

Chaminade University
PSY/PH/RE 463 Psychology of Death and Dying
Summer 2018 • July 9, 2018 to September 17, 2018

Instructor: Blendine P. Hawkins, Ph.D., LMFT
Location and Day/Time: Online
Email: blendine.hawkins@chaminade.edu **Number:** 808-349-6649
Office Hours: Chat hours weekly- will be announced on Canvas.

Required Text:

Kastenbaum, R. & Moreman, C. M. (2018). *Death, Society, and Human Experience* (12th Ed.). New York: Routledge Taylor & Francis Group

Catalog Course Description

The scope of this course is an exploration into the domain of death and dying. The focus of the course will be a psychological, philosophical, theological, ethical, biological, social and scientific inquiry to the nature of death. Topics to be examined include nature of death, life after death, assisted suicide, right to die, suicide, bereavement, death system, death counseling, death in society, Eastern approaches to death, and issues of death and dying within the context of nursing. Our focus on death will be guided by concepts derived from evolutionary theory, the stress response and stress management. Fulfills interdisciplinary course requirement. Cross-listed as PH/RE 463.

Program Linking Statement – Psychology

This course develops and assesses the skills and competencies for the program student learning outcome of Specific Focuses in Psychology. In addition, this course also addresses the program student learning outcomes of 1) Scientific Method and its Application in the Field of Psychology and 2) Cross-Cultural Psychology.

Program Linking Statement – Religion

This course develops and assesses the skills and competencies for Religious Studies: Intellectual Tradition - world religions; Moral and Spiritual - engagement for personal growth, application to real world situations, fundamental questions of ultimate meaning, meaning of morality and moral decision making; and Religion and Culture - awareness of uniqueness of Hawaii and Pacific Rim, religions and cultures interaction affecting values.

Student Learning Outcomes

Student will demonstrate an understanding of

1. How evolutionary theory, the stress response and stress management provide an integrated approach to the issue of death and dying.
2. An interdisciplinary approach (psychology, religion, philosophy, science, etc.) to death and dying.
3. Cross-cultural approaches to death and dying.
4. Children's experiences and perceptions regarding death.
5. How society addresses death/the death system.
6. Death and dying within the context of nursing.
7. Developmental/biological aspects of death.

8. Counseling, spirituality and death.
9. The relationship between ethics, the medical profession, technology and death and dying.
10. How this course can be addressed from each of the 5 Marianist educational values.

Questions to Ponder During the Course of the Semester:

1. What is life? What is death?
2. Why do we die?
3. What makes life good? What makes death bad?
4. Does our society deny death?
5. Could there be life after death?
6. Does culture impact on how we view death?
7. Could a machine ever be alive? And then to die?
8. Do animal lives matter, morally?
9. If there were no death, how would society be affected?
10. What is the function of religion relative to the concept of death?
11. Do we have moral obligations to presently non-existent future generations?
12. When is it permissible to sacrifice one life for another?
13. Who decides who lives and who dies?

Course Requirements

Grades for the course will be assigned based on the quality of student work as demonstrated by successful completion of the following requirements:

Weekly class discussions	140 pts (7 x 20 points each)
Mid-Term Examination	100pts
Final Examination	140 pts
Video Presentation	<u>120 pts</u>
Total Points	500

Grades for the course will be assigned using the following points-percentage equivalency:

450-500	90% - 100%	A -Outstanding scholarship and an unusual degree of intellectual initiative.
400-449	80% - 89%	B -Superior work done in a consistent and intellectual manner.
350-399	70% - 79%	C -Average grade indicating a competent grasp of subject matter.
300-349	60% - 69%	D -Inferior work of the lowest passing grade; not satisfactory for fulfillment of Pre-requisite coursework.
349↓	59% or below	F -Failed to grasp even the minimum subject matter; no credit given.

I – Did not complete a small portion of the work or final examination due to circumstances beyond the student’s control. The issuance of an “I” grade is not automatic.

Class policies

This course requires you to log in to Canvas weekly. In lieu of in vivo class meetings, there will be quizzes and group discussions, and while you can work at your own pace, there are strict deadlines for all assignments.

- All assignments will be due by 11:59 pm on the due date specified on this syllabus.
- No late assignments will be accepted unless a special arrangement was made prior to the due date or test date. You have to notify and arrange with me 48 hours prior to the deadline (unless it is an unexpected or unforeseen circumstance). Documentation is required.

- All assignments must be completed within the time frame of this class. No work will be accepted after the last week of the term. Incomplete grades are not automatically issued without prior correspondence and deliberation.
- No examinations will be administered after its due date has passed (please refer to the course calendar below).
- If you have questions regarding your assignments, contact me early in the term. I am here to assist you if you need help. Please be proactive.

YOU MUST DO THE READING TO DO WELL IN THE COURSE.

Attendance

With on-line courses I know you are attending if you show up on the Canvas discussion board and take part. If you do not show up and take part in our discussions and submit exams and assignments, then you are not attending the class.

If illness prevents you from attending class it will be my prerogative to modify deadlines of course requirements accordingly. Any student who stops attending a course without officially withdrawing may receive a failing grade.

Federal regulations require continued attendance for continuing payment of financial aid. If your attendance is not continuous, financial aid may be terminated. When illness or personal reasons necessitate continued absence, you should officially withdraw from all affected courses. Anyone who stops attending a course without official withdrawal may receive a failing grade.

Description of the Assessments

Video Presentation (120 points)

You will choose a topic that interests you related to death and dying (submitted for approval by week 6). You will summarize the research on the topic and develop a presentation on it. Think about the video presentation as an effort to dispense information to an audience (such as parents, educators, youth, communities, etc.). The video should be 5-8 minutes in length and informed by research. Guidelines for the paper and grading rubrics will be made available on Canvas.

Discussion Questions (140 pts, 7 x 20 points each)

Each week there will be assigned chapter readings from your textbook. The 7 Discussion questions will be based on the readings. This assignment will give you an opportunity to interact with your classmates and build a dialogue with them. Each week you will be required to post 1 comment with a question on the instructor's post (this may be a video clip, provocative question, news article, or other media connected to the week's topic) **by Wednesday 11:59pm every week**, and post 1 response (a question or opinion) to a group member's post **by Sunday 11:59pm every week**. Each post should contain 5 or more sentences. Your first post must contain a reference to the content from your reading that week for you to receive full points. I encourage you to critically think about your answer prior to posting. Please post something substantive, meaning, "Of Substance." Write clearly and concisely. Please be respectful of your fellow students. If you disagree with someone, make constructive comments to support your answer. Cultivate a lively, respectful, and enjoyable learning dialogue.

NOTE: NO late discussion postings will be accepted, as the instructor closes the forum each week. Once the conversation ends, we move on to another topic. Remember, you will see one post per week – you will need to respond once with a question, and respond once to a group member's posts.

Mid-term (100 points) & Final Exam (140 points)

The Mid-term will cover content from chapters 1 to 8, and will include multiple choice questions, and short-answer questions. The Final will be cumulative and cover chapters 1-15 and will include mostly multiple choice questions.

Academic Honesty

Academic honesty is an essential aspect of all learning, scholarship, and research. It is one of the values regarded most highly by academic communities throughout the world. Violations of the principle of academic honesty are extremely serious and will not be tolerated.

Students are responsible for promoting academic honesty at Chaminade by not participating in any act of dishonesty and by reporting any incidence of academic dishonesty to an instructor or to a University official. Academic dishonesty may include theft of records or examinations, alteration of grades, and plagiarism.

Plagiarism is presenting someone else's words or work as your own. Plagiarism applies to material taken from a book, article, or the Internet and to material taken from another student. All work must be cited. To support your work and thoughts, you are required to liberally CITE all references. Any time you use information from a source, cite it. Any time you paraphrase something from a source and put into your own words, please cite it. Ex: (Wallace, 2015); (Santrock, 2016); (King & Stone, 2017). Plagiarism is a violation of the Academic Code of Conduct of the University and carries penalties ranging from failure of the assignment to suspension from the university. In this course, plagiarism on an assignment, paper, project or examination will result in an F for that assignment, paper, project or examination.

Questions of academic dishonesty in a particular class are first reviewed by the instructor, who must make a report with recommendations to the Dean of the Academic Division. Punishment for academic dishonesty will be determined by the instructor and the Dean of the Academic Division and may range from an 'F' grade for the work in question to an 'F' for the course to suspension or dismissal from the University.

Students with Disabilities

Chaminade will provide assistance for any student with documented disabilities. Any student who believes he/she may need accommodations in this class must contact **Dr. June Yasuhara, 735-4845**, at the Counseling Center (office next to Security) in order to determine if the student meets the requirements for documented disability in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act. It is important to contact them as soon as possible so that accommodations are implemented in a timely fashion.

Title IX Statement

Chaminade University of Honolulu (CUH) recognizes the inherent dignity of all individuals and promotes respect for all people. Sexual misconduct, physical and/or psychological abuse will NOT be tolerated at CUH. If you have been the victim of sexual misconduct, physical and/or psychological abuse, we encourage you to report this matter promptly. As a faculty member, I am interested in promoting a safe and healthy environment, and should I learn of any sexual misconduct, physical

and/or psychological abuse, I must report the matter to the Title IX Coordinator. Should you want to speak to a confidential source you may contact the following:

- Chaminade Counseling Center| [808 735-4845](tel:8087354845).
- Any priest serving as a sacramental confessor or any ordained religious leader serving in the sacred confidence role.

Scientific Method Definitions

The **METHODS OF SCIENCE** are only tools, tools that we use to obtain knowledge about phenomena.

The **SCIENTIFIC METHOD** is a set of assumptions and rules about collecting and evaluating data. The explicitly stated assumptions and rules enable a standard, systematic method of investigation that is designed to reduce bias as much as possible. Central to the scientific method is the collection of data, which allows investigators to put their ideas to an empirical test, outside of or apart from their personal biases. In essence, stripped of all its glamour, scientific inquiry is nothing more **THAN A WAY OF LIMITING FALSE CONCLUSIONS ABOUT NATURAL EVENTS**.

Knowledge of which the credibility of a profession is based must be objective and verifiable (testable) rather than subjective and untestable.

SCIENCE is a mode of controlled inquiry to develop an objective, effective, and credible way of knowing.

The assumptions one makes regarding the basic qualities of human nature (that is, cognitive, affective, behavioral, and physiological processes) affect how one conceptualizes human behavior.

The two basic functions of scientific approach are 1) advance knowledge, to make discoveries, and to learn facts in order to improve some aspect of the world, and 2) to establish relations among events, develop theories, and this helps professionals to make predictions of future events.

Research Design in Counseling
Heppner, Kivlighan, and Wampold

A **THEORY** is a large body of interconnected propositions about how some portion of the world operates; a **HYPOTHESIS** is a smaller body of propositions. **HYPOTHESES** are smaller versions of theories. Some are derived or born from theories. Others begin as researchers' hunches and develop into theories.

The **PHILOSOPHY OF SCIENCE** decrees we can only falsify, not verify (prove), theories because we can never be sure that any given theory provides the best explanation for a set of observations.

Research Method In Social Relations
Kidder

THEORIES are not themselves directly proved or disproved by research. Even **HYPOTHESES** cannot be proved or disproved directly. Rather, research may either support or fail to support a particular hypothesis derived from a theory.

Scientific research has four general goals: (1) to describe behavior, (2) to predict behavior, (3) to determine the causes of behavior, and (4) to understand or explain behavior.

Methods In Behavioral Research; Cozby

In order to verify the reliability and validity of scientific research it is important to replicate the results. It is the preponderance of evidence that establishes/supports the theory.

<http://allpsych.com/researchmethods/replication.html>

Marianist Educational Values

Chaminade University is a Catholic, Marianist University. The five characteristics of a Marianist education are:

1. Educate for Formation in Faith

Catholic Universities affirm an intricate relationship between reason and faith. As important as discursive and logical formulations and critical thinking are, they are not able to capture all that can be and ought to be learned. Intellectual rigor coupled with respectful humility provide a more profound preparation for both career and life. Intellectual rigor characterizes the pursuit of all that can be learned. Respectful humility reminds people of faith that they need to learn from those who are of other faiths and cultures, as well as from those who may have no religious faith at all.

2. Provide an Excellent Education

In the Marianist approach to education, “excellence” includes the whole person, not just the technician or rhetorician. Marianist universities educate whole persons, developing their physical, psychological, intellectual, moral, spiritual and social qualities. Faculty and students attend to fundamental moral attitudes, develop their personal talents and acquire skills that will help them learn all their lives. The Marianist approach to education links theory and practice, liberal and professional education. Our age has been deeply shaped by science and technology. Most recently, information and educational technologies have changed the way faculty and students research and teach. At Marianist Universities, two goals are pursued simultaneously: an appropriate use of information technology for learning, and the enhancement of interaction between students and teachers. As Catholic, Marianist Universities seek to embrace diverse peoples and understand diverse cultures, convinced that ultimately, when such people come together, one of the highest purposes of education is realized: a human community that respects every individual within it.

3. Educate in Family Spirit

Known for their strong sense of community, Marianists have traditionally spoken of this sense as “family spirit.” Marianist educational experience fosters the development of a community characterized by a sense of family spirit that accepts each person with loving respect, and draws everyone in the university into the challenge of community building. Family spirit also enables Marianist universities to challenge their students, faculty and staff to excellence and

maturity, because the acceptance and love of a community gives its members the courage to risk failure and the joy of sharing success.

4. Educate for Service, Justice, and Peace

The Marianist approach to higher education is deeply committed to the common good. The intellectual life itself is undertaken as a form of service in the interest of justice and peace, and the university curriculum is designed to connect the classroom with the wider world. In addition, Marianist universities extend a special concern for the poor and marginalized and promote the dignity, rights and responsibilities of all people.

5. Educate for Adaptation to Change

In the midst of rapid social and technological change, Marianist universities readily adapt and change their methods and structures so that the wisdom of their educational philosophy and spirituality may be transmitted even more fully. “New times call for new methods,” Father Chaminade often repeated. The Marianist university faces the future confidently, on the one hand knowing that it draws on a rich educational philosophy, and on the other fully aware for that philosophy to remain vibrant in changing times, adaptations need to be made.

*Selected from Characteristics of Marianist Universities: A Resource Paper,
Published in 1999 by Chaminade University of Honolulu, St. Mary’s University
and University of Dayton*

Each of these characteristics is integrated, to varying degrees, in this course.

Tentative Course Schedule

Date	Class Activity	Readings Due:	Assignments Due:
Week 1	Welcome Review Syllabus Chapter 1 As We Think About Death	Chapter 1	Weekly Discussion 1 (Post Self-Introduction by Sunday 11:59pm)
Week 2	Chapter 2 What Is Death? Chapter 3 The Death System	Chapter 2 & Chapter 3	Weekly Discussion 2 (Post Comment by Wednesday, Reply comment by Sunday)
Week 3	Chapter 4 Dying Chapter 5 Hospice and Palliative Care Chapter 6 End-of-Life Issues and Decisions	Chapter 4 5, 6	Weekly Discussion 3 (Post Comment by Wednesday, Reply comment by Sunday) <i>Recommended: Start researching for your video presentation</i>
Week 4	Chapter 7 Suicide Chapter 8 Violent Death: Murder, Terrorism, Genocide, Disaster, and Accident	Chapter 7 & Chapter 8	Weekly Discussion 4 (Post Comment by Wednesday, Reply comment by Sunday)
Week 5	Review Chapters 1-8		MID-TERM
Week 6	Chapter 9 Euthanasia, Assisted Death, Abortion, and the Right to Die Chapter 10 Death in the World of Childhood	Chapter 9 & Chapter 10	Weekly Discussion 5 (Post Comment by Wednesday, Reply comment by Sunday) Submit Video Presentation topic for approval
Week 7	Chapter 11 Bereavement, Grief, and Mourning Chapter 12 The Funeral Process	Chapter 11 & Chapter 12	Weekly Discussion 6 (Post Comment by Wednesday, Reply comment by Sunday)
Week 8	Chapter 13 Do We Survive Death? Chapter 14 How Can We Help? Chapter 15 Good Life, Good Death?	Chapter 13, 14 & 15	Weekly Discussion 7 (Post Comment by Wednesday, Reply comment by Sunday)
Week 9	Review for Final Examination (Chapters 1 – 15) Finalize Video Presentation		Video Presentation Due
Week 10	Final Examination (Chapters 1 through 15)		FINAL EXAM

** Syllabus is subject to change by instructor according to class needs.*