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| Course ID: | Course Title: | Winter 2023 |
| IND 405 | Special Topics: Death & Dying | Prerequisite: 60 credits |
| | | Credits: 3 |



Detail from *The Death of Chatterton* by Henry Wallis (1856)

| Class Information | | Instructor Information | | Important Dates | |
|----------------------|--------------|------------------------|--|--|------------------|
| Delivery: | In Class | Instructors: | Darren Dyck (PhD) Alyssa Michaud (PhD) Pam Nordstrom (PhD) Joel Thiessen (PhD) Colin Toffelmire (PhD) | First Day of Class: | January 9, 2023 |
| Day: | Wednesday | Email: | darren.dyck@ambrose.edu amichaud@ambrose.edu pam.nordstrom@ambrose.edu jathiessen@ambrose.edu ctoffelmire@ambrose.edu | Last Day to Add/Drop: | January 22, 2023 |
| Time: | 6:30-9:30 pm | Phone: | See faculty profile pages | Last Day to Withdraw: | March 31, 2023 |
| Room: | A2133 | Offices: | Dyck: L2069 Michaud: G2185 Nordstrom: L2051 Thiessen: L2105 Toffelmire: L2089 | Last Day to Apply for Coursework Extension: | April 3, 2023 |
| Lab/Tutorial: | n/a | Office Hours: | By appointment only | Last Day of Class: | April 12, 2023 |
| Final Exam: | n/a | | | | |

Important Dates and Information

For a list of all important dates and information regarding participating in classes at Ambrose University, please refer to the Academic Calendar at <http://ambrose.edu/academic-calendar>.

Course Description

An exploratory interdisciplinary course designed to provide senior Ambrose students with the opportunity to reflect critically and from diverse perspectives upon one of life's enduring concerns. Professors from five academic disciplines will collaborate to teach this course through individual lectures, discussion, and debate. The topic will vary from year to year, but potential topics include death and dying, friendship, conflict and resolution, suffering, and the passing of time.

In Winter 2023, IND 405 will explore the topic of death and dying as treated in and understood through the academic disciplines of Sociology, Nursing, Bible & Theology, Musicology, and English.

Expected Learning Outcomes

By reading assigned texts, participating in class discussions, and writing short reflections and an essay, students will:

- understand and employ the perspectives, theories, key concepts and ideas of the disciplinary approaches presented in the course;
- consider the strengths and limitations of different disciplinary approaches to the course topic;
- integrate at least two of the course's disciplinary approaches into a written argument about the course topic;
- grapple with the personal and societal realities and potential implications of course content; and
- employ critical thinking skills and Christian thought.

Textbooks

All course readings are provided on Moodle. Select resources have also been placed on reserve at the library.

Requirements

All assignments should be submitted digitally on Moodle (Word or PDF) and are due by 6:00 pm on the date specified in the course schedule.

All assignments should be formatted in accordance with the "Style Guide for IND 405" document on Moodle.

Disciplinary Reflections (5 @ 10% each)

One week after each unit concludes, students will submit a two-page reflection. Each reflection should (1) forward a claim about death and/or dying—something uniquely revealed by the unit's disciplinary approach—and (2) consider the unit's readings and relevant disciplinary perspectives, theories, concepts, and ideas. To put it simply, each reflection invites students to see some aspect of death and dying through one discrete disciplinary lens.

Disciplinary reflections will be graded by the unit instructor.

Essay (50%)

At the end of the term, students will submit an eight-to-10 page essay, which explores death and dying and employs at least two of the five disciplinary approaches presented in the course. This essay should have a clear and debatable thesis statement, a well-conceived and laid-out argument, and a minimum of 10 relevant scholarly sources.

While there is no specific prompt for this essay, students are invited to consider, on some level, the notion of a "good death" and, thus, to suggest, even if only by implication, something about a good life.

Each essay will be graded by all five course instructors, with the assigned grade determined by averaging the five instructor grades.

Note on Late Submissions and Extensions:

Assignments submitted after the due date will be **penalized 5% per day late**. Extensions may be granted in rare circumstances but must be requested in advance and accompanied by appropriate documentation (e.g. note from physician). Extension requests for disciplinary reflections should be made to the unit instructor; extension requests for the essay should be made only to Dr. Dyck (darren.dyck@ambrose.edu).

Course Schedule

| Date | In the Classroom | Readings | Assignments Due |
|--------|---------------------------------------|--|-------------------|
| Jan 11 | Introductions | | |
| Jan 18 | Unit 1: Sociology (Thiessen) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Walter, "Sociological Perspectives on Death, Dying, and Bereavement" Walter, "Facing Death without Tradition" Walter, "Risk" and "Security and Insecurity" | |
| Jan 25 | Unit 1: Sociology (Thiessen) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Northcott and Wilson, "Dying and Death in Canada Today" Bibby, "Dealing with Death" | |
| Feb 1 | Unit 2: Nursing (Nordstrom) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> "Signs of Approaching Death" Howard, <i>The Biology of Death</i>, pp. 85-108 | Unit 1 Reflection |
| Feb 8 | Unit 2: Nursing (Nordstrom) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Davis, "The Devalued Status of Old Age" McClay, "Epiphanies, Small and Large" Frangou, "Life and How to Leave It" Meier et al., "Defining a Good Death" Gawande, <i>Being Mortal</i>, pp. 149-190 | |
| Feb 15 | Unit 3: Bible & Theology (Toffelmire) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Genesis 1-3 Ecclesiastes John 1 Corinthians Rutledge, "The Descent into Hell" | Unit 2 Reflection |
| Feb 22 | Reading Week: No Class | <p>The 22nd is Ash Wednesday, traditionally a day of fasting and prayer in Western Christianity. On Ash Wednesday, which marks the beginning of Lent, many Christians have ashes 'imposed' upon their foreheads in the shape of a cross.</p> <p>The ashen cross, in addition to being one <i>sign</i> of a Christian, is a <i>memento mori</i>, in the Latin idiom, a reminder that you will die—or, more literally, a reminder <i>to die!</i></p> <p>In the Anglican Book of Common Prayer (Canada), the Ash Wednesday epistle is taken from the Book of James: "Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep: let your laughter be turned to mourning, and your joy to heaviness" (6:9, NASB).</p> | |
| Mar 1 | Unit 3: Bible & Theology (Toffelmire) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Malick, <i>The Tree of Life</i> (film) Gregory of Nyssa, "Concerning Those Who Have Died" Augustine, Selections from <i>The City of God</i> Ireneaeus, Selections from <i>Against Heresies</i> Cavadini, "Two Ancient Christian Views of Suffering and Death" | |
| Mar 8 | Unit 4: Musicology (Michaud) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coming Soon! | Unit 3 Reflection |
| Mar 15 | Unit 4: Musicology (Michaud) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coming Soon! | |
| Mar 22 | Unit 5: English (Dyck) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coming Soon! | Unit 4 Reflection |
| Mar 29 | Unit 5: English (Dyck) | <p>Today is the Ambrose Research Conference. Daytime classes are cancelled, but evening classes continue as scheduled.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coming Soon! | |

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| Apr 5 | Make-up class (if necessary) | | Unit 5 Reflection |
| Apr 12 | Symposium | | |
| Apr 19 | Exam Week: No Class | | Final Essay |

Note on Attendance:

Given that IND 405 is both a night class and team-taught (such that instructors only have two class sessions each), **attendance is extremely important**. Missing even one class puts a student at a significant disadvantage and cannot help but affect his or her grade on that unit’s reflection and, potentially, the final essay. Please aim, therefore, to attend every class session. As you can see from the above course schedule, we’re planning to meet only 12 times, rather than the customary 13. If you absolutely must miss a class session, please arrange **in advance** for one of your classmates to take notes on your behalf. It is not the instructor’s job to ‘catch you up.’ That said, we all welcome you to visit us, either during our office hours or at a pre-arranged time, to discuss course matters.

Grade Summary:

The available letters for course grades are as follows:

| Grade | Percentage | Interpretation | Grade Points |
|-------|--------------|----------------|-----------------|
| A+ | 96 and above | Excellent | 4.00 |
| A | 91-95 | | 4.00 |
| A- | 86-90 | | 3.70 |
| B+ | 82-85 | Good | 3.30 |
| B | 75-81 | | 3.00 |
| B- | 72-74 | | 2.70 |
| C+ | 68-71 | Satisfactory | 2.30 |
| C | 63-67 | | 2.00 |
| C- | 60-62 | | 1.70 |
| D+ | 56-59 | Poor | 1.30 |
| D | 50-55 | Minimal Pass | 1.0 |
| F | Below 50 | Failure | 0.00 |
| P | | Pass | No Grade Points |

Because of the nature of the Alpha 4.00 system, there can be no uniform University-wide conversion scale. The relationship between raw scores (e.g. percentages) and the resultant letter grade will depend on the nature of the course and the instructor’s assessment of the level of each class, compared to similar classes taught previously. Please note that final grades will be available on student registration system. Printed grade sheets are not mailed out.



Detail from *Danse Macabre (Dance of Death)* by Bernt Notke (15th Century)

Ambrose University Important Information

Communication

All students have received an Ambrose e-mail account upon registration. It is the student's responsibility to check this account regularly as the Ambrose email system will be the professor's instrument for notifying students of important matters (cancelled class sessions, extensions, requested appointments, etc.) between class sessions.

Exam Scheduling

Students who find a conflict in their exam schedule must submit a *Revised Final Exam Time Application* to the Office of the Registrar by the deadline noted in the Academic Calendar. Requests will be considered for the following reasons only: 1) the scheduled final examination slot conflicts with another exam; or 2) the scheduled final examination slot results in three consecutive examination periods. Travel is not considered a valid excuse for re-scheduling or missing a final exam.

Standards of Behaviour in the Classroom Setting

Learning is an active and interactive process, a joint venture between student and instructor and between student and student. Some topics covered within a class may lead to strong reactions and opinions. It is important that Students understand that they are entitled to hold contradictory beliefs and that they should be encouraged to engage with these topics in a critical manner. Committing to this type of "active learning" significantly increases the learning experience for both teacher and student, and reflects the Christian imperative to pursue truth, which lies at the heart of the Ambrose educational experience. However, active discussion of controversial topics will be undertaken with respect and empathy, which are the foundations of civil discourse in the Classroom Setting. Primary responsibility for managing the classroom rests with the instructor. The instructor may direct a student to leave the class if the student engages in any behaviour that disrupts the classroom setting. If necessary, Ambrose security will be contacted to escort the student from class. Please refer to your professor regarding their electronic etiquette expectations.

Academic Integrity

We are committed to fostering personal integrity and will not overlook breaches of integrity such as plagiarism and cheating. Academic dishonesty is taken seriously at Ambrose University as it undermines our academic standards and affects the integrity of each member of our learning community. Any attempt to obtain credit for academic work through fraudulent, deceptive, or dishonest means is academic dishonesty. Plagiarism involves presenting someone else's ideas, words, or work as one's own. Plagiarism is fraud and theft, but plagiarism can also occur by accident when a student fails or forgets to acknowledge to another person's ideas or words. Plagiarism and cheating can result in a failing grade for an assignment, for the course, or immediate dismissal from the university. Students are expected to be familiar with the policies in the current Academic Calendar that deal with plagiarism, cheating, and the penalties and procedures for dealing with these matters. All cases of academic dishonesty are reported to the Academic Dean and become part of the student's permanent record.

Academic Policies

It is the responsibility of all students to become familiar with and adhere to academic policies as stated in the Academic Calendar. The academic calendar can be found at <https://ambrose.edu/academics/academic-calendar>.

Privacy

Personal information (information about an individual that may be used to identify that individual) may be required as part of taking this class. Any information collected will only be used and disclosed for the purpose for which the collection was intended. For further information contact the Privacy Compliance Officer at privacy@ambrose.edu.

Coursework Extensions

Should a request for a time extension on coursework exceed the end of the term, a *Coursework Extension Application* must be completed and submitted to the Office of the Registrar. The extension (if granted) will be recorded on the student record. Extensions are granted at the discretion of the instructor and registrar. Normally, Course Extension Applications will be considered only when all of the following conditions are met:

- the quality of prior course work has been satisfactory;
- circumstances beyond your control, such as an extended illness or death of a family member, make it impossible for you to complete the course work on time; and
- you submit *Coursework Extension Application* to the Office of the Registrar on or before the deadline specified in the Academic Schedule.

If granted, time extensions do not excuse you from a final examination where one has been scheduled for the course. A temporary grade of TX will be assigned until a final grade is submitted in accordance with the new deadline. A final grade of F will apply to:

- all course work submitted after the end of the semester unless a coursework extension has been granted; and all course work submitted after the revised due date provided by an approved extension to coursework.

Academic Success and Supports

Accessibility Services

Academic accommodation is provided to Ambrose students with disabilities in accordance with the Alberta Human Rights Act and the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. Provision of academic accommodation does not lower the academic standards of the university nor remove the need for evaluation and the need to meet essential learning outcomes. Reasonable accommodations are tailored to the individual student, are flexible, and are determined by considering the barriers within the unique environment of a postsecondary institution. It can take time to organize academic accommodations and funding for disability-related services. Students with a disability who wish to have an academic accommodation are encouraged to contact Accessibility Services as early as possible to ensure appropriate planning for any needs that may include accommodations. Staff can then meet with students to determine areas to facilitate success, and if accommodations are required, ensure those accommodations are put in place by working with faculty.

Ambrose Writing Services

Ambrose Writing services provides academic support in the four foundational literacy skills—listening, speaking, reading, and writing. It also assists students with critical thinking and the research process. Throughout the academic year, students can meet with a writing tutor for personalized support, or they can attend a variety of workshops offered by Academic Success. These services are free to students enrolled at Ambrose University. Academic Success serves all students in all disciplines and at all levels, from history to biology and from theatre to theology. To learn more, please visit <https://ambrose.edu/sas/writing-services>

Ambrose Tutoring Services

Ambrose Tutoring Services provides support in specific disciplinary knowledge, especially in high-demand areas such as chemistry, philosophy, math and statistics, and religious studies. These tutors also coach students in general study skills, including listening and note-taking. During the academic year, Ambrose Tutoring Services offers drop-in tutoring for courses with high demand; for other courses, students can book a one-to-one appointment with a tutor in their discipline. These services are free to students enrolled at Ambrose University. To learn more, please visit <https://ambrose.edu/tutoring>.

Mental Health Support

All of us need a support system. We encourage students to build mental health supports and to reach out when help is needed.

On Campus:

- Counselling Services: ambrose.edu/counselling
- Peer Supportive Listening: One-to-one support in Student Life office. Hours posted at ambrose.edu/wellness.
- For immediate crisis support, there are staff on campus who are trained in Suicide Intervention and Mental Health First Aid. See <https://ambrose.edu/student-life/crisissupport> for a list of staff members.

Off Campus:

- Distress Centre - 403-266-4357
- Sheldon Chumir Health Care Centre - 403-955-6200
- Emergency - 911

Sexual Violence Support

All staff, faculty, and Residence student leaders have received *Sexual Violence Response to Disclosure* training. We will support you and help you find the resources you need. There is a website with on and off campus supports – ambrose.edu/sexual-violence-response-and-awareness.

Off Campus:

- Clinic: Sheldon Chumir Health Centre - 403-955-6200
- Calgary Communities Against Sexual Abuse - 403-237-5888

Note: Students are strongly advised to retain this syllabus for their records.