COURSE PREREQUISITES:

This course is open to students who have achieved graduate student status and to undergraduate students who have achieved junior status. Students may also register with consent of the instructor.

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course is designed to examine death and dying issues and to provide the student with the basic skills in working effectively with the dying and their families. The class will be conducted with the expectation that students contribute significantly to the class. Methods of instruction will include lectures, group discussions of the readings assigned, videos, and guest presentations. Emphasis will be placed upon the integration of theory and practice within the practice area identified by the specific topic.

COURSE GOALS AND OBJECTIVES:

For students in this course in the BSW or MSW program, the social work programs focus on metropolitan social problems with a commitment to social and economic justice, cultural diversity, and the empowerment of individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities to effect change. The goal of the program is to educate and train social work practitioners who demonstrate the values and ethics of the profession, and who are competent for generalist social work practice at the BSW level, or for specialized practice and scholarly pursuits at the MSW level. The goal of this course is to cultivate students’ awareness of the multiple issues surrounding death and dying (including their own assumptions and beliefs), and the development of therapeutic intervention skills in working with the dying and their families.

The objectives of this course are:

1. To examine death and dying issues, to include cultural, historical, financial, legal and ethical issues.
2. To develop an understanding of the theory, process and practice in working with the dying, as well as a systemic perspective of the significant others pertinent to their care.
3. To develop an understanding of social work values, ethics and beliefs in relation to social work practice with the dying and their significant others.
4. To nurture an understanding of methods of advocacy and resource identification, that promote social and economic justice as part of an intervention strategy with the context of social work practice with the dying.
5. To develop an understanding of the ways in which aspects of diversity (gender, race, age, disabilities, culture, sexual orientation, socio-economic status...) can impact social work practice with the dying and their families.

LEARNING ENVIRONMENT:

Students may utilize the student computer laboratory while registered for this or any other social work course. Information re: university policies about disabilities, accommodations for religious observances, academic conduct, complaint procedures, grade appeals procedures, sexual harassment policy, safety policies, and other standing policies/procedures is available in the Social Work Student Handbook, and at the reception desk for the School of Social Welfare, 10th Floor – Enderis Hall.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS, ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING

Students will be expected to complete all assigned readings, participate in class discussions, based on lectures and readings, and complete all assignments, papers, and exam on time.

Assignments and grading for all students taking the class for 2 credits: “everyone”

Response papers to the videos: 20 points.

Reaction papers to the assigned readings: 20 points.

Mid-term take home exam: 30 points.

FINAL PAPER: 591 students:

A review/critique of a topic of your interest, related to the course (i.e. right to die issues, hospice, etc.). Support your paper with readings, lectures notes from the semester, and other pertinent articles/books/videos, etc., you have researched for your chosen topic. The paper is to be 5-7 pages in length, double-spaced, with appropriate references indicated. 30 points.

FINAL PAPER: 791 students:

A case analysis/interview – 8 to 10 pages in length, double-spaced. Create an interview with a client who is dying and go through how you would work with your client and their family. Construct a thorough assessment and indicate the interventions that you might utilize that you have learned in class (supportive counseling, advocacy, etc.). Describe potential challenges, how you develop the relationship, as well as how you would address
any other potential issues (cultural, socio-economic, etc.) that would impact your work.  
30 points.

**GRADING SCALE FOR SW 591/791 STUDENTS: 2 CREDITS.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>100-96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>95-91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>90-86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>85-82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B- 81-79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>78-75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>74-70</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Assignment and grading for SW591 students taking the course for 3 credits.

All of the assignments pertinent for 2 credit students.  
In addition, to earn a 3rd credit, compose a 4-6 page paper, double-spaced, discussing your own death. Approach the paper, as if you had a terminal illness; what would be your thoughts and feelings, what might you want from your family and friends, and what issues might you want/need to deal with, as a dying person. Please utilize the readings and discussion we shared in class, and any other resources (articles, videos, etc.) that would assist in the creation of your paper. I would also suggest the Christine Longaker book: “Facing Death and Finding Hope,” which is on reserve in the library, for further ideas.  
30 points.

Assignment and grading for SW 791 students taking the course for 3 credits.

All of the assignments pertinent for 2 credit students.
Write a 6-8 page, double-spaced analytic paper on the impact of diversity issues related to death and dying. Describe the challenges that these issues bring up (cultural, social, economic, racial, age, gender, etc.) and how these issues can potentially influence what might be a “good death” for your client and their family. Use resources to support your conclusion and note them in your paper.  
30 points.

**Grading Scale for SW 591/791 students: 3 credits.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>130-126</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>125-121</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>120-116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>115-112</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B- 111-109</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>108-105</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>104-100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Required Texts: Availble at Panther Books


There will be required readings from articles I will present and supplemental readings on Library Reserve, which include the following.