Course Objectives:

At the end of this course students should be able to demonstrate their ability to apply their knowledge of grief counseling and grief therapy to work with individuals, families, and groups, in brief therapy and educational models of intervention by:

• accurately assessing a client’s need for grief counseling or grief therapy and planning an appropriate intervention.

• demonstrating their familiarity with the literature supporting the intervention.

• demonstrating their understanding of the influence of society, race, culture, and spiritual beliefs on clients’ attitudes about and behavior relating to loss and death.

• identifying the effect of their own experiences with and/or beliefs about death dying and bereavement on their role as helper.

Course requirements:

Students are expected to be on time for, attend, and actively participate in each class session. If a class is missed due to illness or a personal emergency, the student should contact the instructor prior to class to make arrangements to make up missed material. Student may fail class if more than 2 classes are missed.

Students are expected to do assigned readings prior to each class and to participate in class discussions and role-plays.

Students are expected to complete written assignments on time, unless they have made alternate arrangements with the instructor prior to the due date.

Textbooks and Readings:


Canvas Articles

Assignments

Class participation-20%
Active, thoughtful, regular participation that reflects a critical understanding of the readings and concepts covered in class is required. Class attendance is required. More than 2 missed classes may result in a failing grade for this class.

Assignment #1:
A critical reflection on personal losses  
Worth: 30%  
Part A: DUE WEEK 2 (10 points)  
Create a clear & comprehensive timeline showing your lifelong experience with loss (a wide variety of losses should be shown). Highlight 3-4 loss experiences you consider to be particularly important/meaningful/influential in your life. Can be legibly hand written.

Part B: DUE WEEK 4 (10 points)  
Create a short playlist of songs that represent your most important/meaningful/influential loss(es) in some way. Minimum of 3 songs required. Write 1-2 sentences about each song discussing why you chose it. There are no rights of wrongs, nor scholarly resources required here. Email your list to Lara on DAY BEFORE CLASS…

Part C: DUE Week 6 (80 points)  
Write a 6-8 page paper assessing one of your own significant loss experience(s) and how it/they have shaped you personally and professionally. Minimum of 6 scholarly references required. AT LEAST 2 of the cited readings MUST be a Neimeyer article or chapter. Scholarly resources must be woven throughout entire reflection to back up your thinking.
1. Describe a loss(es) that has been particularly influential in your life (20 points)
2. Assess the impact of your loss(es). – back up thoughts with scholarly literature (50 points)
   - Assess the impact on you specifically
   - Assess any impact on the significant people in your life
   - Explore the influence of your culture, family norms, and/or society on your experience of this loss
   - Utilize established theories on loss & grief to assess your own experience.
3. Discuss your professional interest in loss and grief and assess how your own losses have helped to shape you professionally. (20 points)
   - Explore how your own loss/grief experiences may constitute both professional strengths and challenges.
   - Quality of writing and robust use of scholarly resources (10 points)

Assignment #2-
Movie Reflection
Rachel Getting Married
Due week 10
Use a minimum of 5 scholarly resources. Scholarly resources must be woven throughout entire reflection to back up your thinking.
4-5 pages
Worth-20%  
After viewing the movie Rachel Getting Married, please reflect upon the losses you see in one character and the family as a unit. Answer the following questions.
Assessing Grief of Chosen Character (30 points)

- What losses has this character suffered?
- How does the impact of loss manifest in the character you chose to explore?
- How has loss impacted the family as a whole?
- How does this family cope with their grief?
- Does this qualify as complicated grief for your chosen character? Yes/no? Why?

Please reflect upon the impact of watching this movie on you personally and professionally. (30 points)

- How did it feel to watch this story unfold?
- Were issues of countertransference present for you?
- How has this shifted the way you think about working with grieving families?

Be sure to explore this family from the lens of at least one of the following class concepts (concepts can be woven throughout) ambiguous loss, disenfranchised grief, complicated grief (30 points)

Quality of Writing, use of scholarly literature and APA style (10 points)

Assignment #3

**PLEASE SELECT ONE**

**CHOICE A**

**Process Recording**

Due Week 13

Minimum of 6 scholarly references required

Worth-20%

1. **Part A** - Process Record a session/part of a session (4-6 pages) with a client, couple, family or group that shows your work with loss and/or grief. Use the column method for this process recording and get comments from your field instructor! Identify any theories/concepts from loss and/or grief literature that you feel (at the time or in hindsight) apply in this situation.

**Assignment 2**

2. **PART B** Write 4-5 page paper-supported by scholarly resources from the syllabus (and beyond if you want). Scholarly resources must be woven throughout entire reflection to back up your thinking.
   a. Reflect upon your work in this situation. Discuss your use of grief theory to guide your work from both an assessment and intervention standpoint. Explore why you handled the situation with this client(s) as you did. Back your exploration up with literature.
   b. Explore how it felt to do this kind of work during and after the session. Discuss relevant issues of use of self, boundaries, and/or countertransference.
   c. Discuss your plan for professional growth working with grieving clients.

**OR**

**CHOICE B-READING REFLECTION**

Due Week 13
Minimum of 6 scholarly references required
Worth-20% read the book Turtles All the Way Down by John Green (2017)
Assess the grief experienced by 2 Chosen Characters
Literature, from our class readings, to be used throughout to back up your thinking
5-7 pages
   Loss assessment (30 points)
   - What losses have these characters suffered?
   - How does the impact of loss manifest in the character you chose to explore?
   - How has loss impacted the family as a whole?
   Explore using 2 of the following lenses-meaning making/reconstruction, ambiguous loss, chronic sorrow, disenfranchised grief, traumatic grief (30 points)
   Intervention recommendation (30 points)
   - Make 2-3 recommendations, based on our class learning and readings, for how you might support ONE of these characters grief and healing
Quality of writing/use of scholarly resources, Use of APA style (10 points)

CHOICE C-STUDENT PRESENTATION
ASSIGNED THROUGHOUT SEMESTER-decided by week 4
Create a 40-50 minute experiential group project (3-4 students for each project)
6-8 scholarly references (include your reference list and power point slides as handout)
   o 20 minute POWERPOINT PRESENTATION-(50 points)
   o Briefly explore the kind of losses/grief experienced by your chosen population (i.e.-ambiguous loss related to sexual abuse, traumatic grief, divorce, infertility, grief related to death of a sibling) and how they are impacted by this kind of loss.
   o Discuss your chosen point(s) of intervention-individual, family or group based-why it fits the needs of your chosen population.
   o Present evidence to support your choice. You may have to adapt evidence from other populations or unrelated to grief, but related to your chosen intervention.
   o 20-30 minute EXPERIENTIAL PRESENTATION: (30 points)
   o Select one creative technique, using Neimeyer book as starting point, and teach it to the class. You may NOT choose a technique Lara is already teaching (NO Guided Imagery, Journaling, Collage or Wisdom Groups-sorry)
      o Describe your method of intervention
      o Defend your choice of intervention as it relates to the client(s) specific kind of loss/grief. Use relevant scholarly literature to explore.
      o Discuss any challenges you may face in trying to implement this program
      o Explain the relevance of the specific setting in which this intervention takes place
      o Quality of Presentation (10 points)
      o Quality of Handouts (10 points)
         - Should include-reference list and resource list and brief outline or power point slides for class at a minimum
      o Creativity is highly encouraged. Make this interesting for us!!! Have fun!

Assignment #4
Professional Growth Reflection
1-2 pages –DUE week 14

Worth-10%

Please answer the following questions. There are no rights and wrongs here. Just be honest and open with yourself.

1) Discuss your growth over the course of this class. How have you grown personally and professionally? What are you most surprised by? Most proud of? Most concerned about? How will your growth help you professionally? No citations needed here.

2) What was your favorite topic(s) from this class and why?

3) List your favorite 3-4 readings. BRIEFLY share why they made an impact on you.

COURSE CONTENT

Week 1: Course Introduction: Loss Through a Life Cycle 1/11/18

- Recognizing Loss Through a Life Cycle
- Grieving from Birth to Death
- Defining Loss, Grief, Bereavement & Mourning
- Understanding Loss in Our Own Lives


Open to Hope-Lara Krawchuk’s Interview-Parent Loss-


Week 2: Assessing the Impact of Loss: Individual, Family & Community-1/18/18

- Loss Through the Life cycle-Impact on the Family
- Bio Psycho Social Spiritual Assessment of Loss
- Impact of Culture on Loss and Grief
- Centrality of Loss
- Resilience & Growth

Part A-Assignment 1 DUE


Neimeyer (2012)-Techniques of Grief Therapy Chapter 1, 2, & 82

Week 3: Grief Theories: From Historical Foundations to Current Models 1/25/18

- Attachment and Loss
- Freud and psychodynamic theorists
- Kubler-Ross and Stage Theories
- Task Theories


Week 4: Grief Theories: - Contemporary Theory 2/1/18

- Constructivist Grief Theory-Meaning Making
- Playlists and Meaning Deconstruction
- Meaning Reconstruction

PART B-ASSIGNMENT 1 DUE


Week 5: Grief Theories: Current Models II -2/8/18

- Dual Process Model
- Resilience in grief and loss
- Spirituality and loss


**Week 6 Complicated Grief  2/15/18**
- Assessing and Treating Complicated Grief
- Understanding the Impact of Traumatic Losses
- Moral Injury

**ASSIGNMENT 1-PART C DUE**

Read Neimeyer, Shear and two others


**Week 7: Ambiguous Loss & Chronic Sorrow 2/22/18**
- Recognizing & Treating Ambiguous Loss
- Living Losses
- Chronic Sorrow

**READ BOSS & TELL ARTICLES PLUS TWO OTHERS OF INTEREST TO YOU**


**Week 8: Creative Healing Techniques for Grieving Clients 3/1/18**

- The Mind Body Connection
- Guided Imagery
- Mindfulness
- Art Therapy

**STUDENT PRESENTATION**

**Lara-Guided Imagery with Grieving Clients**


Neimeyer (2012)-Techniques of Grief Therapy Chapters 14, 17, 18, 19, & 20, 35 , 58,
Recommended readings:


Week : SPRING BREAK-3/8/17

Week 9: Disenfranchised Grief 3/15/18
AT HOME CLASS
• Seeds of Disenfranchisement
• Supporting disenfranchised grievers
• Understanding when grief is complicated

WATCH RACHEL GETTING MARRIED ON YOUR OWN
Write reflection paper assignment based on your viewing of this movie-due next week

Read Attig & and two others


**Week 10: Supporting Grieving Children and Adolescents 3/22/18**

- Neurobiology and Loss
- Assessment of children Adolescents
- Treating Grieving Children and adolescents

**RACHEL GETTING MARRIED ASSIGNMENT DUE**

*Center for Grieving Children*


**Recommended reading**-


**Week 11- Supporting Aging Clients through Loss and Grief-3/29/18**
- Assessing and Treating Older Adults
- Dementia and Loss
- Legacy Building

**STUDENT PRESENTATIONS**


**Week 12: Anticipatory Mourning 4/5/18**
- Anticipatory Mourning
- End of Life Care

**READ BERZOUFF & BOUCHAL AND TWO OTHERS**


Week 13: Healing Techniques for Grieving Clients-Traumatic Losses  4/12/18
- Creative Healing
- Poetry-Slamming Open the Door-Katherine Sheeder Bonanno
- Legacy Building

ASSIGNMENT 3-Option A or B DUE

STUDENT PRESENTATION-

ASSIGNMENT 3-Option A or B DUE

STUDENT PRESENTATION-

NPR podcast-Bonanno


Neimeyer (2012)-Techniques of Grief Therapy Chapters 22, 23, 24, 67, 68, 70, 77

Week 14: Compassion Fatigue & Self-Care for Social Workers and Warp-Up celebration 4/19/18
- Compassion Fatigue & Vicarious Trauma
- Sustaining Professional Resilience

ASSIGNMENT #4 DUE

STUDENT PRESENTATION


Neimeyer (2012)-Techniques of Grief Therapy Chapters 92, 93, 94