

TE WHARE WĀNANGA O TE ŪPOKO O TE IKA A MĀUI



**VICTORIA**  
UNIVERSITY OF WELLINGTON

SCHOOL OF SOCIAL AND CULTURAL STUDIES

*Te Kura Mahinga Tangata*

**Sociology and Social Policy**

**SOSC/SPOL 217**

*Special Topic:*

*Sociology of Dying & Death*

# Course Outline

CRN 11381/11382: 20 POINTS: TRIMESTER 2, 2010

*Teaching dates: 12 July – 15 October 2010*

*Study/Examination period: 18 October- 13 November 2010*

**COURSE COORDINATOR: DR ALLISON KIRKMAN**

*Room 1013, Murphy Building*

*Tel: (04) 463 5676*

*Email: [allison.kirkman@vuw.ac.nz](mailto:allison.kirkman@vuw.ac.nz)*

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**LECTURES: MON 10am – 11am & WED 10am – 12noon: AM LT102**

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## **COURSE COORDINATOR**

Allison Kirkman  
Murphy Building, MY 1013  
Tel: 04 463 5676  
E-mail: [allison.kirkman@vuw.ac.nz](mailto:allison.kirkman@vuw.ac.nz)

## **OFFICE HOURS**

Monday 2- 3pm

## **LECTURE TIMES**

Monday, 10 – 11am

Wednesday, 10am – 12noon – please note that one hour of the Wednesday slot will be used for discussion and viewing course-related videos, and replaces a tutorial programme.

## **OTHER CONTACT INFORMATION**

Head of School: Dr Allison Kirkman, MY1013  
Tel: 463 5676 E-m: [Allison.Kirkman@vuw.ac.nz](mailto:Allison.Kirkman@vuw.ac.nz)

International Student Liaison: Dr Hal Levine MY1023  
Tel: 463 6132 E-m: [Hal.Levine@vuw.ac.nz](mailto:Hal.Levine@vuw.ac.nz)

Maori and Pacific Student Liaison: Dr Trevor Bradley, MY1101  
Tel: 463 5432 E-m: [Trevor.Bradley@vuw.ac.nz](mailto:Trevor.Bradley@vuw.ac.nz)

Students with Disabilities Liaison: Dr Russil Durrant, MY1120  
Tel: 463 9980 E-m: [russil.durrant@vuw.ac.nz](mailto:russil.durrant@vuw.ac.nz)

School Manager: Carol Hogan, MY918  
Tel: 463 6546 E-m: [Carol.Hogan@vuw.ac.nz](mailto:Carol.Hogan@vuw.ac.nz)

School Administrators: Monica Lichti, Alison Melling, Heather Day  
MY921, Tel: 463 5317; 463 5258; 463 5677  
E-m: [sacs@vuw.ac.nz](mailto:sacs@vuw.ac.nz)

## **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

Additional information related to the course will be available on the Blackboard website at <http://www.blackboard.vuw.ac.nz>. The School website can be found at: <http://www.victoria.ac.nz/sacs>. On the same page you will also find *Sociolog*, a chronicle of reflections written by SOSC/SPOL staff and postgraduate students.

## **COURSE CONTENT**

This course will explore sociological perspectives on dying and death. Topics will include: societal and cultural attitudes toward death and dying, the relationship of gender, sexuality, class, ethnicity and age to dying and death, technologies and rituals relating to dying and death. Special attention will be paid to dying and death in New Zealand.

## **LEARNING OBJECTIVES**

This course aims to introduce you to sociological approaches to the study of dying and death.

By the end of the course students should:

- ✓ be able to identify societal and cultural attitudes toward death and dying
- ✓ be able to identify sociological perspectives on death and dying
- ✓ be able to critically analyse the influence of gender, sexuality, class, ethnicity and age on dying and death
- ✓ be able to evaluate research methodologies for studying death and dying
- ✓ be able to apply knowledge of death and dying to New Zealand society.

## **COURSE MATERIAL FOR SOSC/SPOL 217**

**Each student should buy Student Notes from the Student Notes Distribution Centre on the ground floor of the student union building, since ready access to and familiarity with its contents will be required throughout the course.**

For the first two weeks of trimester all undergraduate textbooks and student notes will be sold from the Memorial Theatre foyer, while postgraduate textbooks and student notes will be sold from vicbooks in the Student Union Building, Kelburn Campus. After week two all textbooks will be sold from vicbooks and student notes from the Student Notes Distribution Centre on the ground floor of the Student Union Building.

Students can order textbooks and student notes online at [www.vicbooks.co.nz](http://www.vicbooks.co.nz) or can email an order or enquiry to [enquiries@vicbooks.co.nz](mailto:enquiries@vicbooks.co.nz). Books can be couriered to customers or they can be picked up from nominated collection points at each campus. Students will be contacted when they are available.

Opening hours are 8.00 am – 6.00 pm, Monday – Friday during term time (closing at 5.00 pm in the holidays). Phone: 463 5515.

## LECTURE PROGRAMME

While attendance at lectures is not compulsory, students are expected to regularly attend lectures, and will find this an advantage if they do so.

<b>Week 1</b>	<b><i>Introduction</i></b>
12 July	Introduction to the course
14 July	Film – Deadly Business
14 July	Information on the first assessment item
<b>Week 2</b>	<b><i>How and when we die</i></b>
19 July	How we die – the New Zealand picture
21 July	Sudden death (Gerard Hoffman)
21 July	Sudden death
<b>Week 3</b>	<b><i>How and when we die</i></b>
26 July	The age of dying
28 July	Documentary – Life, death and a living transplant
28 July	Intensive Care
<b>Week 4</b>	<b><i>How and when we die</i></b>
2 August	Organ donation (Dr Rhonda Shaw)
4 August	Social death and dementia
4 August	Documentary
<b>Week 5</b>	<b><i>Care while dying</i></b>
9 August	Essay 2 discussion
11 August	Film (to be announced)
11 August	Film (to be announced)
<b>Week 6</b>	<b><i>Care while dying</i></b>
16 August	Cancer and hospice care
18 August	Film - The Story of the Quilt
18 August	HIV/AIDS
23 August – 5 September	<b>Mid-Trimester Break</b>

<b>Week 7</b>	<b><i>Bereavement and remembering</i></b>
6 September	Managing grief and remembering
8 September	Documentary - Only human: life after death
8 September	Preparation for Project- Examining cemeteries
<b>Week 8</b>	<b><i>The funeral industry</i></b>
13 September	Disposal of the body
15 September	Documentary - Inside New Zealand, donated to science
15 September	Burial and cremation
<b>Week 9</b>	<b><i>The funeral industry</i></b>
20 September	Memorialisation
22 September	Documentary - Funeral of the Māori Queen
22 September	Tangihanga
<b>Week 10</b>	<b><i>Cultural attitudes toward death</i></b>
27 September	Culture and rituals associated with death
29 September	The media and death
29 September	Documentary – The death of the Princess of Wales
<b>Week 11</b>	<b><i>Celebrities and death</i></b>
4 October	The media and death
6 October	Euthanasia and end of life care
6 October	Documentary -The promise: the Lesley Martin story
<b>Week 12</b>	<b><i>Current issues</i></b>
11 October	Controversies around death and dying
13 October	Review of course
13 October	Review of course

## EXPECTED WORKLOAD

University guidelines stipulate that a one-trimester course worth 20 points should require 13 hours per week, including class time, of student work.



accompanied by the analysis. Further information about the project will be provided in class.

## **RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LEARNING OBJECTIVES AND ASSESSMENT**

The forms of assessment will assist you to achieve the learning objectives outlined above and to develop skills in dealing with the study of the sociology of dying and death.

In the first assessment item, the assignment, students are able to demonstrate their ability to identify the social contexts in which dying and death take place in New Zealand

In the second assessment item, the essay, students are able to demonstrate their knowledge of a range of sociological theories and concepts related to dying and death

The project allows students to reflect on dying and death in contemporary society, demonstrate their knowledge of sociological concepts, and apply these in a New Zealand context.

## **MANDATORY COURSE REQUIREMENT**

To gain a pass in this course, students must:

- ▲ Submit the assignment, essay and project.

## **PENALTIES FOR LATE SUBMISSION**

Late submissions for student assignments in all Sociology and Social Policy undergraduate courses are subject to a penalty. The exact deduction will be calculated on the basis of one half mark per day late for each 10 marks, i.e. 1 mark will be deducted each day for an assignment worth 20% of the total course mark.

*Note: assessment work will not be accepted for marking more than 7 days after the due date or 7 days after an approved extension date. Work must still, however, be submitted to meet the mandatory course requirements.*

You are advised to always keep a copy of any work you submit for assessment.

## **CLASS REPRESENTATIVE**

A class representative will be recruited in consultation with the class at the beginning of the course. The class rep's name and contact details will be available to the Victoria University of Wellington Students' Association (VUWSA), the course coordinator and the class (on BlackBoard). The class representative provides a communication channel to liaise with the course coordinator on behalf of students.

## **COURSE WITHDRAWAL PROCEDURES**

If you decide for ANY reason at ANY stage to withdraw from SOSC/SPOL 217 (or any other course) please see the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences office on the 4<sup>th</sup> floor of the Murphy Building for an Add/Drop Course form. Failure to do so may have consequences for enrolment, student grants, allowances, loans, etc., i.e. you will get credited with a fail, not a withdrawal on your record if you do not act promptly.

Information on withdrawals and refunds may be found at

<http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/admisenrol/payments/withdrawalsrefunds.aspx>

## **GENERAL UNIVERSITY POLICIES AND STATUTES**

Students should familiarise themselves with the University's policies and statutes, particularly the Assessment Statute, the Personal Courses of Study Statute, the Statute on Student Conduct and any statutes relating to the particular qualifications being studied; see the *Victoria University Calendar* or go to the Academic Policy and Student Policy sections on:

<http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about/policy>

The AVC(Academic) website also provides information for students in a number of areas including Academic Grievances, Student and Staff conduct, Meeting the needs of students with impairments, and student support/VUWSA student advocates. This website can be accessed at:

[http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about\\_victoria/avcacademic/Publications.aspx](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about_victoria/avcacademic/Publications.aspx)

## **ACADEMIC INTEGRITY AND PLAGIARISM**

Academic integrity means that university staff and students, in their teaching and learning are expected to treat others honestly, fairly and with respect at all times. It is not acceptable to mistreat academic, intellectual or creative work that has been done by other people by representing it as your own original work.

Academic integrity is important because it is the core value on which the University's learning, teaching and research activities are based. Victoria University's reputation for academic integrity adds value to your qualification.

The University defines plagiarism as presenting someone else's work as if it were your own, whether you mean to or not. 'Someone else's work' means anything that is not your own idea. Even if it is presented in your own style, you must acknowledge your sources fully and appropriately. This includes:

- Material from books, journals or any other printed source
- The work of other students or staff
- Information from the internet
- Software programs and other electronic material



- Designs and ideas
- The organisation or structuring of any such material

Find out more about plagiarism, how to avoid it and penalties, on the University's website: <http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/plagiarism.aspx>

## **ADDITIONAL READINGS**

The following list provides further readings. 3DL refers to those books on 3 day loan.

The following two books provide an introduction to the sociology of dying and death (there is a chapter from both in the Book of Readings):

Howarth, G. (2007). *Death and Dying: A Sociological Introduction*. Cambridge, Polity Press. 3DL

Seale, C. (1998). *Constructing Death: The Sociology of Dying and Bereavement*. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press. 3DL

### **General**

Many introductory texts on sociology have a section on death and dying. Three are listed here. The first (Furze et al. is an Australasian text).

Furze, B., Savy, P., Brym, R. J., and Lie, J. (2008) *Sociology in today's world*. South Melbourne, Vic., Cengage Learning Australia.

Bilton, T.[et al.] with J. Stanyer and P. Stephens. (2002) *Introductory sociology*. New York, Palgrave.

Macionis, J.J., and Plummer, K. (2002) *Sociology :a global introduction*. New York, Pearson Education.

### **Classics in the Sociology of Dying and Death**

Durkheim, E. (1951). *Suicide, a study in sociology*. Glencoe, Ill., Free Press.

Glaser, B. G. and A. L. Strauss (1965). *Awareness of dying*. Chicago, Aldine. 3DL

Glaser, B. G. and A. L. Strauss (1968). *Time for dying*. Chicago, Aldine. 3DL

Glaser, B. G. and A. L. Strauss (2007). *Time for dying*. New Brunswick, NJ, Aldine. 3DL Transaction.

Sudnow, D. (1967). *Passing On: The Social Organisation of Dying*. Englewood Cliffs, N.J., Prentice-Hall. 3DL

## **Death and Dying**

Blackmore, S. J. (1993). *Dying to live: near-death experiences*. Buffalo, N.Y., Prometheus Books. 3DL

Carr, D. (2003). "A "Good Death" for Whom? Quality of Spouse's Death and Psychological Distress among Older Widowed Persons." *Journal of Health and Social Behavior* 44 (June): 215-232.

Charmaz, K., Howarth, G., and Kellehear, A. (eds) (1997) *The unknown country : experiences of death in Australia, Britain, and the USA*. New York, St. Martin's Press.

Clark, D. (ed) (1993) *The sociology of death: theory, culture, practice*. Oxford, Blackwell Publishers/The Sociological Review.

Davies, D. J. (2005). *A brief history of death*. Malden, MA Blackwell. 3DL

DeShazer, M. K. (2005). *Fractured borders: reading women's cancer literature*. Ann Arbor University of Michigan Press. 3DL

Dickenson, D. and M. L. Johnson (1993). *Death, dying and bereavement*. London; Newbury Park, Calif., Sage Publications in association with the Open University. 3DL

Green, J. W. (2008). *Beyond the good death: the anthropology of modern dying*. Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press. 3DL

Hockey, J., Katz, J. and Small, N. (eds) (2001). *Grief, Mourning and Death Ritual*. Buckingham, Open University Press. 3DL

Howarth, G. (2000) Dismantling the boundaries between life and death, *Mortality* 5(2): 127-138.

Kearl, M. C. (1989). *Endings: a sociology of death and dying*. New York, Oxford University Press. 3DL

Kellehear, A. (1990). *Dying of cancer: the final year of life*. Chur [Switzerland]; New York, Harwood Academic Publishers. 3DL

Kellehear, A. (2006). *A social history of dying*. New York, Cambridge University Press. 3DL

Timmermans, S. (1998). "Social Death as a Self-Fulfilling Prophecy: David Sudnow's Passing On Revisited." *The Sociological Quarterly* 39(3): 453-472.

### **Cultural and Ethnic Diversity**

Irish, D. P., K. F. Lundquist, et al. (1993). *Ethnic variations in dying, death, and grief: diversity in universality*. Washington, DC Taylor & Francis. 3DL

Jackson, C. O. (1977). *Passing: the vision of death in America*. Westport, Conn., Greenwood Press. 3DL

Jalland, P. (2006). *Changing ways of death in twentieth-century Australia: war, medicine, and the funeral business*. Sydney, UNSW Press. 3DL

Leach, M. M. (2006). *Cultural diversity and suicide: ethnic, religious, gender, and sexual orientation perspectives*. New York, Haworth Press. 3DL

Parkes, C. M., Laungani, P. and Young, B. (eds) (1997). *Death and bereavement across cultures*. London, Routledge.

Robben, A. C. G. M. (2004). *Death, mourning, and burial: a cross-cultural reader*. Malden, MA Blackwell.

Rosenblatt, P. C., Walsh, R. P. and Jackson, D.A. (1976). *Grief and mourning in cross-cultural perspective*. New Haven, Conn., HRAF Press. 3DL

## **Intensive Care**

Baird, R. M., and Rosenbaum, S. E. (eds) (2003) *Caring for the dying: critical issues at the edge of life*. Amherst, N.Y., Prometheus Books.

Hadders, H. (2007) Dealing with the dead patient at the intensive care unit, *Mortality* 12(3): 207-222.

Seymour, J. E., (2001) *Critical Moments – Death and Dying in Intensive Care*. Buckingham, Open University Press.

Seymour, J. E. (2000) Negotiating natural death in intensive care, *Social Science and Medicine* 51: 1241-1252.

Seymour, J. E. (1999) Revisiting medicalisation and 'natural' death, *Social Science and Medicine* 49: 691-704.

## **Hospice Care**

Eschenbruch, N. (2006). *Nursing stories: life and death in a German hospice*. New York, Berghahn Books. 3DL

Froggatt, K. (1997) Rite of passage and hospice culture, *Mortality* 2 (2): 123-136.

Kubler-Ross, E. (1970). *On death and dying*. London, Tavistock. 3DL

Lawton, J. (1998) Contemporary Hospice Care: The Sequestration of the Unbounded Body and 'Dirty Dying', *Sociology of Health and Illness*, 20 (2): 121-143.

McNamara, B. (2004) Good enough death: autonomy and choice in Australian palliative care, *Social Science and Medicine* 58(5): 929-938.

Saunders, C. (1990). *Hospice and palliative care: an interdisciplinary approach*. Sevenoaks : Edward Arnold.

## **Remembering**

Fowler, B. (2007) *The obituary as collective memory*. New York, Routledge.

Hallam, E and Hockey, J. (2001) *Death, memory and material culture*. Oxford, Berg.  
3DL

Starck, N. (2006) *Life after death: the art of the obituary*. Carlton, Vic., Australia, Melbourne University Press.

Vanderstraeten. R. (2009) Modes of Individualisation at Cemeteries. *Sociological Research Online*, 14 (4): <<http://www.socresonline.org.uk/14/4/10.html>>.

## **Burial and Cremation**

Davies, D. J. and L. H. Mates (2005). *Encyclopedia of cremation*. Aldershot, England Ashgate. 3DL

Grainger, H. J. (2005). *Death redesigned: British crematoria, history, architecture and landscape*. Reading Spire Books. 3DL

Prothero, S. R. (2001). *Purified by fire: a history of cremation in America*. Berkeley University of California Press. 3DL

## **End of Life Issues**

Birnbacher, D. and E. Dahl, Eds. (2008). *Giving death a helping hand: physician-assisted suicide and public policy. An international perspective*. Dordrecht, Springer. 3DL

Hillyard, D. and Dombrink, J. (2001). *Dying right: the death with dignity movement*. New York Routledge. 3DL

Radley, A. and Payne, S. (2009) A sociological commentary on the refusal of treatment by patients with cancer, *Mortality* 14(4): 309-324.

Warnock, M. and E. Macdonald (2008). *Easeful death: is there a case for assisted dying?* Oxford, Oxford University Press. 3DL

Young, R. (2007). *Medically assisted death*. Cambridge Cambridge University Press.  
3DL

Yount, L. (2007). *Right to die and euthanasia*. New York NY Facts on File. 3DL

## **New Zealand**

Budge, P. (1988). *Te Omanga Hospice : the genesis*. Lower Hutt, P. Budge.

Davey, J. (1998) 'Death' in *Tracking Social Change in New Zealand*. Wellington, Institute of Policy Studies, 219-234.

Schafer, C. (2007) Post-mortem personalization: pastoral power and the New Zealand funeral director, *Mortality* 12(1): 4-21.

Schwass, M (2005). *Last words : approaches to death in New Zealand's cultures and faiths*. Wellington, Bridget Williams Books with the Funeral Directors Association of New Zealand.

Wood, S., P. Fox, et al. (2006). *Dying: a New Zealand guide for the journey*. Auckland Calico Pub. 3DL

## **Journals**

Useful journals in the VUW Library are:

*Sociology of Health and Illness*

*Social Science and Medicine*

*Journal of Near-Death Studies*

*Death Studies*

*Mortality*

Office use only

Date Received:

# School of Social and Cultural Studies

Te Kura Mahinga Tangata

CULTURAL ANTHROPOLOGY

CRIMINOLOGY

SOCIOLOGY & SOCIAL POLICY

## Assignment Cover Sheet

*(please write legibly)*

Full Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
*(Last name)* *(First name)*

Student ID: \_\_\_\_\_ Course (eg ANTH101): \_\_\_\_\_

Tutorial Day: \_\_\_\_\_ Tutorial Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Tutor (if applicable): \_\_\_\_\_

Assignment Due Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### CERTIFICATION OF AUTHENTICITY

*I certify that this paper submitted for assessment is the result of my own work, except where otherwise acknowledged.*

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_