I. Catalogue Description
End-of-Life: Implications and Challenges for Practice is an elective course. This course focuses on social work practice with children, adolescents, adults and elders who have a terminal illness, as well as their families.

II. Course Overview
This three-part course is designed to provide the knowledge base and practice skills necessary for working effectively with terminally ill individuals of all ages and their families. In Part 1, background information is provided on the shifting patterns of death and dying throughout American history, the theories constructed to assist professionals caring for terminally ill individuals, and the various end-of-life models of care. In Part 2, students are provided with opportunities via readings, discussions and exercises to develop a self-awareness of the values and beliefs they hold towards dying and death. Developing this self-awareness will allow them to work more effectively with terminally ill individuals and their families. In Part 3, knowledge and practice skills are covered regarding the assessment and fulfillment of the psychosocial needs of children, adolescents, adults and elders who have a terminal illness, as well as their families. Issues specific to each population are discussed, as well as those of special needs populations such as terminally individuals who have a developmental disability or a mental illness. Information is also provided regarding the final planning for dying and death, practice skills for mediating and facilitating such planning with terminally ill individuals and their families, and overarching ethic and moral dilemmas that may arise.

III. Course Competencies and Practice Behaviors and Assignments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Competencies Addressed in Course</th>
<th>Practice Behaviors Addressed in Course</th>
<th>Assignment(s) Measuring Behavior</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.1.1 Identify as a professional social worker and conduct oneself accordingly</td>
<td>• Practice personal reflection and self-correction to assure continual professional development</td>
<td>Journaling, Obituary &amp; Advance Directives</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 2.1.2 | Apply social work ethical principles to guide professional practice | ▪ Recognize and manage personal values in a way that allows professional values to guide practice  
▪ Tolerating ambiguity in resolving ethical conflicts | Journaling & Ethical Issue Paper |
| 2.1.3 | Apply critical thinking to inform and communicate professional judgments | ▪ Distinguish, appraise, and integrate multiple sources of knowledge, including research-based knowledge, and practice wisdom  
▪ Use effective oral and written communication in working with individuals, families, groups, organizations, communities, and colleagues | Reaction Papers |
| 2.1.4 | Engage diversity and difference in practice | ▪ Recognize the extent to which a culture's structures and values may oppress, marginalize, alienate, or create or enhance privilege and power  
▪ Gain sufficient self-awareness to eliminate the influence of personal biases and values in working with diverse groups | Reaction Papers  
Journaling & Ethical Issue Paper |
| 2.1.5 | Advance human rights and social and economic justice | ▪ Understand the forms and mechanisms of oppression and discrimination  
▪ Engage in practices that advance social and economic justice | Reaction Papers  
In-Class Activities |
| 2.1.7 | Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment | ▪ Utilize conceptual frameworks to guide the processes of assessment, intervention, and evaluation  
▪ Critique and apply knowledge to understand person and environment | Both: Reaction & Ethical Issue Papers |

IV. Course Content

Week 1: September 5
Topic:
▪ Overview of Course, Syllabus & Grading  
▪ Goals of Dying & Death Education

PART 1: Background Information
Required Reading: *Final Gifts*, Pages 1-60

Week 2: September 12
Topic: History of Dying and Death in the United States
▪ Dying Trajectories & Legal Battles  
▪ Self-Determination & Social Work’s Growing Role
Required Readings:
~ Social Work in End-of-Life and Palliative Care: Chapter 1, pgs. 1-18.

Week 3: September 19
Topic: Coping With Dying & Death: Theoretical Approaches
- End-of-Life Theories
- Integrating Theory into Clinical Practice

Required Readings:
~ Renz, M., Mao, M., Bueche, D., Cerny, T., & Strasser, F. (2012). Dying is a transition. American Journal of Hospice & Palliative Medicine, 30(3), 283-290.

Week 4: September 26
Topic: End-of-Life Models of Care
- Definitions & Goals
- Strengths and Limitations

Required Readings:

Week 5: October 3
Topic: The Dying Experience
- Physical, Spiritual & Psychosocial Symptoms
- Signs and Symptoms of Active Dying
PART 2: Self-Awareness

Required Reading: Final Gifts, Pages 61-128

Week 6: October 10

REACTION PAPER #1 DUE

Topic: Coping With Dying & Death: The Professional, Part 1

- Self-Awareness
- Beliefs, Values and Behaviors
- Ethical Dilemmas & Boundary Setting

Required Readings:


Week 7: October 17

OBITUARY DUE

Topic: Coping With Dying & Death: The Professional, Part 2

- Professional Power Differentials
- Caring for Self

Required Readings:


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**PART 3: Practice Skills**

**Required Reading: Final Gifts, Pages 129-231**

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**Week 8: October 24**

**REACTION PAPER #2 DUE**

**JOURNAL ENTRIES FOR WEEKS 6 & 7 (TWO ENTRIES) DUE**

**Topic: Psychosocial and Spiritual Assessment**

- Person-in-Environment Approach & Assessment
- Identifying Goals, Resource Acquisition, Advocacy & Empowerment
- Effective Practice Strategies

**Required Readings:**


~ Puchalski, C. & Romer, A. (2000). Taking a spiritual history allows clinicians to understand patients more fully. *Journal of Palliative Medicine, 3*(1), 129-137.


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**Week 9: October 31**

**ETHICAL ISSUE APPROVAL DEADLINE**

**Topic: Communication**

- Decisions require information
- Difficult conversations
- Communication & culture
- Effective Practice Strategies

**Required Readings:**

~ *Social Work in End-of-Life and Palliative Care*: Chapter 3


**Week 10: November 7**

**Topic: Children, Adolescents & Family**

- Theory
- Communication
- Assisting
- Effective Practice Strategies

**Required Readings:**

- *Social Work in End-of-Life and Palliative Care*: Chapter 4

**Week 11: November 14**

**Topic: Terminally Ill Individuals with Special Needs & Their Families**

- Developmental Disability
- Mental Illness
- Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender People
- Dementia
- Effective Practice Strategies

**Required Readings:**

**Week 12: November 21**

*JOURNAL ENTRIES FOR WEEKS 8-11 (FOUR ENTRIES) DUE*

**Topic: Adults & Elders & Family**
- Death-Related Concepts & Attitudes
- Coping with Terminal Illness
- Communication & Assisting
- Effective Practice Strategies

Guest Speaker: Cindy Ragland, MSW

**Required Readings:**
- *Social Work in End-of-Life and Palliative Care: Chapter 5*

**Week 13: November 28, No Class**

**Week 14: December 5**

*REACTION PAPER #3 DUE*

*FINAL JOURNAL ENTRY DUE*

**Topic: Ethical Issues**
- Confidentiality, Autonomy & Self-determination
- Withdrawing or Withholding of Treatment
- Palliative Sedation
- Physician-Assisted Suicide
- Effective Practice Strategies

**Required Readings:**
- *Social Work in End-of-Life and Palliative Care: Chapters 7 & 8*
Week 15: December 12

ADVANCE DIRECTIVE DUE

Topic: Final Plans

- Advance Directives & Organ Donation
- Inheritance & Funerals
- Effective Practice Strategies

Required Readings:
- Social Work in End-of-Life and Palliative Care: Chapter 9

ETHICAL ISSUE PAPER DUE DECEMBER 16

V. Course Texts and Reading Materials

Required Texts And Readings:

- Required articles can be found on the course Learn@UW website

VI. Evaluation of Competencies and Practice Behaviors: Assignments, Grading and Methods

Grading Scale & Standards:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>What the point totals &amp; subsequent grade generally indicate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>94-100</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>Outstanding, surpasses expectations in all areas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>88-93</td>
<td>AB</td>
<td>Surpasses expectations in many areas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>82-87</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>Meets expectations in all areas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>76-81</td>
<td>BC</td>
<td>Meets expectations in most areas; below in others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70-75</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>Below expectations in most areas; not acceptable graduate-level work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>64-69</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>Below expectations in all areas, not acceptable graduate-level work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&lt;64</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Fails to meet minimum expectations in all areas</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Assignments:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Points/Percentages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reaction Papers</td>
<td>45 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Journaling</td>
<td>15 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obituary</td>
<td>10 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advance Directive</td>
<td>3 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethical Issue Topic Approval</td>
<td>2 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethical Issue Paper</td>
<td>25 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Points</strong></td>
<td>100 points</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Assignment Instructions & Grading Rubrics:

1. Attendance & Class Participation Policy.
   In order for you and your fellow classmates to benefit from this course, attendance and active participation are expected. Attendance will be taken at the beginning of class and I will note your level of participation. If you are unable to attend class, please email me prior to class so that you can receive an excused absence; you may receive two per semester. Two points will be deducted from your grade for each unexcused absence incurred.

2. Reaction Papers.
   You are required to write three reaction papers: one based on a reading from Part 1, one based on a reading from Part 2, and one based on a reading from Part 3. You may write four papers (the fourth paper can be written on a reading from Parts 1, 2 or 3) and I will choose the three highest grades to incorporate into your final course grade. These reaction papers are to be not less than three full pages in length and not more than four pages. Be sure that you adhere to the Writing Assignment Policy presented below. Papers are to be placed in the Learn@UW dropbox prior to the beginning of class on the date due. You can earn up to 15 points for each paper.

   In these papers, both undergraduates and graduates should critically evaluate (not summarize) what they have read and respond by discussing the following:

   1. What important point(s) arise from the reading?
   2. Can these important points be generalized to individuals of diverse backgrounds (with respect to gender, ethnicity, culture, spirituality or sexual orientation)? If so, how? If not, why not?
   3. What question(s) do you feel the reading should have addressed, but did not?
   4. Overall, in what specific ways do you, not the author(s), feel the reading serves to inform social work practice or policy? Be specific.

   Reaction papers for undergraduate and graduate students will be due three times during the semester:
   
   Oct. 10: Reaction paper(s) written on reading from Part 1
   Oct. 24: Reaction paper(s) written on reading from Part 2
   Dec. 5: Reaction paper(s) written on reading from Part 3

3. Journaling
   A key goal of this course on death and dying is to provide you with a deeper awareness and understanding of your own values and beliefs regarding dying and death. In addition to increasing your awareness and understanding, it is also important that you recognize how these values and beliefs may influence your assessment of, and relations with, terminally ill clients and their families.

   To assist you in gaining this awareness and understanding, you will be expected to personally reflect and respond to the weekly readings and class discussions by journaling your thoughts, reactions, and concerns. Please type your journal using the written assignment policy below. Both undergraduates and graduates must generate at least 2 full pages per week for the weeks
listed below. For each set of journal entries due, please staple a cover sheet and your entries together into a single packet.

Your final entry should include thoughts on the following: 1) how this class has increased your awareness of the values and beliefs you hold toward the process of dying and death; 2) how you feel these values and beliefs might impact your assessment of, and relations with, clients, families, and fellow staff members; and 3) the ethical dilemmas you might face as a result of value and belief differences.

Journal entries will be due on the following dates:
   - Oct. 24 covering weeks 6 & 7 (2 entries)
   - Nov. 21 covering weeks 8 through 11 (4 entries)
   - Dec. 5 Final entry

You may earn up to 12 points for the first two sets of entries and up to 3 points for the final journal entry, for a total of 15 points. You will not be graded on the content of the journal since the purpose of a journal is to express your thoughts freely. Your grade will be based on whether your journal is turned in on time and whether you have followed the instructions above and in the written assignment policy.

4. Obituary
   For this assignment, you will be given an instructional sheet with the general areas you are to cover. Your obituary is due in class on October 17 and you can earn up to 10 points for this assignment. Be sure that you adhere to the Writing Assignment Policy presented below.

5. Advance Directive
   You will be required to complete an advance directive document that I will provide to you. Your advance directive is due in class on December 12 and you can earn up to 3 points for this assignment.

6. Ethical Issues in End-of-Life Paper
   You are required to write a paper on an ethical issue pertinent to the practice of social work and end-of-life care. Undergraduate students are required to write a 6-page minimum to 8-page maximum paper and graduate students are required to write an 8-page minimum to 10-page maximum paper

   In your paper, provide:
   - **Introduction** that describes the briefly states the ethical issue on which you will focus, information on why the issue is important (the “So What” question), and the issue’s relevance to social work practice
   - **Literature review** on the issue, which includes information on the role of oppression, economic deprivation or discrimination
   - **Your position** on the issue and the values and beliefs you hold that lead you to take your position
   - **Potential strengths and challenges** of your stance in regard to practice as a social worker
   - **Conclusion**
You may not use articles or book chapters assigned to you for this course as reference materials for your paper, nor any newspaper or magazine articles. Your sources should be from journals and books (non-social work and social work). I prefer that you do not use websites; however, if you feel it is unavoidable, you will need to obtain my approval. You must use APA (Sixth Edition) style for your paper formatting, citing & references. Finally, you must 1) obtain approval regarding your choice of an ethical issue no later than October 31, and 2) upload your completed paper in at the beginning of class on December 16. You can earn up to 2 points for obtaining your topic approval on time and up to 25 points on your paper.

VII. Course Policies
Reading Assignments: You are expected to have read all assigned material prior to the class date under which the readings are listed above. Reading and critically evaluating what you have read is necessary so that you can learn, actively participate in class discussions, and successfully complete written assignments.

Late Assignment Policy:
The assignments listed above are due at the beginning of the class period on the date specified. Students who believe they have a legitimate reason for turning in a late assignment should contact the instructor prior to the due date. Unapproved late assignments will be marked down three points for each day they are late.

Written Assignment Policy:
1. All written assignments are to be either typed or computer-generated.
2. Format assignments using one-inch margins, double-spacing, and a 12-inch font.
3. Always include a cover sheet (not counted as one of the required pages) with the title of the paper, your name, the date turned into the instructor, course number, and course title. Do not put this cover sheet information on the first page of an assignment.
4. Please us page numbers, but not on the cover sheet.
5. All assignments should be checked thoroughly for correct spelling and grammar.

Students with Disabilities
If you require accommodations to obtain equal access to this class or to any assignments that I may give, please contact me as soon as possible. I want all my students to have an excellent learning experience.

Student Behavior Policy:
In order to learn, we must be open to the views of people different from ourselves. Each and every voice in the classroom is important and brings with it a wealth of experiences, values and beliefs. In this time we share together over the semester, please honor the uniqueness of your fellow classmates, and appreciate the opportunity we have to learn from each other. Please respect your fellow students’ opinions and refrain from personal attacks or demeaning comments of any kind. Finally, remember to keep confidential all issues of a personal or professional nature discussed in class.