

Chaminade University
PSY/PH/RE 463 Psychology of Death and Dying
Winter 2019 • January 7 to March 19, 2019

Instructor: Patricia Wallace, M.S.C.P.
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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 PSY/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 Homework Assignments	200 pts
Weekly Discussions	200 pts
Final Examination	100 pts
<u>APA Research Paper</u>	<u>100 pts</u>
Total Points	600 pts

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

540-600	90% - 100%	A - Outstanding scholarship.
480-539	80% - 89%	B - Superior work.
420-479	70% - 79%	C - Average grade.
360-419	60% - 69%	D - Inferior work; not satisfactory for fulfillment of Pre-requisite coursework.
359 ↓	59% or below	F - Failed to grasp the minimum subject matter; no credit given.

Class policies

This course requires you to log in to Canvas weekly. 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. 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.
- No examinations will be administered after its due date has passed.
- If you have questions regarding your assignments, contact me early in the term. Please be proactive.

STUDENTS 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 actively participate. If you do not show up and take part in our discussions and submit assignments/test, then you are not attending the class. **Students should allot 6-8 hours a week to read course material and complete assignments.**

If illness prevents you from attending class (documentation required), it will be my choice 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

1. **Weekly homework questions** – Students will read the textbook and use other recommended sources to gather information in an effort to produce a well-rounded, focused response to weekly questions. Students will form responses, using complete sentences, presenting one to two paragraphs of substantiated content. All work due Sunday evening by 11:59 pm. No late work. Ten weekly homework assignment at 20 points each = **200 points**
2. **Bi-Weekly topic discussions** – This serves as our weekly conversation and round-table. These bi-weekly discussion questions are derived from the text, surveys, or video reviews. Critically think about your answer prior to posting. Please post something substantive, meaning, “Of Substance.” Write clearly and concisely. If you utilize research in your post, please cite it using APA style. I ask that you be respectful of your fellow learners. If you disagree with someone, make constructive comments to support your answer. Cultivate a lively, respectful, and enjoyable learning exchange. **No late discussions** accepted, as the board will close Sunday evening each week. All final replies due by 11:59 pm Sunday.

*****Other Discussion Rules*****

I. Students are required to respond to the initial question (presented by instructor) by forming well-researched, well-thought responses and presenting at least two full paragraphs of appropriate content, unless otherwise specified in the individual discussion board. [By Thursday each week]

(Discussion Rules continued)

II. Students are also required to reply to a fellow classmate in each bi-weekly discussion board. The reply to a fellow classmate must represent at least one clear, content-related paragraph in length. Students may reply to additional students, at any length, once the required initial post and substantive reply have been delivered. (Weeks 9 & 10 only contain one discussion requirement)

Important

[Post your INITIAL response by Thursday of each week, so classmates will have an opportunity to reply back to you in a timely manner. If initial posts are not made by Thursday, points will be deducted.] Twenty discussions at 10 points each = **200 points**

3. **Research Paper:** Cultural Implications of Death - Using the textbook, traditional books, and peer-reviewed journal articles, students will research the idea of death from a cultural perspective. Students are asked to compare and contrast the Western models, mores, institutions, practices, and attitudes with another culture of the student's choice. (Ex: Native American, Ancient Greeks, Pacific Islanders, or Eastern Religious traditions.)

This paper will be written using the American Psychological Association (APA) style of writing. Papers must be double-spaced, using 1 inch margins and 12 point Times New Roman font. **Three** approved references are required; however, additional references may be used. Students must use information from at least one peer-reviewed journal article, which may be accessed through the online Chaminade Library database. Students may also use any textbook, as well as any traditional hard copy or e-copy library book. Refrain from using .com or .org web addresses. Additional Instructions located in the Canvas course shell. One Research Paper = **100 points**

4. **Final Exam – PSY 463**

Students will complete an online assessment near the end of the semester. Final test will exist within the Canvas course shell in a multiple choice format. Instructions regarding available dates and log-on instructions are listed in the CANVAS course shell. One Final Exam = **100 points**

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 reword it (put into your own words), a citation is required. Ex: (Wallace, Hall, & Leary, 2015); (Santrock, 2016). 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). Students may also speak with 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 Jan 7-13	Welcome / Review Syllabus Chapter 1 As We Think About Death	Chapter 1	Weekly Discussions Weekly Homework
Week 2 Jan 14-20	Chapter 2 What Is Death?	Chapter 2	Weekly Discussions Weekly Homework (Post Initial Comment by Thursday, Reply comment by Sunday)
Week 3 Jan 21-27	Chapter 3 The Death System *Begin Paper Research	Chapter 3	Weekly Discussions Weekly Homework (Post Initial Comment by Thursday, Reply comment by Sunday)
Week 4 Jan 28- Feb 3	Chapter 4 Dying Chapter 5 Hospice and Palliative Care *Continue Paper Research	Chapters 4 & 5	Weekly Discussions Weekly Homework (Post Initial Comment by Thursday, Reply comment by Sunday)
Week 5 Feb 4-10	Chapter 6 End-of-Life Issues and Decisions Chapter 7 Suicide *Begin Writing Paper	Chapters 6 & 7	Weekly Discussions Weekly Homework (Post Initial Comment by Thursday, Reply comment by Sunday)

Week 6 Feb 11-17	Chapter 8 Violent Death; Murder, Genocide, Disaster Chapter 9 Euthanasia, Assisted Death, Abortion, Right to Die	Chapters 8 & 9	Weekly Discussions Weekly Homework (Post Initial Comment by Thursday, Reply comment by Sunday)
Week 7 Feb 18-24	Chapter 10 Death in the World of Childhood Chapter 11 Bereavement, Grief, and Mourning	Chapters 10 & 11	Weekly Discussions Weekly Homework (Post Initial Comment by Thursday, Reply comment by Sunday)
Week 8 Feb 25 – March 3	Chapter 12 The Funeral Process Chapter 13 Do We Survive Death? Paper Due MARCH 3rd	Chapters 12 & 13	Weekly Discussions Weekly Homework Research Paper DUE (Post Initial Comment by Thursday, Reply comment by Sunday)
Week 9 Mar 4-10	Chapter 14 How Can We Help? Review for Final Exam	Chapter 14	Weekly Discussion Weekly Homework (Post Initial Comment by Thursday, Reply comment by Sunday)
Week 10 Mar 11-17	Chapter 15 Good Life, Good Death? Final Exam	Chapter 15	Weekly Discussion Weekly Homework FINAL EXAM

* Syllabus is subject to change by instructor according to class needs. P. Wallace, 2019