

PHIL 225 A01: Death and Dying
Fall 2020 | CRN: 12443

All of us will die at some point in the future. But this fact can seem quite dark and unsettling, leading many of us to experience fear if we reflect on it enough. But what does it mean to die, and is being dead really a bad thing? The philosophy of death and dying urges us to think critically about our assumptions and ideas around these topics. In this course, we will explore the nature of death and dying and whether they are bad; the ethics and politics of human efforts to resist death and to become dead; our duties to those who have died; how we face our own deaths; and how we cope with the deaths of others.

Note: This outline gives students a sense of what the course will involve, but it is not the final, official outline. Please feel free to email me if you have any questions.

Instructor	Dr. Katie Stockdale (katiestockdale@uvic.ca)
Office Hours (by Zoom)	CLE B312, Tuesdays & Wednesdays, 10:30 – 11:30 and by appointment.
Communication	You are welcome to visit me in virtual office hours to chat about the course or philosophy any time. If you cannot make my office hours, email me to request an appointment. My pronouns are she/her; please feel free to let me know your name/pronoun preferences as well.
Website	Coming soon!
Course Format	This course is <i>asynchronous</i> , which means that you can work through the course material largely at your own pace. For each week in the course, there will be a checklist of tasks to complete. Students will complete readings, watch short lecture videos, and participate in discussion through the course website. Although it is your choice when, during the week, to complete each task, make sure that you have all of the items crossed off the list before the next week begins!
Readings	All readings will be available on the course website.

Evaluation:

Grading Scale¹	A (Superior performance)	A+: 90-100; A: 85-89; A-: 80-84
	B (Good performance)	B+: 77-79; B: 73-76; B-: 70-72
	C (Adequate performance)	C+: 65-69; C: 60-64
	D (Minimal performance)	50-59
	F (Inadequate performance)	0-49
Assignments²	Participation	10%
	Close Reading Assignment	15%
	Reflection Paper	20%
	Final Paper	25%
	Take-home Exam	30%
Flexibility, Lateness & Extensions	Please email me as soon as possible if you are facing challenges to completing course requirements by the due dates.	

¹ For further detail, see <https://web.uvic.ca/calendar2019-05/undergrad/info/regulations/grading.html>.

² Detailed instructions for all assignments will be posted on the course website.

Accessibility

Students with diverse learning styles and needs are very welcome in this course. If you have a disability/health consideration that may require accommodations, please feel free to approach me and/or the Resource Centre for Students with a Disability (RCSd) as soon as possible. The RCSd staff are available by appointment to assess specific needs, provide referrals and arrange appropriate accommodations <http://rcsd.uvic.ca/>. The sooner you let us know your needs the quicker we can assist you in achieving your learning goals in this course.

Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is intellectual honesty and responsibility for academic work that you submit individual or group work. It involves commitment to the values of honesty, trust, and responsibility. It is expected that students will respect these ethical values in all activities related to learning, teaching, research, and service. Therefore, plagiarism and other acts against academic integrity are serious academic offences.

The responsibility of the institution

Instructors and academic units have the responsibility to ensure that standards of academic honesty are met. By doing so, the institution recognizes students for their hard work and assures them that other students do not have an unfair advantage through cheating on essays, exams, and projects.

The responsibility of the student

Plagiarism sometimes occurs due to a misunderstanding regarding the rules of academic integrity, but it is the responsibility of the student to know them. If you are unsure about the standards for citations or for referencing your sources, ask your instructor. Depending on the severity of the case, penalties include a warning, a failing grade, a record on the student's transcript, or a suspension.

It is your responsibility to understand the University's policy on academic integrity.³

Intellectual Property

Please note that all assignments for this course and all materials posted to the course website are the intellectual property of myself and the University of Victoria. Do not circulate this material or post it to note-sharing sites without my permission. Posting course materials to note-sharing sites or otherwise circulating course materials without the permission of your instructor violates the Policy on Academic Integrity.⁴ Any evidence you are circulating materials without permission will be referred to the Chair of the Philosophy Department for investigation.

Territory Acknowledgement: The University of Victoria is committed to acknowledging and respecting the Songhees, Esquimalt and WSÁNEĆ peoples on whose traditional territory the University stands and whose historical relationships with the land continue to this day. For information about support for Indigenous students and efforts to foster reconciliation, please visit the Office of Indigenous Academic & Community Engagement.

³ For more information, see <http://web.uvic.ca/calendar2012/FACS/UnIn/UARe/PoAcI.html>.

⁴ For more information, see <http://web.uvic.ca/calendar/FACS/UnIn/UARe/PoAcI.html>.

Course schedule: (tentative and subject to change before the course begins):

Note: The lecture videos will be very short, so don't worry! The workload for this course will be no more than in person. You can think of each bullet as a task to check off for the week. Once you check off all the items on the list, you have completed the week's tasks for the course and are all caught up! Assignment due dates are TBD at this time.

Week 1: Introducing Ourselves and Welcome! (September 9-11)

- Watch video, *Welcome to the Course!*
- Read course syllabus
- Fill out Introductory Survey, *Getting to Know Students*
- *Optional:* join Zoom discussion (time TBD; recorded for students who cannot attend)
- *Optional:* post questions you have for me on the "Introductory Q&A" discussion thread

Week 2: What is Death? (September 14-18)

- Watch video, *Introductory Remarks*
- Read Arthur Caplan, "Death: An Evolving, Normative Concept"
 - Watch mini lecture, *Defining Death*
- Read TBD
 - Watch mini lecture, TBD
- *Optional:* join Zoom discussion, (time TBD; recorded for students who cannot attend)
- Discussion thread, complete Q&A # 9 by Friday, 11:59pm

Week 3: Is Death Bad? (September 21-25)

- Watch video, *Introductory Remarks*
- Read Epicurus, *Letter to Menoeceus*
 - Watch mini lecture, *Thinking with Epicurus*
- Read Thomas Nagel, "Death"
 - Watch mini lecture, *The Badness of Death*
- *Optional:* join Zoom discussion, (time TBD; recorded for students who cannot attend)
- Discussion thread, complete Q&A # 9 by Friday, 11:59pm

Week 4: The Fear of Death (September 28-October 2)

- Watch video, *Introductory Remarks*
- Read Amelie Rorty, "Fearing Death"
 - Watch mini lecture, *What is Fear?*
 - Watch mini lecture, *Should We Fear Death?*
- *Optional:* join Zoom discussion, (time TBD; recorded for students who cannot attend)
- Discussion thread, complete Q&A # 9 by Friday, 11:59pm

Week 5: Social Perspectives on the Badness of Death (October 5-9)

- Watch video, *Introductory Remarks*
- Read Lori Gruen, "Death as a Social Harm" (p. 53-61 only)
 - Watch mini lecture, *Death and Social Harm*
- Read Amy Olderding, "Is the Death of an Elder Worse than the Death of a Young Person?"
 - Watch mini lecture, *Are Some Deaths Worse than Other Deaths?*
- *Optional:* join Zoom discussion, (time TBD; recorded for students who cannot attend)
- Discussion thread, complete Q&A # 9 by Friday, 11:59pm

Week 6: Resisting Death (October 13-16)

- Watch video, *Introductory Remarks*
- Martha Nussbaum, "Aging, Stigma, and Disgust"
 - Watch mini lecture, *Resisting Death*
- Read Christopher Wareham, "How Can Life-Extending Treatments be Available for All?"
 - Watch mini lecture, *The Quest to Live Forever*

- *Optional*: join Zoom discussion, (time TBD; recorded for students who cannot attend)
- Discussion thread, complete Q&A # 9 by Friday, 11:59pm

Week 7: The Duty to Die (October 19-23)

- Watch video, *Introductory Remarks*
- Read John Hardwig, "Is there a Duty to Die?"
 - Watch mini lecture, *The Duty to Die*
- Read TBD
 - Watch mini lecture, TBD
- *Optional*: join Zoom discussion, (time TBD; recorded for students who cannot attend)
- Discussion thread, complete Q&A # 9 by Friday, 11:59pm

Week 8: Choosing Death (October 26-30)

- Watch video, *Introductory Remarks*
- Read James Rachels, "Active and Passive Euthanasia"
 - Watch mini lecture, *Euthanasia*
- Read Anita Ho, "Choosing Death: Autonomy and Ableism"
 - Mini lecture, *Autonomous Decisions to Die*
 - Mini lecture, *How Ableism Affects Autonomy*
- *Optional*: join Zoom discussion, (time TBD; recorded for students who cannot attend)
- Discussion thread, complete Q&A # 9 by Friday, 11:59pm

Week 9: Preventing Death (November 2-6)

- Watch video, *Introductory Remarks*
- Read Norah Martin, "Preserving Trust, Maintaining Care, and Saving Lives: Competing Feminist Values in Suicide Prevention"
 - Mini lecture, *Values and Suicide Prevention*
 - Mini lecture, *Challenges for Suicide Prevention*
- *Optional*: join Zoom discussion, (time TBD; recorded for students who cannot attend)
- Discussion thread, complete Q&A # 9 by Friday, 11:59pm

Week 10: Reading Break (November 9-11)

No tasks to complete!

Week 11: Thoughts in the Face of Death (November 16-20)

- Watch video, *Introductory Remarks*
- Read Luc Bovens, "Secular Hopes in the Face of Death"
 - Watch mini lecture, *What is Hope?*
 - Watch mini Lecture, *Hope and Death*
- Read Audre Lorde, "The Transformation of Silence into Language and Action"
 - Watch mini lecture, *Death and Perspective*
- *Optional*: join Zoom discussion, (time TBD; recorded for students who cannot attend)
- Discussion thread, complete Q&A # 9 by Friday, 11:59pm

Week 12: Relationships with the Dead (November 23-27)

- Watch video, *Introductory Remarks*
- Read Kathryn J. Norlock, "Real (and) Imaginal Relationships with the Dead"
 - Mini lecture, *Can We Have Relationships with the Dead?*
- Read Barry Lam, "Is it Moral to Respect the Wishes of the Dead, above the Living?"
 - Mini lecture, *Honouring the Dead*
- *Optional*: join Zoom discussion, (time TBD; recorded for students who cannot attend)
- Discussion thread, complete Q&A # 9 by Friday, 11:59pm

Week 13: Grieving Others' Deaths (November 13-December 4)

- Watch video, *Introductory Remarks*
- Read Lori Gruen, "Death as a Social Harm" (61-65)
- Read Robert C. Solomon, "On Grief and Gratitude"
 - Watch mini lecture, *The Nature of Grief*
 - Watch mini lecture, *The Value of Grief*
- *Optional*: join Zoom discussion, (time TBD; recorded for students who cannot attend)
- Discussion thread, complete Q&A # 9 by Friday, 11:59pm