Instructor: Professor Tracy Schroepfer
Meeting Time: Thursday, 10:00am-Noon
Location: Biochemistry, Room 1116
Office Hours: By appointment
Phone: 263-3837
Email: tschroepfer@wisc.edu

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>
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</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

#### Critical Reflection Papers & In-Class Activities

### 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

#### Critical Reflection & Ethical Issue 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

#### Critical Reflection & Ethical Issue 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: Critical Reflection & Ethical Issue Papers

### IV. Course Content

#### Week 1: September 4

**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 11
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 18
Topic: Coping With Dying & Death: Theoretical Approaches
  ▪ End-of-Life Theories
  ▪ Integrating Theory into Clinical Practice

Required Readings:

Week 4: September 25
Topic: End-of-Life Models of Care
  ▪ Definitions & Goals
  ▪ Strengths and Limitations

Required Readings:
Week 5: October 2
Topic: The Dying Experience
- Physical, Spiritual & Psychosocial Symptoms
- Signs and Symptoms of Active Dying

Required Readings:
~ Social Work in End-of-Life and Palliative Care: Chapter 2

PART 2: Self-Awareness
Required Reading: Final Gifts, Pages 61-128

Week 6: October 09
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 16
OBITUARY DUE
Topic: Coping With Dying & Death: The Professional, Part 2
- Professional Power Differentials
- Caring for Self

Required Readings:


**PART 3: Practice Skills**

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

**Week 8: October 23**

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:**


**Week 9: October 30**

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 6

**Topic: Children, Adolescents & Family**
- Theory
- Communication
- Assisting
- Effective Practice Strategies

**Guest Speaker:** Guest Speakers: Jessica Shiveler, LCSW

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

### Week 11: November 13

**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 20
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

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

Week 13: November 27, No Class

Week 14: December 4
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 11
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 15

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>Critical Reflection &amp; Evaluation Papers</td>
<td>45 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Journaling</td>
<td>14 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obituary</td>
<td>8 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advance Directive &amp; Paper</td>
<td>8 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethical Issue Paper</td>
<td>25 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Points</td>
<td>100 points</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Assignment Instructions & Grading Rubrics:

1. Critical Reflection & Evaluation Papers

Purpose of Assignment
As the number of social work researchers grows and technology increases the availability of information, critically reflecting and evaluating the material presented in journal articles have become crucial skills for social workers. Even after graduation, social workers must now continue to stay on top of the latest research in order to insure their clients are receiving the best possible care at all levels of practice.

Another skill that must be honed is the ability to triangulate the readings for a course, the lecture content provided by the instructor and the related field and/or personal experiences. Instead of reading the assigned material and mentally compartmentalizing it or listening to the lecture and doing the same, triangulation connects this information with the experiences outside of the classroom. This ability to triangulate mirrors social work practice since social workers must often take a number of informational sources/experiences, connect them and critically reflect on the overall picture that emerges.

In this class, we will read articles that are key to the topics we are covering and with which you may have experience. It is my hope that in writing these papers, you will gain the skills described above and use them in your own social work practice.

Assignment Instructions
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 the three highest grades will be incorporated into your final course grade. These papers are to be no less than three full pages and not more than four pages. Graduate and undergraduate students have different grading sheets (see Learn@UW). Be sure you adhere to the Writing Assignment Policy presented below. Papers are to be uploaded to the Learn@UW dropbox prior to the start 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.

Assignment Due Dates
Reaction papers for undergraduate and graduate students will be due three times during the semester:

Oct. 9: Reaction paper(s) written on reading from Part 1
Oct. 23: Reaction paper(s) written on reading from Part 2
Dec. 4: Reaction paper(s) written on reading from Part 3
2. **Journaling**

*Purpose of Assignment*

A key goal of this course 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.

*Assignment Instructions*

Please type your journal following the course Written Assignment Policy. 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 include a cover sheet.

Your final journal entry of the semester 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.

You may earn up to 12 points for the first two sets of entries and up to 2 points for the final journal entry, for a total of 14 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.

*Assignment Due Dates*

Journal entries will be due on the following dates:
- Oct. 23 covering weeks 6 & 7 (2 entries) (4 points)
- Nov. 20 covering weeks 8 through 11 (4 entries) (8 points)
- Dec. 4 Final entry (2 points)

3. **Obituary**

*Purpose of Assignment*

An obituary is a very short story of one’s life and includes the key points that define that life. The clients to whom palliative and hospice social workers provide care at the end of life are faced with their dying and subsequent death, and often give much reflection to what has defined their life and their legacy. This assignment seeks to give you a glimpse into what terminally ill clients may be thinking about as they are dying and preparing for their death. It also provides you with an opportunity to gain an awareness of your emotions, values and beliefs regarding dying and death.

*Assignment Instructions*

Below, I have provided standard format guidelines often used in writing an obituary. Today’s obituaries, however, are often longer and focused more on less tangible accomplishments and
so I have also included a sample of a more creative obituary. You are welcome to be creative in this assignment. For example, you can type your obituary up in a newspaper column format. Your grade will be based on meeting the deadline, following instructions and, most importantly, the effort exhibited in regards to reflection.

Standard Format:
- Lead paragraph
  - Include deceased person’s name (you)
  - One or two key points from your life
  - About 35 words in length
- Paragraph 2
  - Elaborate points from first paragraph
  - Why they were important to you, your family, friends and community
- Paragraph 3
  - Discuss your life journey and the different milestones along the way
- Paragraph 4
  - Honors & Awards
  - Survivors
  - Visitation and funeral information
  - Burial site
  - Memorial contributions

Creative Format:

**John J. Jones**

John Jones, 63, of Black River, passed away December 25, 2003. He was the son of Randall and Sue Jones, both deceased. He is survived by his brother James, his nephew Trevor, and many loving relatives and friends.

He graduated from Calvin High School in Black River, completed his bachelor’s degree at Black River University, and his law degree at the University of North Dakota. He was in the United States Navy Reserves for twenty-seven years; five of those years on active duty including two tours in Vietnam. His last position in the service was Commander of a Reserve navy SEAL Unit in Black River, North Dakota. He recently retired after a long and successful career as an attorney at law.

John was a cultured and enlightened gentleman with religious values and honor, frequently quoting Shakespeare and Kipling, traits that are not often found among men of this day and age. His hobbies included chess, fencing, photography, and world travel. He was the family genealogist, frequently traveling to Scotland in support of these endeavors. There is now a void in the community of man. He is missed.

Arrangements are pending with Jackson Funeral Home, 5800 W. Main, Black River, 423-7890.
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Assignment Due Date
Papers are to be uploaded to the Learn@UW dropbox prior to the start of class on October 16. In addition to uploading your obituary, please bring a copy to class on the day due. You can earn up to 8 points for this assignment. Be sure that you adhere to the Writing Assignment Policy presented below.

4. Advance Directive

Purpose of Assignment
Palliative care and hospice social workers are often tasked with having clients complete an Advance Directive, which can be an emotional experience for the client. This assignment requires that you complete your own Advance Directive so that you can not only gain some awareness of what a client may feel in completing their directive, but also experience another opportunity to further develop an awareness of your emotions, values and beliefs regarding dying and death.

Assignment Instructions
I will provide you with an advance directive document to complete. I will not read your completed directive, as I feel that is very private information that need not be shared with me. When you turn in the document, I will quickly glance through it only to determine that it has been completed. You will also be required to write a 1-2 page paper reflecting on what the experience was like for you and for anyone else you may involve in your process (e.g., family, friends, etc.). You will be graded on your critical thinking and depth of reflection.

Assignment Due Date
Papers (not the advance directive document) are to be uploaded to the Learn@UW dropbox prior to the start of class on December 11. In addition to uploading your paper, please bring a copy to class that same day, along with your completed advance directive. You can earn up to 8 points for this assignment. Four points for completing the directive and 4 points for the reflective paper. Be sure that you adhere to the course Writing Assignment Policy.

5. Ethical Issues in End-of-Life Paper

Purpose of Assignment
Palliative care and hospice social workers regularly face ethical issues in their daily practice. Due to public health improvements and advances in medicine, people now live longer than ever before. Often, the result is that individuals who would have died a natural death are faced with difficult end-of-life decisions, as are their family members when the individual can no longer make decisions for themselves. It is important that social workers gain a deeper understanding of the ethical issues that will present themselves when providing care to terminally ill individuals and their family members. Although we will discuss many of these issues in class, I also want you to have the opportunity to choose one about which you have an interest and the desire to learn more: this ethical issues paper will allow you to do so.

Assignment Instructions
You must first obtain approval from me, the instructor, regarding your choice of an ethical issue pertinent to the practice of social work and end-of-life care. Once you have received this approval, then you can begin working on your paper. Undergraduate students are
required to write a 6-page minimum to 8-page maximum paper and graduate students an 8-page minimum to 10-page maximum paper

In your paper, provide the following sections. It is recommended that you use these heading or something similar in order to increase the readability of your paper.

- **Introduction:** Includes a brief discussion (couple of sentences) concerning 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:** Carefully review the literature on the issue and discuss both the pros and the cons. As social workers we are dedicated to addressing issues of social injustice and so it is important to address the role of oppression, economic deprivation or discrimination.
- **Personal Stance on Issue:** Having reviewed the literature, discuss what you feel is your stance on the issue, and the values and beliefs you hold that lead you to take this position
- **Potential Impact on Social Work Practice:** Discuss how your position on the issue may impact your policy work (for those of you who do not plan to work directly with clients) or your practice with clients and family members (for those of you who do plan to do direct practice) facing this ethical issue.
- **Conclusion:** Synthesize rather than simply summarize. You can refer back to the main theme presented in your introduction (brings your reader full circle), briefly summarize main points of your paper, note any new insights you may have gained, and discuss implications for social work practice.

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. In order to insure that your use of APA style is accurate, please refer to the UW-Madison Writing Center’s APA website: http://writing.wisc.edu/Handbook/DocAPA.html

**Assignment Due Date**
You must obtain approval regarding your choice of an ethical issue no later than October 30, and 2) your completed paper must be uploaded before midnight on December 15. Two points will be deducted if your topic approval is obtained after the deadline. You can earn up to 25 points on your paper.

**VII. Course Policies**

**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.
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-point Times-Roman 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 use 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.