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 ethical and moral dilemmas that may arise.

III. Course Content
Week 1: September 8
Topic:
- Overview of Course, Syllabus & Grading
- Goals of Dying & Death Education
- Course Terminology
Week 2: September 15
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 22
Topic: Coping With Dying & Death: Theoretical Approaches
- End-of-Life Theories
- Integrating Theory into Clinical Practice

Required Readings:

Week 4: September 29
Topic: End-of-Life Models of Care
- Definitions & Goals
- Strengths and Limitations

Required Readings:
Week 5: October 6
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 65-124

Week 6: October 13
CRITICAL REFLECTION & EVALUATION 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 20
OBITUARY & PAPER DUE
Topic: Coping With Dying & Death: The Professional, Part 2
- Professional Power Differentials
- Caring for Self
Required Readings:

**Week 8: October 27**
**ADVANCE DIRECTIVE DUE**

**Topic: Coping With Dying & Death: The Professional, Part 3**
- Comfort with End-of-Life Planning
- Cultural Self-Reflection

**Required Readings:**

**PART 3: Practice Skills**
**Required Reading: Final Gifts, Pages 125-218**

**Week 9: November 3**
**CRITICAL REFLECTION & EVALUATION PAPER #2 DUE**
**JOURNAL ENTRIES FOR WEEKS 6, 7 & 8 (THREE ENTRIES) DUE**

**Topic: Psychosocial and Spiritual Assessment**
- Person-in-Environment Approach & Assessment
- Identifying Goals, Resource Acquisition, Advocacy & Empowerment
- Effective Practice Strategies

**Required Readings:**
**Week 10: November 10**

**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 11: November 17**

**Guest Speaker: Jessica Shiveler, LCSW**

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

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

**Week 12: November 24**

**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 13: December 1

*OPTIONAL CRITICAL REFLECTION & EVALUATION PAPER DUE*

*JOURNAL ENTRIES FOR WEEKS 8-12 (FIVE 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 14: December 8

*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 15**

**Topic: Final Plans**
- Organ Donation, Inheritance & Funerals
- Effective Practice Strategies

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

**ETHICAL ISSUE PAPER DUE BY NOON ON DECEMBER 19**

**IV. Course Texts and Reading Materials**

**Required Texts and Readings:**
- Required articles can be found on the Learn@UW course website

**V. 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>30 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Journaling</td>
<td>18 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obituary</td>
<td>12 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advance Directive &amp; Paper</td>
<td>10 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethical Issue Paper</td>
<td>30 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Points</strong></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 two critical reflection and evaluation papers: one based on a reading from Part 1 of the course and one based on a reading from Part 2. You may write three papers (the third paper must be based on a reading from Part 3) and the two highest grades will be incorporated into your final course grade. The critical reflection and evaluation 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. You can earn up to 15 points for each required 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
Required critical reflection and evaluation papers for undergraduate and graduate students to be uploaded to the Learn@UW dropbox prior to the start of class on the following due dates.

Oct. 13: Critical reflection and evaluation paper written on reading from Part 1
Nov. 3: Critical reflection and evaluation paper written on reading from Part 2
Dec. 1: Optional critical reflection and evaluation paper 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, it is 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 weekly readings and class discussions by journaling your thoughts, reactions, and concerns.

*Assignment Instructions*

Please type your journal following the Written Assignment Policy. Both undergraduates and graduates must generate at least 2 full pages for each week 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 16 points for the first two sets of entries and 2 points for the final journal entry, for a total of 18 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 1) the depth of and critical approach to your journal writing, 2) whether your journal is turned in on time and 3) whether you followed the instructions above and in the Written Assignment Policy.

*Assignment Due Dates*

Journal entries will be due on the following dates:
- Nov. 3 Weeks 6, 7 & 8 (2 points per entry = 6 points)
- Dec. 1 covering weeks 8 through 12 (2 points per entry = 10 points)
- Dec. 8 Final entry (2 points)

3. **Obituary**

*Purpose of Assignment*

An obituary is a very short story of one’s life and includes key points defining that life. The clients to whom palliative and hospice social workers provide care at end of life are faced with their dying and subsequent death, and often reflect on what has defined their life and 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 for the obituary will be based on meeting the deadline, following instructions and, most importantly, the effort exhibited in regards to reflection in writing it.

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 have involved (e.g., family, friends, etc.). You will be graded on your critical thinking and depth of reflection.

**Assignment Due Date**
Your cover sheet, obituary and paper are to be uploaded to the dropbox prior to the start of class on October 20. In addition, please bring a copy of your obituary to class that same day. You can earn up to 12 points for this assignment. Be sure that you adhere to the course Writing Assignment Policy.

**Standard Format:**
- Lead paragraph
  - Include deceased person’s name (you)
  - One or two key points from your life
- 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
  - Note honors and awards
  - Discuss survivors
  - Provide visitation, funeral and burial site information
  - Memorial contributions

**Creative Format:**

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**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, traits not often found among men of this day and age. His hobbies included chess, photography, and travel. He was the family genealogist, traveling to Ireland 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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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 this document is very private and so 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. Please note that for this class assignment you need not have witnesses sign your document.

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 have involved 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 dropbox prior to the start of class on October 27. 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 10 points for this assignment. 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 November 10, and 2) your completed paper must be uploaded before NOON on December 19. Two points will be deducted if your topic approval is obtained after the deadline. You can earn up to 30 points on your paper.

VI. 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 no more than two excused absences per semester. Two points will be deducted from your grade for each unexcused absence incurred.

Code of Ethics, Student Rights and Responsibilities & Plagiarism
BSW and incoming MSW students read and signed electronic forms of the NASW Code of Ethics, the School of Social Work Plagiarism Policy and the Student Rights and Responsibilities. In doing so, they agreed that while in the BSW or MSW Program they would honor the NASW Code of Ethics and Student’s Rights and Responsibilities, as well as adhere to the Plagiarism Policy and that should they not do so, sanctions would be imposed. BSW and MSW students are expected to adhere to these policies in the classroom, in the field and in the preparation of course assignments.
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, 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 issues of a personal or professional nature discussed in class.

VII. Course Competencies, Practice Behaviors & Assignments

A special note for social work students:
Social Work Education is framed by a competency-based approach to curriculum design. At the conclusion of their education, social work students are expected to be competent in 10 core areas. Competency is achieved through the attainment of measureable practice behaviors learned through classroom and field experiences, and which are derived from social work knowledge, values and skills.

SW648 is an elective course. Social Work students will find that this course contributes to their achievement of the core competencies as follows:
<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 | 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 |