

# Psychology of Death and Dying



UBC Vancouver Campus, Fall Term (Sept. – Dec., 2023)

UBC is located on the traditional, ancestral, and unceded territory of the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam) people.

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. This section of the course will be delivered **in-person** and **CANNOT be completed remotely or online.**

**Course Prerequisites:** It is **strongly** recommended that you have taken an intro psychology course and/or have some knowledge of research methods!

## YOUR INSTRUCTOR



**David King, MSc, PhD** (he/him/his)  
Please call me either David or Dr. King!

**Email:** [dbking11@psych.ubc.ca](mailto:dbking11@psych.ubc.ca)  
Please email me directly, not via Canvas!

**Office:** 2136 West Mall, Room 2406

**Dr. King's Office Hours on Zoom:** Wednesdays 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM (Sept. 13 – Dec. 13), or by appointment. *Drop in any time during these hours, or email me to schedule a meeting. See Appendix A or Canvas for Zoom details.*

**NOTE:** Office hour drop-ins/meetings may have to be limited to 10 to 15 minutes per student when others are waiting. *Please be respectful of everyone's time! I am NOT available on Fridays, Saturdays, Sundays, or holidays, or after 5 PM (PST) on any day.*

**For my website & blog, visit [www.davidbking.net](http://www.davidbking.net). Or follow me on Threads ([@dr\\_davidking](https://www.threads.net/@dr_davidking)) for random musings, more psych stuff, and cute dog pics.**

---

## YOUR TEACHING ASSISTANT

**Astin Tsai** (he/him/his) **Email:** [astin17@student.ubc.ca](mailto:astin17@student.ubc.ca)

*To schedule a meeting with your TA, please email them directly. Remember to treat your TA with respect during all interactions and communications!*

**NOTE:** Your TA should be your first point of contact for grading-related inquiries.

---

## EMAIL ETIQUETTE *When emailing us for any reason...*

### PLEASE DO:

- Include a subject line, starting with the course code AND section number.
- Include prev. relevant correspondence.
- Include your FULL name & student #.
- Be specific in your request (e.g., number of days needed for an extension).
- Give us at least 48 hours to respond!

### PLEASE DON'T:

- Email us through Canvas.
- Email us multiple times about the same issue in a 48-hour period.
- Leave out important information.
- Provide unnecessary details about an illness (e.g., bodily fluids).
- Assume we can read your mind!

## **COURSE NOTICE** (*Please read!*)

**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 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 often require 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 provided.

**In light of these considerations and the sensitivities surrounding this topic, your upmost maturity is required during all class interactions (including both online and in-person).**

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

## **COURSE FORMAT**

This course will be structured around readings and lecture content, which is intended to summarize and expand upon textbook readings. All lectures will be delivered live/in-person and will NOT be recorded. A preliminary set of lecture slides/outlines (excluding most images and answers to discussion questions) will be posted online prior to each lecture. Lecture outlines are intended to be visual aids only; you should take your own notes during class!

**Course Website:** This course uses **Canvas** (<http://canvas.ubc.ca>) to organize course content and make important announcements. Please ensure that this course appears in your Canvas account and that you are set up to receive notifications. **You are responsible for reading all class announcements.**

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

**Canvas Discussions & Links:** External links and discussions recommended in Canvas are for your interest only and are NOT testable. A **general discussion board** has also been posted in Canvas. This should be used for general (non-urgent) questions and discussions only.

---

**COURSE EVALUATION** *You are required to complete 3 exams and have the option of submitting a final paper.*

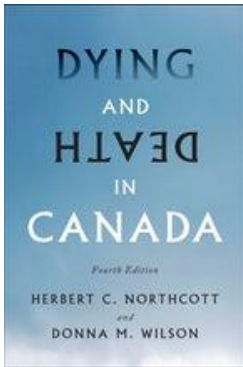
**Evaluation Route 1:** If you do not submit the optional paper, each exam will comprise 1/3 (33.33%) of your final grade.

**Evaluation Route 2:** If you submit the optional paper AND it improves your grade, each component (3 exams and 1 paper) will comprise 1/4 (25%) of your final grade. Otherwise, you will be evaluated by Route 1.\*

*\*You do NOT need to notify me ahead of time of your choice. If you hand in a paper and it improves your grade, you will be evaluated according to Evaluation Route 2. If not, you will be evaluated by Evaluation Route 1.*

*+ up to 3 points from HSP (optional; see section on 'Extra Credit')*

## REQUIRED READING



### 1. YOUR 'TEXTBOOK – DYING AND DEATH IN CANADA (Fourth Edition, 2021, University of Toronto Press)

by Herbert C. Northcott & Donna M. Wilson

*There are 3 formats to choose from, depending on your preference...*

1. Paperback (9781487509279) | 2. E-Book (9781487509293) | 3. E-Book PDF (9781487509286)

*Different e-book options are available through the publisher's website...*

**Publisher's Website:** <https://utorontopress.com/9781487509279/dying-and-death-in-canada-fourth-edition/>

**Older Editions:** It is **not** recommended that you use old editions of the book.

*See the course schedule at the end of the syllabus for chapter assignments.*

**Recommended Supplementary Reading:** If you're looking for a good book to read during the term, I highly recommend ***Staring at the Sun: Overcoming the Terror of Death*** by psychiatrist Irvin D. Yalom (2009)

### 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. Rieger, D., & Hofer, M. (2017). How movies can ease the fear of death: The survival or death of the protagonists in meaningful movies.
9. Harris, D. L. (2009). Oppression of the bereaved: A critical analysis of grief in Western society.
10. 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.
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., & Benschoff, 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 at the end of this syllabus for the additional reading deadlines/schedule. **IMPORTANT: Additional readings should be read before their respective lectures!***

## EXAMINATIONS

There are 3 equally-weighted, non-cumulative exams in this course, each worth one third 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, 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 multiple choice and written questions (short answer; point form responses are acceptable).** These questions will be based on both assigned readings and lecture material from the respective unit. The purpose of the lectures 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 covered in readings. Furthermore, there may be material from assigned readings that will not be discussed in lecture. **More details on exam content can be found in the study guide.**

***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 provided). 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 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 under any circumstances.** 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.**

***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 by the instructor 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 another exam or course assignment.

***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 an in-person make-up 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 must email me requesting a re-grade 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, though you are welcome to review your midterm exams at any point.** 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.

## OPTIONAL WRITTEN ASSIGNMENT

You have the **option** of submitting a final written assignment in this course (4 to 5 pages in length, double-spaced, NOT including the title page and references). **The goal of the written assignment is to examine and review a particular question or area of research within the psychological study of death and dying** and make insightful conclusions regarding this topic or line of inquiry. The goal is NOT to simply summarize individual papers or studies, but instead to write **a synthesized review of the current state of the scientific literature on your topic of choice**. Your topic can be as broad or narrow as you like, but narrower topics often allow for more detailed examination of a topic of research. Your topic should also be one that has been the subject of **recent** research, so that you can make conclusions about an area of study that is active and/or relevant to psychology today.

**Paper topics must be relevant to psychology in some way, though you are welcome to examine research on death or dying in a neighbouring discipline (e.g., biology, sociology, anthropology) and consider its implications for psychology or mental health.** Please confirm your topic with me or a TA if you are unsure of its suitability. As a starting point, it may be wise to consider course content that you found especially interesting or intriguing and want to explore further. Importantly, however, **you must ensure that the research reviewed in your paper has NOT already been reviewed in depth in a reading assignment or lecture from this class.**

**Paper Organization:** *The paper should be organized as follows:*

Start with an overview of the topic, including background information and definitions of key terms. At the end, identify the goals or purpose of your paper in a thesis statement. **[Approx. 1/2 to 3/4 page for introduction.]**

In the body of the paper, review the findings from **at least 5 empirical, peer-reviewed articles**. Rather than simply listing summaries of studies (such that each paragraph is dedicated to a different study), you should aim to organize the body of your paper around key questions/issues/points. Only include brief discussions of study methods, participants, and analyses, unless these details are necessary in order to make a particular point. Focus more on study findings and their interpretation, as well as their implications. You should ensure that your review is **thoughtful, in-depth, and integrated** such that you are demonstrating critical thinking, drawing connections, and relating ideas throughout. **[Approx. 3 pages for body of paper.]**

Your conclusions on the topic should be based on the literature you reviewed and discussed, revisiting and summarizing key findings, stating conclusions (specific and general), and noting key implications (for research, clinical practice, and/or society), key limitations in the research reviewed or in the area of study broadly, areas for improvement, and suggestions for future research. In cases where topics involve controversy or debate, you should also make a firm conclusion regarding which side is the strongest based on the research you reviewed. Though you are welcome to touch on some of these questions throughout the body of your paper, the discussion section should demonstrate critical thinking about the research as a whole, in order to offer some general conclusions and insights. These conclusions and insights should be clearly relevant to the thesis statement in your introduction. **[Approx. 1–1.5 pages for discussion.]**

*More information about the optional paper, including topic ideas and tips for writing, will be provided online. A sample paper will also be made available on the course website, but should not be used as a strict template.*

**Paper Requirements:** The written assignment must be typed, **double-spaced**, in **12-point Times New Roman or similar font**, and **between 4 and 5 pages in length (NOT including the title page and reference section)**, with **1-inch margins**. Your paper must include a **title page** and a **reference section**, but **not an abstract**. Headings are optional (but often helpful). Extra spacing should not be included between paragraphs or around headings. **First-person perspective and frequent direct quoting should be avoided**. You should ensure that your paper is written in a formal/academic tone at all times. Paper formatting must adhere to APA guidelines as outlined in the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, 7th Edition (2019): <https://guides.library.ubc.ca/apacitationstyle>; or see this link: [https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research\\_and\\_citation/apa\\_style/apa\\_style\\_introduction.html](https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/apa_style/apa_style_introduction.html)

**You must reference a minimum of 5 primary source scholarly articles from peer-reviewed academic journals.** These articles must be relevant to the area/field of interest. Given that your goal is to address a current or recent topic of research, **most** of the research you review should be relatively recent (i.e., published in 2010 or later). In many cases, reviewing more than 5 studies/articles will be beneficial, but do not try to review too much either! **Primary source** articles are those that present original findings for the first time (and do not include review articles or meta-analyses, although these may be used in addition to your 5 primary sources).

**Paper Grading:** Your paper should be at an academic level and reflect a high degree of critical thinking. The paper will be graded for *content*—that is, how effectively you analyzed, summarized, and synthesized the research findings reviewed. For example, did you provide a sufficient and accurate review of key concepts or theories related to your topic? Did you accurately interpret the research findings reviewed? Did you exhibit thoughtful, independent thinking in your review? Did you connect similar ideas/findings in the research? Did you note the strengths and weaknesses of the studies reviewed? Did you identify common problems or limitations in the research, make recommendations for future research, and come to some general conclusions about the topic or area of study?

The paper will also be graded for *style, mechanics, and formatting*—that is, how well your paper was written. For example, did your paper contain a clear statement of its purpose or objectives (i.e., thesis statement)? Was your writing clear, concise, and easily understood, with appropriate word choice and university-level academic tone? Was your paper well organized, characterized by effective transitions between ideas and a logical flow? Were there errors in punctuation, grammar, or spelling? Did your paper conform to the formatting requirements? Were all sources of information referenced according to APA guidelines? *A detailed grading rubric/feedback sheet that will be used for grading is available on the course website.*

**Paper Submission: (1) Papers must be uploaded directly to Canvas by 11:59 PM on the due date indicated (see course schedule).** In Canvas, go to **Assignments** and click on “Optional Paper” to upload your paper. Papers should be uploaded in PDF format. **(2) Papers must ALSO be uploaded to “TurnItIn” by 11:59 PM on the day of submission.** If you do not upload your paper to BOTH places by the deadline, you will receive a grade of ‘0’ for the assignment. In cases of medical emergencies or unforeseen circumstances, concessions may be offered (see UBC’s policy on in-term concessions), but you must contact me within 24 hours of the deadline. If your concession is approved, a late submission may be accepted.

**TURNITIN:** TurnItIn is a service designed to detect and deter plagiarism. Through this service, students’ papers are scanned and compared to over 5 billion pages of content located on the Internet or in TurnItIn’s own proprietary databases. The results of comparisons are compiled into customized “Originality Reports” that are forwarded to instructors and contain several measures of plagiarism. Papers that have not been scanned by TurnItIn by the deadline will not be graded and will receive a grade of “0.”

**Turnitin Submission:** Please submit your paper in the exact same form as the hardcopy submission (i.e., do not remove your title page or reference section, if applicable). **Originality reports of 30–40% or higher should be of concern.** If you are worried about potential plagiarism in an assignment, it is strongly advised that you submit your paper early to TurnItIn and, in the case that an assignment demonstrates significant overlap, make appropriate changes before the final submission. Students will be able to view their originality reports and resubmit before the respective deadlines.

**Turnitin Information:** Please visit [www.turnitin.com](http://www.turnitin.com) and use the following Turnitin information to submit your paper: **Class ID: 40136476; Enrolment Key: grief2023.**

Note that you must first set up an account if you do not already have one. If you are concerned about security issues involving the use of identifying information (e.g., being stored on U.S. servers), you have the option of creating an alias to use when uploading your paper. In such instances, please note your Turnitin alias in the heading of your paper when you upload it to Canvas or note your alias in the assignment comments in Canvas.

**Paper Grades:** Paper grades will be posted as percentage grades in Canvas as soon as they are available. Please allow 2 weeks for paper grades to be posted. Grading feedback will be made available directly in Canvas. Paper re-grades are possible within 2 weeks of paper grades being posted.

## WRITING SUPPORT

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

**Did you know you can receive FREE WRITING CONSULTATIONS through the UBC Library? You can have a consultant review your written work here:** [writing.library.ubc.ca/undergraduates/writing-consultations/](http://writing.library.ubc.ca/undergraduates/writing-consultations/)

**Remember, feedback on your written work is always beneficial, even if it's hard to take at first! Please try to approach all critical feedback with HUMILITY, and do not take it personally!**

## 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, to a maximum of 3 'bonus' credits in this course. Each credit is added to your final grade in the course as a bonus percentage point. Note that currently, there is no limit on the number of credits that can be earned from online studies.

Create an account and sign up for studies here: <https://hsp.psych.ubc.ca>. Or, if you prefer, you can earn the same credits by completing a library-writing project. Find more information at the above link or in the Canvas announcement regarding the HSP system, which includes further details.

**IMPORTANT:** As instructors, we do not have access to the HSP system during the term. It is managed separately by the department. Any issues with HSP should be resolved directly with HSP Admin ([hspadmin@psych.ubc.ca](mailto:hspadmin@psych.ubc.ca)). Please also keep in mind that the HSP system is NOT connected to Canvas. At the end of the term, we will receive a spreadsheet from HSP Admin containing a list of participating students and the credits assigned to them. At that time, we will enter HSP credits in to Canvas so that you can check that they are accurate. The only thing you need to ensure is that you have assigned your HSP credits to the class(es) of your choice, in your HSP account, before the system closes on the last day of classes.

**NOTE: This will be the only way to earn bonus points in this course!**

---

## DEPARTMENTAL POLICY ON GRADE DISTRIBUTIONS

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. 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 your academic record.** You will receive both a percent and a letter grade in this course.

## ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

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 to detect cheating and plagiarism. In cases of suspected academic misconduct, the parties involved will be pursued to the fullest extent as dictated by the guidelines of the University. 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 / Misconduct](#) here: [www.calendar.ubc.ca/vancouver](http://www.calendar.ubc.ca/vancouver) (see Campus-Wide Policies).

*What does academic integrity mean for this class? Here are some tips:*

### 1. 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. Generative A.I. tools like ChatGPT are **not permitted** for any stage of work in this class. Importantly, any submitted written work must consist of your own writing. **Generative A.I. programs are not a replacement for human creativity, originality, and critical thinking. Using these tools to complete work in this class is strictly prohibited and will be considered an act of academic misconduct.** Note that A.I. detection software may be used in investigations of academic misconduct.

### 2. Avoid unintentional plagiarism.

The ideas of others should always be acknowledged! Visit this guide to preventing plagiarism in your writing: [learningcommons.ubc.ca/resource-guides/avoiding-plagiarism/](http://learningcommons.ubc.ca/resource-guides/avoiding-plagiarism/)

### 3. DO NOT share course materials.

All course materials, including PowerPoint files and exam questions, are the **copyrighted intellectual property of David King**. You may not share these materials outside of this course (e.g., on CourseHero).

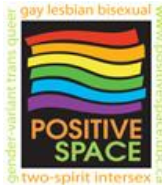
***We appreciate your attention to these matters and trust that you will uphold these expectations at all times!***

## **PARTICIPATION & ATTENDANCE**

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. 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 cases only. **It is expected that you treat this course as a normal, in-person, lecture-based course.**

## **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 am dedicated to fostering a learning atmosphere that is receptive to and welcoming of 2SLGBTQIA+ people and issues (see [positivespace.ubc.ca](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 happen 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 to be more polite 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:** [www.hr.ubc.ca/respectful-environment](http://www.hr.ubc.ca/respectful-environment)



### **Unsure of What It Means to Be Respectful?**

Here are some basic tips on how to communicate respectfully:  
[www.wikihow.com/Be-Respectful#Communicating\\_Respectfully\\_sub](http://www.wikihow.com/Be-Respectful#Communicating_Respectfully_sub).  
Remember to treat your Instructor and TA(s) with the same respect!

## **CLASS ETIQUETTE** – Please be thoughtful and think of others!

In consideration of your classmates, **PLEASE TURN YOUR PHONE OFF DURING CLASS** and **keep noise to a minimum!** The use of a laptop is welcome, but please make an effort to type quietly, as background sounds can be very distracting to others. If you arrive to class late or need to leave early, please do so with minimal disruption. **OPEN AND CLOSE DOORS QUIETLY** and **DO NOT ALLOW DESKTOPS TO SLAM DOWN (if applicable)!**

## **SUPPORTING STUDENT SUCCESS**

UBC provides resources to support student learning and to maintain healthy lifestyles but recognizes that sometimes crises do arise, and so there are additional resources available should you need them, including those for survivors of violence. UBC values the safety of all individuals and respects the ideas of all members of the academic community. Harassment and discrimination are not tolerated nor is suppression of academic freedom. UBC also provides appropriate accommodation for students with disabilities and for religious and cultural observances. Details of these policies and how to access these services are available here: [senate.ubc.ca/policiesresources-support-student-success](http://senate.ubc.ca/policiesresources-support-student-success). You can find further details below:

### **ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATIONS**

UBC accommodates students with disabilities who have registered with the Centre for Accessibility ([students.ubc.ca/about/access](http://students.ubc.ca/about/access)). **Please let me know within the first 2 weeks of class if you require any accommodations.**

### **ACADEMIC CONCESSIONS**

If you encounter medical, emotional, or personal problems that affect your attendance or performance, please notify me as you may be eligible for a concession. For more information, please consult Policies and Regulations in the UBC Calendar ([www.calendar.ubc.ca/vancouver/index.cfm](http://www.calendar.ubc.ca/vancouver/index.cfm)).

### **LEARNING RESOURCES**

**Learning Commons** ([learningcommons.ubc.ca](http://learningcommons.ubc.ca)) is an online resource designed to provide students with learning and study support.



## HEALTH & WELLNESS RESOURCES

You may at some point find yourself struggling to manage your health (mental or physical) while in school. Below is a list of health-related resources on and off campus that you may wish to utilize. If concerns about your well-being arise during the term, or if you reach out to us asking for help, we may also submit an **Early Alert** on your behalf in order to get you help.

**Early Alert** allows faculty, staff, and TAs to identify their concerns about students sooner and in a more coordinated way. It is a confidential system in which your unique challenges can be reported to Student Services, who will refer you to appropriate resources. As an instructor, it is my responsibility to submit an Early Alert for you if concerns arise about your health or safety.

### *On Campus Services...*

**Centre for Accessibility:** The CfA provides accommodations for UBC students with physical or mental disabilities. Website: [students.ubc.ca/about-student-services/centre-for-accessibility](https://students.ubc.ca/about-student-services/centre-for-accessibility) | Phone: 604-822-5844

**Counselling Services at UBC:** Counselling offers a variety of resources to help you maintain your mental health while in school. Visit their website here: [students.ubc.ca/health/counselling-services](https://students.ubc.ca/health/counselling-services) | Phone: 604-822-3811

**Kaleidoscope:** A confidential peer-run mental health support group that takes place on campus at least once a week. See the website for meeting times. Website: [www.the-kaleidoscope.com](http://www.the-kaleidoscope.com)

**Mental Health Awareness Club:** A club that offers opportunities to speak about mental health with others and strives to promote mental health awareness throughout the UBC community. Website: [blogs.ubc.ca/ubcmhac/](https://blogs.ubc.ca/ubcmhac/)

**Mood Disorders Centre at UBC:** A psychiatric program designed specifically to treat individuals living with depression or bipolar disorder. Website: [www.centreforbrainhealth.ca/clinics/clinic-information/mood-disorders](http://www.centreforbrainhealth.ca/clinics/clinic-information/mood-disorders)

**Psychology Clinic at UBC:** Professional psychological services provided to the community, including assessment & treatment for children, adults & families by clinical psychology trainees. Website: [clinic.psych.ubc.ca](https://clinic.psych.ubc.ca)

**Student Health Services at UBC:** UBC provides students with a variety of healthcare services to help you maintain your health, including access to doctors and nurses. Website: [students.ubc.ca/health/student-health-service](https://students.ubc.ca/health/student-health-service)

**Thrive at UBC:** Thrive is a mindset and a week-long series of events focused on helping everyone at UBC explore their path to mental health. Website: [wellbeing.ubc.ca/wellbeing-campaigns-and-initiatives/thrive](https://wellbeing.ubc.ca/wellbeing-campaigns-and-initiatives/thrive)

**UBC Grief Support Network:** This is a student-led organization that provides bereavement resources to those in grief and holds grief discussion groups on campus. Linktree: [linktr.ee/ubcgriefsupportnetwork](https://linktr.ee/ubcgriefsupportnetwork)

**Wellness Centre at UBC:** Speak with other UBC students about tips for managing stress, keeping healthy sleep and eating patterns, concerns about safe sex, etc. Website: [students.ubc.ca/health/wellness-centre](https://students.ubc.ca/health/wellness-centre)

### *Off Campus Services...*

**BC Bereavement Helpline:** Non-profit, free, and confidential service that connects the public to grief support services within the province of BC. Website: [www.bcbh.ca](http://www.bcbh.ca) | Phone: 1-877-779-2223

**BC Crisis Centre:** Non-profit, volunteer-driven organization that provides emotional support to youth, adults, and seniors in crisis in BC. Crisis line available 24/7. Website: [crisiscentre.bc.ca](https://crisiscentre.bc.ca) | Phone: 604-872-3311

**Crisis Line:** 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.

**Pacific Spirit Addiction Services:** A free and confidential service for youth and young adults up to the age of 24. Services include counselling, access to an addiction physician - including usage of a methadone maintenance program - and a drug education series. Phone: 604-267-3970

**Talk Suicide Canada:** Connect to a crisis responder to get help. Call **1-833-456-4566** toll-free from anywhere in Canada, 24 hours/day, 7 days/week, 365 days/year; or Text/SMS **45645** 4PM to Midnight ET.

## COURSE SCHEDULE & ASSIGNED READINGS

<u>Start Date:</u>	<u>Module/Lecture &amp; Topics:</u>	<u>Readings:</u>
<b>UNIT 1 → PSYCHOLOGICAL &amp; EXISTENTIAL PERSPECTIVES</b>		
Sept. 7	1. Introduction to the Study of Death & Dying	Ch.2 <i>Syllabus Review; Introduction to the Study of Death &amp; Dying</i>
Sept. 12	2. The Awareness & Fear of Death	Ch.5* / A.1 <i>The Concept of Death; Psych. Development; Death Anxiety</i>
Sept. 19	3. From Death Denial to Death Acceptance	A.2,3 <i>Stages of Dying; Finding Meaning; NDEs; Suicidal Ideation</i>
Sept. 28	4. Bereavement & the Grieving Process	Ch.6 / A.4,5 <i>Survivor Perspectives; Stages of Grief; Factors in Grief</i>
Oct. 10	<b>UNIT 1 EXAM — 80 mins; to be held during regular class time.</b>	

---

### UNIT 2 → THE SOCIAL & CULTURAL CONTEXTS OF DEATH & DYING

<b>Oct. 12</b>	<i>'Make-Up Monday' – Classes falling on Thurs., Oct. 12 are cancelled and will be replaced by classes normally scheduled on a Monday.</i>	
Oct. 17	5. The Social Context of Death & Dying	Ch.3 / A.6 <i>Family &amp; Community; Formalities; Funeral Industry; Mass Media</i>
Oct. 19	6. Cross-Cultural Perspectives on Death & Grief	Ch.1,4 / A.7 <i>Afterlife Beliefs; Cultural &amp; Religious Factors; Historical Grief</i>
Oct. 31	7. Death in Popular Culture ( <b>Happy Halloween!</b> )	A.8 <i>Psychology of Halloween; Death in TV, Film, &amp; Advertising</i>
Nov. 2	8. Sociocultural Issues in Death & Loss	Ch.4 / A.9,10 <i>Grief in Western Society; Disenfranchisement; Shame &amp; Stigma</i>
<b>Nov. 13–15</b>	<b>University Midterm Break – No classes on these days!</b>	
Nov. 16	<b>UNIT 2 EXAM — 80 mins; to be held during regular class time.</b>	

<u>Start Date:</u>	<u>Module/Lecture &amp; Topics:</u>	<u>Readings:</u>
<b>UNIT 3 → END-OF-LIFE CARE, DEATH WORK, &amp; LOOKING AHEAD</b>		
Nov. 21	9. Caring for the Dying	Ch.5* / A.11 <i>Healthcare Context; Factors in End-of-Life Care</i>
Nov. 23	10. A Closer Look at Medically Assisted Dying	A.12 <i>Euthanasia &amp; Assisted Suicide; MAID in Canada; Right to Die</i>
Nov. 30	11. The Impact of End-of-Life Care & Death Work	Ch.7 / A.13,14 <i>Death, Dying, &amp; Grief; Factors in Aging; "Success"</i>
Dec. 7	12. The Future of Death & Dying	A.15 <i>Radical Life Extension; Final Thoughts &amp; Course Wrap-Up</i>
Dec. 11	<b>Optional Paper Due — Upload to Canvas &amp; Turnitin by 11:59 PM!</b>	
<b>Dec. 11–22</b>	<b>UNIT 3 EXAM — To be scheduled by UBC. (Keep schedule open!)</b>	

---

**FOR READINGS:** "Ch." refers to a chapter from the book. "A." refers to an additional reading/article (see p. 3 of this syllabus for numbered reading list).

**\*Note that Chapter 5 should be divided between Units 1 and 3 as follows:**

From "Expectations of Dying..." to "Choosing Death" → Read in Unit 1

From "Preferred Location of Dying..." to "MAID" → Read in Unit 3

### TIPS FOR NAVIGATING CANVAS:

In addition to the **Modules** tab, which will help you stay organized throughout the term, the **Course Summary** located at the bottom of the homepage will help you keep track of important dates and deadlines.

Also be sure to refer to the **Study Guide** in Canvas for more tips on how to study the reading assignments and lectures and better prepare for exams.

And remember, recommended discussions and external links posted in Canvas are for your interest only and do not constitute testable content.

*Appendix A*  
*Zoom Meeting Invitation Details for Office Hours*

Please use the following Zoom meeting link and details for drop-in office hours as well as all other scheduled Zoom meetings:

David King is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting.

Topic: Dr. King's Virtual Office

Time: This is a recurring meeting Meet anytime

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://ubc.zoom.us/j/64610599232?pwd=NDJqTXJFdjFmTitnQURHbIR3THQvUT09>

Meeting ID: 646 1059 9232

Passcode: 11

One tap mobile

+17789072071,,64610599232#,,,,,0#,,11#

Dial by your location

+1 778 907 2071 (Vancouver)

+1 647 374 4685 (Toronto)

+1 647 375 2970 (Toronto)

+1 647 375 2971 (Toronto)

+1 204 272 7920 (Manitoba)

+1 438 809 7799 (Montreal)

+1 587 328 1099 (Alberta)

+1 613 209 3054 (Ottawa)

Meeting ID: 646 1059 9232

Passcode: 11

Join from a videoconferencing system

IP: 65.39.152.160

Meeting ID: 646 1059 9232

Passcode: 11

SIP: 64610599232@vn.zmca.us

Passcode: 11

*Appendix B*  
*Notice about Requests for Letters of Reference*

During your academic career, you may wish to request a letter of reference or recommendation (for admission into a graduate or diploma program, to apply for a research job, etc.).

Unfortunately, due to the volume of requests I receive, I will not be able to accommodate all students. I will only be able to *\*consider\** such a request under the following conditions:

**(1) You have had significant interaction with me such that I have gotten to know you as an individual.** I am not able to provide a reference based solely on you completing this course and I will *not* provide a reference simply stating the grade that you receive in this course. (Your transcript will do so.) If I cannot confidently speak to your other qualities or traits, I cannot write a letter of reference for you that is helpful to your application process. I will make *\*no exceptions\** to this rule.

**(2) You have received a final grade in this course of at least 80%.** This means that I cannot consider such requests before the term has ended and grades are finalized. Please do not ask before that time.

**(3) Your GPA should also be at a level that reflects a high academic performance overall.** Note that my academic reputation would be compromised if I were to refer students who do not have the necessary qualifications for a program of study. Please be mindful of this.

**(4) You make the request at least one month before the letter(s) must be submitted.** Ideally, such a request should be made even earlier.

**(5) In your correspondence, you clearly state the schools/programs you are applying to and the deadline(s) for submission of said letter(s) of support, and also attach your C.V., an unofficial copy or screenshot of your transcript, and a brief explanation of your interest in the desired program(s) and why a letter of reference from me specifically would be relevant.**

**Even if these above conditions are met, it is still very possible that I will not be able to provide you with a letter of reference due to the sheer volume of requests I receive.** Writing such letters is a very time consuming process, and as such, it is necessary for me to set a limit on how many I can write per academic term/year. Please also note that I may not be able to get back to you in a timely manner if any of the above conditions are not satisfied.

*Please note that in recent years, I have started to receive follow-up requests from students immediately after I inform them that I am unable to provide them with a letter. In these follow-up requests, students ask me a second time if I can help, often pleading and begging me to accommodate the request. Unfortunately, I do not have unlimited amounts of time, and as such, it should not be presumed that I could just "make it work" if I wanted to. In the end, I would appreciate not receiving such follow-up requests. (And keep in mind that they come across as highly unprofessional, and as such, do not make me more inclined to provide the support requested.) I consider every request seriously, and if I can make it work (and the above requirements are satisfied), I will. If I cannot, I'm sorry, but this is sometimes how these things go...*