

Virtual Office Hours: Wednesdays 1:30 – 3:00 PM, or by appointment, **via Zoom**. Drop in any time during these hours, or email me in advance to schedule a meeting. **See Canvas for Zoom details.**

In-Person Meetings: **In order to reduce contact, I will not be offering in-person meetings this term except in outstanding circumstances. Please utilize virtual office hours / Zoom meetings whenever possible.**

YOUR TEACHING ASSISTANT Lucas Calderhead **Email:** lucas.calderhead@alumni.ubc.ca

To schedule a meeting (in-person or virtual), please email your teaching assistant directly.

REGARDING EMAIL: Please email us directly (not through Canvas) and include the course code in your subject line (PSYC-208-003). **Please allow at least 24 hours for a reply (48 hours on weekends/holidays)!**

COURSE PREREQUISITES

Education in psychology at the introductory level is recommended but not mandatory. Key psychological terms and concepts will be reviewed and defined in class as needed. Some general understanding of basic statistics and research methods may also be helpful. Most importantly, your maturity and sensitivity are required...

PLEASE NOTE. The topic of death is a difficult one, and a source of unease and discomfort for most people. People deal with death (including the death of loved ones and the thought of their own death) in very different ways. Some people avoid reminders of it altogether, while others may have committed themselves strongly to a specific belief or perspective on the topic. I will approach this course with as much frankness and honesty as I can, acknowledging diverse views whenever possible. This will sometimes necessitate the sharing of content (images, stories, etc.) that may be upsetting to some, as well as perspectives that may feel threatening to one's own views (whether shared by me or other students). **Respect for diverse opinions must be maintained at all times (i.e., it is okay to respectfully disagree).** For those currently in more sensitive positions, it is your responsibility to decide in advance if this is the right time for you to take this course.

Because death is a universally relevant topic, reflecting on your own thoughts and experiences regarding death is inevitable (and encouraged) in this course. We will be discussing such topics as loss and grief, suicidal ideation, death preparation, and the prospect of death. Although these are emotionally salient topics, this course is not intended to serve as an opportunity for personal or group therapy. Students who are currently experiencing significant grief or who have difficulty during the course should consult the list of health and wellness resources near the end of this syllabus. **In light of these considerations and the sensitivities surrounding this topic, your utmost maturity is required in all interactions (either virtual or in person).**

COURSE WEBSITE / CANVAS

This course uses **Canvas** (<http://canvas.ubc.ca>) to make important class **announcements**, post lecture slides/notes, publish grades, and supply other relevant class material to students. A preliminary set of lecture slides/outlines (excluding most images and answers to discussion questions) will be posted online prior to each lecture. Slide outlines are intended as visual aids only; you should take your own notes using the slides as a guide. Please ensure that this course is registered in your *Canvas* account.

ANNOUNCEMENTS: All class announcements will be made through Canvas. Please ensure you are set up to receive notifications by email and/or mobile device. (See **Canvas**—Settings. Note that push notifications are recommended so that you do not miss any important announcements.)

STUDENT RESOURCES: Many valuable resources can be found on the course home page in Canvas, including the most recent version of the syllabus, the exam study guide, sample assignments and grading rubrics (as applicable), additional health and wellness resources, and important links.

COURSE MODULES: Course content will be presented in 12 modules, each corresponding to a different lecture (presented over multiple days/classes) and assigned readings. See the course schedule in the syllabus and the **Modules** tab in Canvas.

LIBRARY ONLINE COURSE RESERVES: This menu tab can be used to access all **Additional Readings**.

DISCUSSIONS: Discussions may be participated in and/or created at your discretion. Any discussions posted in Canvas are voluntary and for your interest only. This is how I will be sharing extra content over the term.

PIAZZA CLASS PAGE: <http://piazza.com/ubc.ca/winterterm12021/psyc2080032021w1>

REQUIRED READING – (1) TEXTBOOK & (2) ADDITIONAL READINGS

1. YOUR 'TEXTBOOK – DYING AND DEATH IN CANADA (3rd Ed., 2016, University of Toronto Press) by Herbert C. Northcott & Donna M. Wilson

There are 2 formats to choose from, depending on your preference and needs...

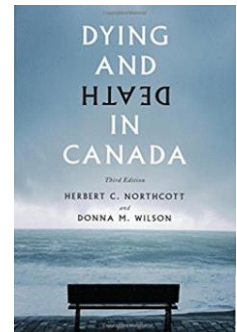
1. Paperback (ISBN 9781442634565) | 2. Electronic (ISBN 9781442634589)

Different e-book options are available through the publisher's website at the following link:

PUBLISHER SITE: <https://utorontopress.com/9781442634565/dying-and-death-in-canada-third-edition/>

OLDER EDITIONS: It is not recommended that you use previous editions of the book.

Please see the course schedule at the end of the syllabus for chapter assignments.



2. ADDITIONAL READINGS (ACADEMIC ARTICLES)

Additional readings are assigned on a weekly basis. They include mainly peer-reviewed articles which intend to further enhance textbook content and explore psychosocial factors specifically in greater detail. All additional readings are available directly through the course website in Canvas. Click on the course link, and then go to **Library Online Course Reserves** to access the readings. Readings are listed in order as follows:

1. Park, Y. C., & Pyszczynski, T. (2019). Reducing defensive responses to thoughts of death: Meditation, mindfulness, and Buddhism.
2. Wong, P. T. P., Reker, G. T., & Gesser, G. (1994). Death Attitude Profile—Revised: A multidimensional measure of attitudes toward death.
3. Copp, G., & Field, D. (2002). Open awareness and dying: The use of denial and acceptance as coping strategies by hospice patients.
4. Bonanno, G. A., et al. (2002). Resilience to loss and chronic grief: A prospective study from preloss to 18-months postloss.
5. Habarth, J., et al. (2017). Continuing bonds and psychosocial functioning in a recently bereaved pet loss sample.
6. Mitima-Verloop, H. B., Mooren, T. T. M., & Boelen, P. A. (2019). Facilitating grief: An exploration of the function of funerals and rituals in relation to grief reactions.
7. Pereira, V., Faísca, L., & de Sá-Saraiva, R. (2012). Immortality of the soul as an intuitive idea: Towards a psychological explanation of the origins of afterlife beliefs.
8. Harris, D. L. (2009). Oppression of the bereaved: A critical analysis of grief in Western society.
9. Bristowe, K., Marshall, S., & Harding, R. (2016). The bereavement experiences of lesbian, gay, bisexual and/or trans people who have lost a partner: A systematic review, thematic synthesis and modelling of the literature.
10. Rieger, D., & Hofer, M. (2017). How movies can ease the fear of death: The survival or death of the protagonists in meaningful movies.
11. Virdun, C., et al. (2017). Dying in the hospital setting: A meta-synthesis identifying the elements of end-of-life care that patients and their families describe as being important.
12. Pronk, R., Willems, D.L. & van de Vathorst, S. (2021). Feeling seen, being heard: Perspectives of patients suffering from mental illness on the possibility of physician-assisted death in the Netherlands.
13. Jackson, B.L. (2017). Bereavement in the pediatric emergency department: Caring for those who care for others.
14. Harrawood, L. K., White, L. J., & Benshoff, J. J. (2008). Death anxiety in a national sample of United States funeral directors and its relationship with death exposure, age, and sex.
15. Lifshin, U., et al. (2018). Mortality salience, religiosity, and indefinite life extension: Evidence of a reciprocal relationship between afterlife beliefs and support for forestalling death.

Please see the course schedule on the last page of the syllabus for the additional reading deadlines/schedule.

IMPORTANT: Additional readings should be read before their respective lectures!

COURSE EVALUATION *You are expected to complete...*

3 End-of-Unit Exams (scheduled on dates indicated in syllabus) — **60% of final grade (20% each)**

See section on *'Examinations'* for additional details and requirements on exams.

3 Thought Papers (2 pages each, 1 submitted per unit) — **40% of final grade (13.33...% each)**

See section on *'Thought Papers'* for additional details and requirements.

3 End-of-Unit Exams (60%) + 3 Thought Papers (40%) = Final Grade

+ up to 3 bonus points for participating in HSP research (optional; see section on *'Extra Credit'*)

EXAMINATIONS

There are **3 equally-weighted, non-cumulative exams in this course, each worth 20% of your final grade. Each exam corresponds to one course unit and will test only material from that unit.** See the course schedule at the end of this syllabus for the dates of Exams 1 and 2, both of which will be held during scheduled class time. Exam 3 will be scheduled by the university (it is up to you to ensure that you are available during this period; final exam dates are announced mid-term). **Each exam will consist of a series of multiple choice and/or written questions (short answer; point form responses are acceptable) that must be completed in the allotted time.** These questions will be based on both assigned readings (including textbook chapters and additional articles) and lecture material from the respective unit. The purpose of the lecture and video files is to explain and expand upon the textbook and additional readings. Although there will be overlap between the lectures and readings, there will also be material that will be covered in lectures that is not specifically discussed in readings. Furthermore, there may be some material from assigned readings that will not be explicitly discussed in lecture. ***More details on exam content will be provided online.***

ON EXAM DAY: Please bring **your own** HB pencil and an eraser to each exam to allow for electronic scoring of the multiple-choice questions (scantron sheets will be used). All exams are closed-book and notes may not be referred to. **All exams will be closely supervised and monitored for cheating.** Invigilators may ask students to move or alter students' seating arrangements with no explanation provided. If you arrive more than 30 minutes late to an exam, you may be refused admittance to the exam and therefore be assigned a grade of "0" on the exam. **Students who arrive to an exam after a classmate has completed the exam and left the exam room will not be permitted to write the exam.** This applies to all examinations, including midterm exams. Given restrictions on room capacity, **you are STRICTLY PROHIBITED from writing an exam in a section of the course in which you are not enrolled (if applicable).**

MISSING AN EXAM: Examinations will be given on published dates only. Exceptions will be made in cases of medical or health-related issues, certain conflicting responsibilities, and other emergency situations. For policies regarding in-term academic concessions, including a list of eligible circumstances, please refer to the relevant UBC calendar entry: <http://www.calendar.ubc.ca/vancouver/index.cfm?tree=3,329,0,0>.

Note that for health-related issues, no medical documentation is required for the first occurrence; however, if you experience ongoing health challenges during the term, you should seek support from your Academic Advising Office. **If you are unable to write an exam due to unforeseen events (illness or otherwise), you must contact me before the exam or within 24 hours following the exam. If you do not contact me within 24 hours of the exam you will be assigned a grade of "0" on the exam.** Accommodations will also be made for religious obligations that conflict with an exam and for athletes with sporting events that are scheduled during an exam.

CONCESSIONS: Depending on the specific circumstances (as determined on a case-by-case basis), students may be offered one of the following accommodations for in-term concessions: (1) a make-up exam scheduled at a later time, or (2) re-weighting of missed marks to other exams and/or course assignments.

MAKE-UP EXAMS: In most cases, if you are unable to write an exam on the scheduled date, you will be expected to complete a make-up exam **within the shortest time possible at the convenience of the TA.**

Depending on the TA's availability, you may be offered only one alternative time to write the exam. The content and/or format of the make-up exam may differ from the original version. Once scheduled, make-up exams should be treated as originally scheduled exams and the same policies regarding exam concessions (as outlined above) must be followed. **In instances in which you are unable to accommodate the TA's schedule, or in cases where a make-up exam is also missed, you may be asked to contact your Academic Advising Office to mediate the situation.** In certain circumstances, including periods in which too many requests have been received, other arrangements may be made.

EXAM GRADES: Exam grades will be posted on the course website as soon as they are available. Please allow 2 weeks for grades to be posted. You may review your completed exams with your TA(s) at either scheduled review sessions or by appointment (to be announced). If you wish to have an exam re-graded, you should email me detailing why you think that your exam was unjustly graded within 2 weeks of the grades being posted and **only after** first reviewing the exam with your TA. Re-grades will not be considered after the 2-week mark, although you are welcome to review your midterm exams at any point during the term. Final examinations are typically reviewed directly with me at a scheduled review session or by appointment after the term is complete. Note that due to minor errors that may occur in grading and/or scoring, exam grades may be adjusted after their original posting. In such corrections, your exam grade may either increase or decrease in order to ensure that it reflects an accurate assessment of the material.

THOUGHT PAPERS

You are required to submit 3 'thought papers' over the course of the term (1 thought paper must be submitted for each unit of the course). **Thought papers are not meant to be summaries of course material. Rather, they are intended to give you the opportunity to develop and express your own thoughts about a particular question posed in lecture.**

Throughout our lecture discussions, we will take time to reflect on a number of critical thinking questions. Some of these questions will be eligible for thought paper topics, as will be clearly indicated on the slides (with the orange icon shown to the right). In each of the 3 units of the course (see course schedule), you may choose any **one** of these questions to write about in a 1 to 2 page thought paper. (It is highly recommended that you come as close to 2 full pages as you can!) Thought papers should not be summaries or reiterations of course content or class discussion, but should instead include new thoughts or insights following your own reflection and contemplation on the matter.



Although thought papers should be academic in tone, they may include personal or anecdotal references where appropriate and within reason. Alternatively, you may also support your thoughts or insights by referencing other sources. The goal is to express your critical thinking and reasoning skills on paper. Additional direction will be provided before your first thought paper is due. A sample thought paper will also be provided in Canvas, **though it should not be used as a strict template or 'gold standard.'**

THOUGHT PAPER REQUIREMENTS: Thought papers must be typed, double-spaced (with 1-inch margins), in 12-point Times New Roman or similar font, and between 1 and 2 pages in length (but again, you should aim to come as close to 2 full pages as possible without exceeding the 2nd page). First-person perspective should be used only when referring to personal experiences, and direct quoting should be avoided in papers of this length unless absolutely necessary (i.e., when paraphrasing would change the meaning of the original statement). Thought papers should adhere to basic **APA formatting** guidelines as outlined in the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*, 7th Edition (APA, 2019), with the exception of an Abstract. The UBC Library has information on APA citations here: <https://guides.library.ubc.ca/apacitationstyle>, or this link may help: https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/apa_style/apa_style_introduction.html. In the event that you refer to another source in a thought paper, you should then attach a standard APA page of references. Given the page number restrictions, you should not include more than 3 references per paper. **You must include the relevant question as stated in lecture at the top of your thought paper along with your name and student ID number. Please keep it as simple as possible; do NOT use more space than you need to or include extra spacing!** This is an example of how the top of each thought paper should appear:

1

Question: What are the potential practical limitations of the Kubler-Ross stage model of dying?
John Smith 12341234

Although Kubler-Ross' proposed stages of dying dramatically changed our understanding of typical responses to impending death, there are some practical limitations. In a clinical setting, one concern revolves

WRITING SUPPORT: UBC students may obtain assistance with writing through the UBC Centre for Writing and Scholarly Communication (<http://learningcommons.ubc.ca/improve-your-writing>). The UBC Library (<http://www.library.ubc.ca>) also provides online information to assist students in research and writing.

THOUGHT PAPER SUBMISSION: Thought papers must be submitted for each unit no later than 11:59 PM on the deadlines indicated (see the course schedule at the end of this syllabus). **Electronic copies must be uploaded through Canvas (see Assignments) in PDF file format.** Only ONE thought paper can be submitted per unit. If you do not submit a thought paper by the unit's deadline, you will receive a grade of '0' for that unit. In cases of medical emergencies and other circumstances, concessions may be offered (see UBC's policy on inter-term concessions), but you must contact me within 24 hours of the deadline. If your concession is approved, a late submission may be accepted or your grade redistributed.

THOUGHT PAPER GRADING: Thought papers will be graded primarily on critical thinking and insightfulness, originality of thought, and organization and clarity. Grammar, spelling, and overall style and structure of each exercise should be at high enough levels so as to not interfere with the communication of your ideas or clarity of your thoughts. Each thought paper will be assigned a point grade out of 100 to reflect a percentage score. This grade is intended to be a holistic representation of your performance on the assignment. (A grading rubric will be provided online and used for the grading of all thought papers.) Grades and feedback will be posted in Canvas. Please allow 2 weeks for grades to be posted following the submission deadline. Thought papers will account for 40% of your final grade in the course (i.e., 13.33... % each).

EXTRA CREDIT (HSP)

You can gain research experience by serving as a participant in one of the many different psychological studies that are being conducted by the department. For each hour of experimental participation you can earn one credit towards your final grade. You can sign up for studies by visiting <https://ubc-psych.sona-systems.com/>. If you prefer, you can earn these same extra credits by completing a library-writing project, in which you read and summarize a peer-reviewed research article. You can find out more about how you can earn extra credits at <https://psych.ubc.ca/hsp>. There you will find a detailed guide about how to participate in the HSP, how-to videos, and a list of frequently asked questions. **You should register in the HSP system AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.**

DEPARTMENTAL POLICY ON GRADE DISTRIBUTION

In order to reduce grade inflation and maintain equity across multiple course sections, all psychology classes are required to comply with departmental norms regarding grade distributions. However, in the spirit of flexibility and compassion in light of COVID-19 and the associated return to in-person teaching, those departmental norms have been adjusted upwards by 5% for 2021W. According to these adjusted norms, the average grade in 200-level psychology classes will be 72 for an exceptionally strong class, 70 for an average class, and 68 for a weak class, with a standard deviation of 14. Scaling may be used in order to comply with these norms; grades may be scaled up or down as necessary by an instructor or the department. **Grades are not official until they appear on a student's academic record.**

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY, CHEATING, & ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT

The academic community is one that is founded on the exchange of ideas, information, and intellectual discourse. This requires that all individuals act with honesty and integrity at all times. **As you are now a part of the academic community, you are expected to act honestly and ethically in all of your academic activities (just like the rest of us).** Cheating, plagiarism, and other forms of academic misconduct are very serious concerns of the University, and the Department of Psychology has taken steps to alleviate them, including the use of software and online platforms (such as TurnItIn) to detect cheating and plagiarism. In cases of suspected academic misconduct, the parties involved will be pursued to the fullest extent dictated by the guidelines of the University. Strong evidence of cheating or plagiarism may result in a zero credit for the work in question. According to the University Act (section 61), the President of UBC has the right to impose harsher penalties including (but not limited to) a failing grade for the course, suspension from the University, cancellation of scholarships, or a notation added to a student's transcript. If you have any questions as to whether or not what you are doing is a case of academic misconduct, please consult UBC's policies on **Academic Honesty and Standards** as well as **Academic Misconduct** here: <http://www.calendar.ubc.ca/vancouver> (click on Campus-Wide Policies and Regulations). *What does academic integrity look like in this course? Here are some tips:*

Do your own work! All graded work in this course is to be original work done independently by you! It is unacceptable to: buy/sell/share exam questions or answers on any platform; misrepresent your identity; use someone else to complete an assignment or exam; help someone else cheat; complete someone else's work.

Avoid unintentional plagiarism. The ideas of others should always be acknowledged! Visit this guide to preventing plagiarism in your writing: <http://learningcommons.ubc.ca/resource-guides/avoiding-plagiarism/>

DO NOT share course materials. All course materials, including PowerPoint files, lecture recordings, uploaded videos, exam questions, discussions, and announcements are the **copyrighted intellectual property of David King**. It is unacceptable to share any of these materials outside of this course (e.g., CourseHero).

IN-CLASS PARTICIPATION

I strongly encourage and appreciate student participation. Participation may be in the form of questions or comments posed during class amongst your classmates or outside of class in discussion with me. I will make every effort to create a classroom environment in which students feel comfortable to discuss their ideas.

ATTENDANCE & MISSING CLASS

Although attendance is not recorded, **you are responsible for all material covered during class**. Should you miss class for any reason, it is your responsibility to find a classmate who is willing to share their notes with you (and you may want to establish this early on in order to better prepare). If your absence is legitimate, then I will be happy to answer questions about the missed material once you have consulted with a fellow student. In extenuating circumstances, it may be possible to receive access to previous recordings of lectures, but this will be in select instances only. Please keep in mind that any recordings may not be updated for the current term. **It is expected that you treat this course as a normal, in-person, lecture-based course.**

CLASS ETIQUETTE

In consideration of your fellow students, **PLEASE TURN YOUR PHONE OFF DURING CLASS** and **keep noise to a minimum!** The use of laptops in class is an effective means to take notes and record comments related to course content. However, some students use laptops in class to surf the internet, engage in e-mail correspondence, and/or work on material associated with other courses. These activities can be very distracting to those who sit in adjacent seats and can interfere with their efforts to focus on course content. For this reason, all students who intend to use laptops in class for activities unrelated to the course are asked to sit in rows at the rear of the classroom. Please also make an effort to type quietly, as background sounds can be very distracting to others. If you arrive at class late or need to leave early, do so with minimal disruption. **OPEN AND CLOSE DOORS QUIETLY** and **DO NOT ALLOW DESKTOPS TO SLAM DOWN LOUDLY (if applicable)!**

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, you are also required to wear a mask at all times during class (see end of syllabus and COVID-19 policies). As a result, you must also refrain from eating food in class. You are welcome to drink water/tea/coffee/etc., but you must keep your mask on between taking sips from your beverage.

RESPECT & DECENCY

I will only ever tolerate an inclusive, respectful, and safe learning environment (which includes all online discussions and interactions). **The opinions and perspectives of all individuals are valued and respected, no matter their age, sex, ability, ethnicity, culture, religion, sexual orientation, or gender identity.** To this end, and in support of UBC's Positive Space campaign, I further aim to foster a learning atmosphere that is receptive to and welcoming of LGBTQ+ people and issues (see <http://positivespace.ubc.ca>). All individuals in the classroom should feel safe to express their thoughts and opinions without judgment, ridicule, or discrimination. As such, thoughts and opinions should only ever be shared in a **respectful** and **polite** manner. **Yes, Intellectual discourse and debate CAN occur politely and respectfully!** In regards to more sensitive issues, it is advisable that you "think before you speak." If a statement or behaviour might offend someone or make an individual feel alienated or threatened, it should be reworded or not shared at all. Educated and respectful opinions, on the other hand, are always welcome. Students should familiarize themselves with UBC's policy on maintaining a Respectful Environment on campus and in the classroom: <http://www.hr.ubc.ca/respectful-environment>



STILL UNSURE OF WHAT IT MEANS TO BE RESPECTFUL? Here are some basic tips on how to communicate respectfully: https://www.wikihow.com/Be-Respectful#Communicating_Respectfully_sub. **And remember, treat your Instructor and TA(s) with the same respect! That includes being patient for e-mail replies.**

SUPPORTING STUDENT SUCCESS

UBC provides resources to support student learning and to maintain healthy lifestyles but recognizes that sometimes crises arise and so there are additional resources to access, including those for survivors of sexual violence. UBC values respect for the person and ideas of all members of the academic community. Harassment and discrimination are not tolerated nor is suppression of academic freedom. UBC provides appropriate accommodation for students with disabilities and for religious and cultural observances. UBC values academic honesty and students are expected to acknowledge the ideas generated by others and to uphold the highest academic standards in all of their actions. Details of the policies and how to access support are available here: <https://senate.ubc.ca/policiesresources-support-student-success>. Further details follow...

ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATION

The University accommodates students with disabilities who have registered with the Centre for Accessibility (<http://students.ubc.ca/about/access>). Please let me know in advance, preferably within the first 2 weeks of class, if you require any accommodation on these grounds.

ACADEMIC CONCESSION

During your time in this course, if you encounter medical, emotional, or personal problems that affect your attendance or performance, please notify me. You may be able to obtain academic concession from the Dean of your Faculty. For further information on academic concession, please consult Policies and Regulations in the UBC Calendar (<http://www.calendar.ubc.ca/vancouver/index.cfm>).

LEARNING RESOURCES

Learning Commons (<http://learningcommons.ubc.ca>) is an online resource designed to provide UBC students with learning and study support. It is an interactive website that provides access to information on exam preparation, tutoring, on-campus learning workshops, study groups, and technical tools. The University of Northern British Columbia (UNBC) also has a number of useful learning resources available for students online. They can be found at: <http://www.unbc.ca/lsc/index.html>.

HEALTH & WELLNESS RESOURCES

This is a psychology course and we will necessarily be discussing a number of factors in psychological health and well-being, including specific psychological disorders. This may lead you to reflect on your own mental health and in some cases, even have concerns about your own well-being. This is somewhat normal (and also happens to students in medical school), and you should not panic! Although self-reflection will be encouraged, it is recommended that you avoid being too self-analytical and/or self-diagnosing.

Should you find yourself in need of additional support during the term, there are a number of resources available to you. **Student health services** can be found here: <https://students.ubc.ca/health/student-health-service>; and **counselling services** can be found here: <https://students.ubc.ca/health/counselling-services>. **The Wellness Centre at UBC** also allows you to connect with other UBC students on matters of mental health and wellness: students.ubc.ca/health/wellness-centre.

If you find yourself in distress or are worried about someone in distress who may hurt themselves, you should call 1-800-SUICIDE 24 hours a day to connect to a BC crisis line, without a wait.

Additional information on health and wellness resources can be found on the main page of the course website.

PSYC-208 (003). PSYCH OF DYING. Schedule of Course Lectures, Readings, & Exams

	<u>Start Date:</u>	<u>Module / Lecture # and Topics:</u>	<u>Readings:*</u>
UNIT 1	<i>UNIT 1 →</i>	Psychological, Social, & Existential Factors in Death & Dying	
	Sept. 9	1. INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY OF DEATH & DYING <i>Syllabus Review; Introduction to Death & Dying; Stats and Facts</i>	Ch.2
	Sept. 14	2. THE AWARENESS & FEAR OF DEATH <i>The Concept of Death; Development of Death Awareness; Death Anxiety & TMT</i>	Ch.5 / A.1
	Sept. 16	3. FROM DEATH DENIAL TO DEATH ACCEPTANCE <i>Stages of Dying; Psychology of a Dying Person; Finding Meaning; NDEs; Suicidal Ideation</i>	A.2,3
	Sept. 23	<i>In-Class Seminar on Academic Writing – in preparation for your first written assignment</i>	
	Sept. 28	4. BEREAVEMENT & THE GRIEVING PROCESS <i>The Perspective of the Survivor; Stages of Grief; Psychosocial Factors in Grief</i>	Ch.6 / A.4,5
	Sept. 30	<i>No class this day due to statutory holiday. Lecture 4 will continue on Oct. 5 and Oct. 7.</i>	
	Oct. 10	Unit 1 Thought Paper Due – to be uploaded to Canvas by 11:59 PM!	
	Oct. 12	UNIT 1 EXAM – to be held during regular class time.	
	UNIT 2	<i>UNIT 2 →</i>	The Social & Cultural Contexts of Death & Dying
Oct. 14		5. THE SOCIAL CONTEXT OF DEATH & DYING <i>Social Institutions; Legalities & Formalities; The Funeral Industry; Mass Media</i>	Ch.3 / A.6
Oct. 19		6. CROSS-CULTURAL PERSPECTIVES ON DYING, DEATH, & GRIEF <i>Beliefs about Life After Death; Cultural & Religious Factors; Historical Trauma & Grief</i>	Ch.1,4 / A.7
Oct. 28		7. SOCIOCULTURAL ISSUES IN DEATH & LOSS <i>Death & Grief in Western Society; Disenfranchisement; Shame & Stigma</i>	Ch.4 / A.8,9
Nov. 4		8. DEATH IN POPULAR CULTURE <i>Psychology of Halloween; Our Immortality Stories; Death in TV, Film, & Advertising</i>	A.10
Nov. 7		Unit 2 Thought Paper Due – to be uploaded to Canvas by 11:59 PM!	
Nov. 9		UNIT 2 EXAM – to be held during regular class time.	
UNIT 3	<i>UNIT 3 →</i>	End-of-Life Care, Death Work, & The Future of Death & Dying	
	Nov. 11	<i>No class this day due to statutory holiday / Midterm break from Nov. 10 to Nov. 12.</i>	
	Nov. 16	9. CARING FOR THE DYING <i>The Health Care Context; Factors in End-of-Life Care; Deathbed Phenomena</i>	Ch.7 / A.11
	Nov. 18	10. A CLOSER LOOK AT MEDICALLY ASSISTED DYING <i>Euthanasia & Assisted Suicide; Medically Assisted Dying in Canada; The Right to Die</i>	A.12
	Nov. 25	11. THE IMPACT OF END-OF-LIFE CARE & DEATH WORK <i>Working with Death; Health Care Workers, First Responders, & Death Care Workers</i>	Ch.8 / A.13,14
	Dec. 7	12. THE FUTURE OF DEATH & DYING <i>The Implications of Life Extension; Final Thoughts & Course Wrap-Up</i>	A.15
	Dec. 12	Unit 3 Thought Paper Due – to be uploaded to Canvas by 11:59 PM!	
	Dec. 11–22	UNIT 3 EXAM – to be scheduled by the university. (Keep your schedule open!)	

*READINGS: "Ch." refers to a chapter from the book. "A." refers to an additional reading/article (see p. 3).

COVID-19 Safety Procedures/Expectations for this Class

IN THE CLASSROOM...

Maintaining distance and reducing contact: I have established the following guidelines and policies for THIS CLASS in order to help maintain distance and minimize contact between people:

- 1) **Whenever possible, please leave an empty seat or seats between you and other students.**
- 2) Try to sit in the same seat or seating area each class; and if applicable, **please do not sit in a seat or area that is within 2 metres of the front of the room** (i.e., within 2 metres of the instructor's "space").
- 3) **Please do NOT ask questions at the front of the room, either before or after class.** Please save all questions for email/Canvas/Piazza/virtual office hours. This will also help to minimize disruptions between classes.

Masks in the classroom: **You are required to wear a non-medical mask during our class meetings, for your own protection and for the safety and comfort of everyone else in the class.** For our in-person meetings in this class, it is important that all of us feel as comfortable as possible engaging in class activities while sharing an indoor space. Non-medical masks that cover our noses and mouths are a primary tool for combating the spread of Covid-19. Further, according to the provincial mandate, masks are required in all indoor public spaces including lobbies, hallways, stairwells, elevators, classrooms and labs. There may be students who have medical accommodations for not wearing a mask. Please maintain a respectful environment at all times!

Students who wish to request an exemption to the indoor mask mandate must do so based on one of the grounds for exemption detailed in the PHO Order on Face Coverings (COVID-19). Such requests must be made through the Center for Accessibility (Vancouver campus). After review, students that are approved for this accommodation will be provided with a letter of accommodation to share with faculty members teaching courses in which they are registered. In the intervening time, these students are welcome in the class.

Note the following from the BC Ministry of Health: **"Instructors and other presenters do not need to wear a mask when behind a barrier or two metres away from students while teaching in indoor public spaces."**

Food and drink in the classroom: Due to the mask mandate, **please do not eat food during class** (unless needed for medical reasons). You may drink water/tea/coffee/etc., but you must keep your mask on between taking sips from your beverage.

When asking questions: When asking questions (while wearing a mask), **please ask only one question at a time.** This will make it easier for me to repeat your question before answering it. **Please also speak clearly and loudly (a bit louder than normal) to ensure that your voice carries through your mask.**

ILLNESSES AND ABSENCES – Please prioritize your health at all times!

If you are sick: **If you are sick, it is important that you stay home.** Complete a self-assessment for Covid-19 symptoms here: <https://bc.thrive.health/covid19/en>. **If I am sick:** I will also stay home. In such an event, live lectures will be supplemented with previously recorded lectures and/or live Zoom discussions.

If you miss class because of illness: **In order to accommodate all unforeseen circumstances and allow you to prioritize your health (and the health of your classmates) at all times, all live lectures in this course will be recorded and made available online.** I will update you with more information on lecture recordings on Canvas. You are also welcome to email me or attend virtual office hours if you have questions regarding missed classes.

If you are feeling ill and cannot attend a midterm or final exam: **If you are feeling ill at the time of an exam, you should not attend the exam.** You must email me right away and we will determine an alternative arrangement or accommodation for the exam. (See course policy on missing an exam.)

FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS ARRIVING LATE IN THE TERM: Live lectures will be recorded and made available online. Exams will be managed on a case-by-case basis if unable to attend in person.

CONTINGENCY PLAN A (In the event of classroom challenges.)

In the event that we experience significant disruptions to class due to the current COVID-19 guidelines and procedures (e.g., frequent class interruptions, significant challenges with students arriving to class on time, significant difficulties engaging in class discussions with masks on), I may consider shifting the delivery of this course to a hybrid format in which we meet on campus one day a week and on Zoom the second day.

I will be very transparent with you about any concerns I have before altering the delivery of this course. Although it is unlikely that I will do this, I am also very unsure of what to expect on campus this term.

CONTINGENCY PLAN B (In the event of another lockdown.)

In the event of another lockdown due to COVID-19 and the return to online course delivery, the following adjustments will be made in this course. These changes apply to THIS COURSE ONLY. Course instructors should be consulted for plans as they pertain to other classes.

LECTURE DELIVERY: All lectures will be presented as originally planned, but rather than being delivered live/in-person, they will be delivered in the form of video recordings of PowerPoint presentations with instructor voice-over. These lecture videos will mimic very closely the lectures as they would have been delivered live and in class. They will be made available in Canvas right away and will be available to watch at your leisure (i.e., on your schedule). There will be no lectures delivered live over Zoom or other platforms.

DISCUSSIONS: In order to supplement the live, in-person discussion and interaction that we will no longer be able to have in class, I will schedule one weekly live discussion on Zoom to be held during scheduled class time on Thursdays. The goal of these discussions will be to address questions posed in lecture, have open discussion about the respective week's lecture content, and resolve content-related questions. These will be fairly informal and semi-structured. There will be no such live discussions on Tuesdays; you should use Tuesdays to watch the pre-recorded lectures for that week. Attendance will NOT be taken during these live discussions and live discussions will be recorded so that they are available to watch at a later time. Discussions on Canvas will also be used in order to stimulate discussion and engagement about course content. These will also be completely optional and may be participated in as much or as little as you prefer. Content from discussions (live or otherwise) will NOT be tested.

ATTENDANCE: Just as attendance is not taken during our in-person lectures, attendance will not be taken in any online meetings or discussions in the event that we move online.

INSTRUCTOR OFFICE HOURS: Virtual office hours will continue to be offered over Zoom as originally scheduled. Virtual meetings outside of these scheduled office hours will be available upon request.

EXAMINATIONS: Any outstanding exams will be moved to an online-format and delivered through Canvas. They will consist of 40 multiple choice questions each from the respective unit, to be completed in 70 minutes. Online exams will be open-book and open-note, but they will be at an advanced level of difficulty that requires knowledge and understanding of the course content (i.e., you will NOT do well if you do not study!). Online exams will be made available for the entire 24-hour period on the originally scheduled date of the exam and must be completed by 11:59 PM on that day.

In the event that we must return to completely online course delivery, it will be my goal to deviate from our original plans (and course policies) as little as possible! Furthermore, students will be readily accommodated in the event of any related challenges or extenuating circumstances. Remember, we are here for you! In any situation, please do not panic. We have your best interest in mind!