

PSYC/SOCL 226

Perspectives on Death and Dying

3 Credits

Community College of Baltimore County

Common Course Outline

Description

PSYC/SOCL 226 – Perspectives on Death and Dying: is a multidisciplinary, evidence-based exploration of universal behaviors, attitudes, emotions, and beliefs related to death, dying, and bereavement. In order to better understand themselves and others, students examine the cultural and global context of death, personal meaning of death at different stages in the life cycle, and the effect of death upon surviving family members and society. This course covers historical, psychological, sociological, cultural, physiological, religious, spiritual, ethical, and legal viewpoints worldwide along with exploration of personal reactions to death, dying, and bereavement.

Pre-requisites: PSYC 101 or SOCL 101

Overall Course Objectives

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. define the fundamental concepts associated with each of the course's major topics;
2. analyze different global perspectives (historical, psychological, sociological, cultural, physiological, religious, spiritual, ethical, legal) of death, dying, and bereavement;
3. examine how individual, societal, and cultural differences around the world contribute to the understanding of, preparation for, and coping with, death and dying;
4. examine death and the process of dying as natural components of the lifespan, and evaluate how an awareness of mortality contributes to the construction of meaning in one's life;
5. explain how the experiences of death, dying, and bereavement are different and/or similar at different stages in the life cycle;
6. evaluate theoretical, scientific, and practical knowledge relevant to issues pertaining to death, dying, grief, and bereavement;
7. examine information on death, dying, and bereavement through the exploration of universal film, television, radio, print, and/or internet resources;
8. communicate clearly in written, visual, oral, and/or signed format a description, analysis, and evaluation of issues related to death, dying, and bereavement;
9. describe the relevance of global diversity as it applies to death, dying, and bereavement; and
10. reflect on one's own cognitive, affective, and behavioral reaction to death, dying, and bereavement.

Major Topics

- I. Definitions of death, dying, and bereavement
- II. Multidisciplinary, cultural, and global perspectives for death and dying

The Common Course Outline (CCO) determines the essential nature of each course.

For more information, see your professor's syllabus.

- III. Death anxiety
- IV. Stages and models of death and dying and the grieving process
- V. Death, dying, and bereavement across the lifespan
- VI. Coping mechanisms relating to grief work
- VII. The funeral process
- VIII. Legal and ethical issues related to death and dying
- IX. Traumatic loss
- X. Hospice and palliative care
- XI. End-of-life issues and decisions
- XII. Near-death experiences
- XIII. The afterlife

Course Requirements

Grading will be determined by the individual faculty member, but shall include the following, at minimum:

- Two exams
- Four graded participation activities, at least three of which incorporate cultural and global aspects of death and dying (*e.g.*, online discussions, interactive group activities, *etc.*)
- Two reflective written assignments and/or presentations
- One research assignment worth at least 10% of the final grade that reflects cultural and global aspects of death and dying

Written assignments and research projects: Students are required to use appropriate academic resources in their research and cite sources according to the style selected by their professor.

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