



North Carolina Central University  
"Communicating to Succeed"  
**School of Education**

***The School of Education's Vision:*** *To become an international community of scholars who are culturally responsive educators and practitioners*

**MISSION**

The mission of North Carolina Central University is to prepare students academically and professionally to become leaders to advance consciousness of social responsibility in a diverse, global society. In accordance with the larger institution, the mission of the North Carolina Central School of Education is "to prepare educational professionals to serve and inspire excellence in teaching, administration, counseling, communication, technology, community outreach, and other related services". Central to this aim is "the development of leaders who promote social justice and dedicate themselves to the well-being of a global society". The Counselor Education Program prepares counselors to work in mental health, school, and career counseling settings who promote social justice and responsibility, serve as leaders in a diverse and global community, and respond to the complexity of human needs across the lifespan. To this end, the program emphasizes increasing awareness, knowledge, and skills in interacting with economically, socially, and culturally diverse populations. Our partnerships with local agencies and schools foster an understanding of multicultural and diverse populations and counseling interventions that promote empowerment.

***Syllabus***  
**CON 5307 OL(1)**  
**Crisis, Trauma, and Grief Counseling**  
**Spring 2019**  
**Distance Education**

**Instructor:** Dr. Peggy P. Whiting, Ed.D., NC Licensed Professional Counselor Supervisor, K-12 Licensed School Counselor, Fellow in Thanatology  
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**Phone:** (919) 530-6182  
**Email:** pwhiting@nccu.edu  
**Office Hours:** Because this is an online class, you may meet with me virtually on these days: Monday 2-4pm; Tuesday 4-7pm; Wednesday 1-4pm; and Thursday 5-7pm. I am also available to schedule on campus if that is preferred. Additionally, I can arrange other times if this works better

for your schedule. Please email me to schedule.

### **Required Textbooks:**

Webber, J. M. & Mascari, J. B. (2018). *Disaster mental health counseling: A guide to preparing and responding*, (4<sup>th</sup> edition). Alexandria, VA: ACA Foundation.

Worden, W. (2018). *Grief counseling and grief therapy* (5<sup>th</sup> edition). New York, NY: Springer Publishing.

### **Recommended Readings:**

Meagher, D. K. & Balk, D. E. (Eds.). (2013). *Handbook of thanatology: The essential body of knowledge for the study of death, dying, and bereavement*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition. New York, NY: Routledge.

Neimeyer, R. A. (Ed.). (2012). *Techniques of grief therapy: Creative practices for counseling the bereaved*. New York, NY: Routledge.

Neimeyer, R.A., Harris, D.L., Winokur, H.R., & Thornton, G.F. (Eds.). (2011). *Grief and bereavement in contemporary society: Bridging research and practice*. New York, NY: Routledge.

Stillion, J.M., & Attig, T. (Eds.). (2015). *Death, dying, and bereavement: Contemporary perspectives, institutions, and practices*. New York, NY: Springer Publishing Co.

### **Course Description:**

This course will provide specialized instruction for candidates in the Mental Health Counseling concentration of the Counselor Education Program. Candidates will learn advocacy, consultation, crisis intervention and clinical strategies for assisting clients facing life changes, transitions across the lifespan, and grief and traumatic events.

### **Expanded Course Information:**

This course is a requirement for clinical mental health counselors and may be used as an elective for other counseling students and NCCU students in other clinical programs such as communications disorders, psychology, criminal justice, and nursing. This course is designed to offer a broad conceptualization of personal loss/trauma and grief as a generic experience resulting from a variety of changes and life events throughout the lifespan. Personal loss is therefore defined in this course as “any experience across the lifespan that demands the surrender of something personally significant and/or familiar”. This grounding loss definition teaches students to recognize multiple client issues as concerns of loss, including but not limited to death events. Personal loss is an inevitable and universal human experience with the power to imprint its impact upon an individual’s life and become an influencing factor in his/her development. The

influence either promotes or retards development, functioning, and resilience depending upon how loss is accommodated and incorporated into the psychological structure of the affected individual.

The class educates students in the recognition of client issues of personal loss/trauma and equips them with knowledge necessary to promote healthy reconciliation of change. Areas of discussion include: theories of transitions across the lifespan; the impact of crisis, disaster, and trauma events upon affected persons; the major theoretical models of crisis intervention, trauma, and grief; the exploration of developmental differences in the way grief is experienced; the principles, skills, and interventions of counselors dealing with those in grief, trauma, and crisis; the impact of diversity upon the individual's experience; *compassion fatigue* for caregivers; and the best practice diagnostic and clinical interventions for situations of uncomplicated and complicated grief. This course assumes a familial and environmental context of grieving. The course is founded upon the premise of an individual's evolving personal narrative, a social story of identity and meaning within one's life rooted within a systems context. Loss reconciliation unfolds when an individual can successfully expand the narrative to add greater depth of meaning of life experiences, including those of grief, crisis, and trauma.

This is not a sociology course on death and dying. The spirit of the class is to teach clinical persons the best intervention practices in client issues of personal trauma, crisis, and grief.

The power of the material of this course often prompts recollection of very personal loss situations. As *reflective practitioners*, I encourage each of us to come to know our own loss sources and processes. We will experiment with some means for encouraging expression in ourselves and in our clients. While it is healthy, appropriate, and unavoidable to reflect upon the learning from our own lives, it is critical to understand the educational intention of this course. Personal experiences can be rich illustrations of the content of the class. Confronting our own losses allows us to *presence* with others in an uncontaminated way. This is, however, an educational learning environment that is separate from a more therapeutic method of assisting with a personal loss journey. As the instructor, I assume the responsibility of protecting the educational goal of the course. Should you find yourself in need of greater support regarding your own losses, please consult with the university counseling center or the instructor for outside referral options.

### **Methods of Teaching:**

Students will learn through video lectures, reading, active interaction in the discussion boards, and through the use of a variety of technological instruction methodologies. The course will utilize online instruction through the Blackboard platform. Students will be expected to assume responsibility for independent learning. Students will be active learners as they demonstrate knowledge, competencies, and skills. It is my belief that learner success is linked to learner engagement. I strive to offer research-based knowledge, evidence-based practice interventions,

higher order rigorous and reflective learning and to do so within the safety of an online community of learners.

### **CACREP Standards Addressed in Course:**

This class responds to the 2016 counseling national standards listed in Section II. These include technology's impact on the counseling profession (F.1.j); self-care strategies appropriate to the counselor role (F.1.l); help-seeking behaviors of diverse clients (F.2.f); the impact of spiritual beliefs on clients' and counselors' worldview (F.2.g); biological, neurological, and physiological factors that affect human development, functioning, and behavior (F.3.e); effects of crisis, disasters, and trauma on diverse individuals across the lifespan (F.3.g); suicide prevention models and strategies (F.5.l); crisis intervention, trauma-informed, and community-based strategies, such as Psychological First Aid (F.5.m); and the use of assessments for diagnostic and intervention planning purposes (F.7.e).

Additionally, this course responds to the 2016 specialty standards for clinical mental health counseling in Section V including impact of crisis and trauma on individuals with mental health diagnoses (C.2.f); and professional organizations, preparation standards, and credentials relevant to the practice of clinical mental health (C.2.k).

### **Specific Student Learning Outcomes and Assessments:**

The content and experiences of this course are sequenced such that students will be able to:

- **Discover and evaluate the effects of loss, crisis, and trauma events throughout the lifespan.** This will be assessed through the narrative interview and the case examples within the in-class exercises throughout the course. (CACREP F.3.g; CMHC C.2.f)
- **Identify the particular losses precipitated by chronological, situational, and developmental transitions and events of trauma & crisis throughout the lifespan.** This will be assessed through examinations and case examples throughout the course. (CACREP F.2.g, F.3.e, F.3.g)
- **Research & apply the major theoretical models of grief, trauma, and crisis.** This will be assessed through the written examinations, the trauma assessment, and the required narrative interview. (CACREP F.5.m)
- **Delineate the operation of an emergency management system within the community.** This will be assessed through the class assignment that reviews the emergency agencies – their roles, responsibilities, and training. (CACREP F.5.m)
- **Observe and assess individual variations to grief reactions including the cultural, ethnic, gender, and familial contexts of mourning and the mediating factor of social support.** This will be assessed through the written examinations, the narrative interview, the stress and social support assessments, and the case illustrations included in the class exercises. (CACREP F.2.f; F.2.g; F.3.g)

- **Articulate the journey of reconciliation as understood in the professional research and clinical practice.** This will be assessed through the written examinations, the trauma assessment, the exploration of technology in reconciliation, and the stress and social support assessments. (CACREP F.1.j; F.2.f; F.2.g; F.3.e; F.5.m; CMHC C.2.f)
- **Utilize an intervention modality that is developmentally appropriate and includes psychological first aid for crisis/trauma intervention and grief counseling with individuals and groups.** This will be assessed through case examples, application demonstrations, all clinical assessments, the narrative interview, and through the examinations. (CACREP F.3.g; F.5.l; F.5.m; CMHC C.2.f)
- **Apply diagnostic criteria and skills for distinguishing crisis, trauma, and grief and between issues of uncomplicated vs. complicated grief and grief counseling vs. grief therapy.** This will be assessed through the trauma assessment, the stress and social support assessments, the case examples, and the narrative interview. (CMHC F.7.e)
- **Access professional organizations, journals, crisis management resources, self-care strategies, and clinical methodologies.** This will be assessed through the examinations and the class exercises that require students to access grief resources and writings. (CACREP F.1.l; CMHC C.2.k)

#### **Specific Course Assignments and Evaluation Criteria:**

- **Readings:** Each student will complete all assigned texts and other readings as given in class.
- **Dispositions:** Each student will demonstrate dispositions consistent with an inclusive, multicultural, and ethical professional role in promoting well-being, healthy relationships, academic success, and career mastery.
- **Attendance:** Each student is expected to complete all scheduled weekly activities and be prepared and willing to participate in discussion boards and class exercises. If you miss more than two weeks of assigned modules you will be dropped from the course. **The last day to withdraw from a class with a WC grade is March 6th.**
- **Quizzes:** Each student is expected to complete 4 quizzes on the assigned readings and content. These will be timed quizzes and no makeup quizzes will be offered. (100 total points).
- **Examinations:** Each student is expected to successfully complete a mid-term examination and a final examination (worth 100 points each-200 total points).
- **Narrative Interviews:** Each student is expected to complete one narrative interview to gain experience with listening and responding to persons affected by past crisis and loss. Instructions and a grading rubric will be given as the course unfolds. (worth 50 points).

- **Class exercises/reflections:** Each student is expected to complete class assignments that relate to the major modules of the class. These exercises will include reflections, a trauma assessment of an individual client, completion of stress and social support assessments, and case examples of treatment methodologies with clients in grief. The reflections will be used as a means to augment the cognitive aspect of the course by using experiential prompts to deepen the student's understanding of the material. These will be assigned at strategic weeks during the semester. (100 total points).
- **Discussion Boards:** Each student is expected to complete discussion board assignments. Individual assignment of topics will be given for a particular week. These topics include discussions of diverse expressions, emergency management systems, resources for various age groups, psychological first aid interventions, assessments & at-risk profiles, and special issues and populations such as military families, expressive arts interventions, suicide/homicide survivorship, and parents losing children.

### **Grading Scale:**

#### **Written assignments will be weighted as follows:**

Class exercises & Reflections	= 100 total Points
Quizzes	= 100 total Points
Written examinations (2@100 pts. each)	= 200 total Points
Narrative Interview	= 50 total Points
Discussion Boards	= 120 total Points
 Total Points	 = 570 total Points

#### **Final Grading on Written Assignments:**

513 - 570 Total Points	= A
456 - 512 Total Points	= B
399 - 455 Total Points	= C
Below 399 Total Points	= F

### **ACADEMIC HONESTY REMINDER:**

North Carolina Central University views academic honesty as a critical value protecting the transmission of knowledge. Academic dishonesty is a serious violation and includes providing/receiving unauthorized assistance with papers, projects, and exams; presenting, as one's own, another's words/ideas without acknowledgement; presenting the same papers/projects for credit in two classes without explicit professor permission; and using undocumented internet information. Academic dishonesty will result in a grade of "F" in the course.

## **CLASS ATTENDANCE POLICY:**

Class attendance is expected of students at North Carolina Central University and represents a foundational component of the learning process in both traditional on-campus and online courses. Students should attend all sessions of courses for which they are registered for the entire scheduled period and are responsible for completing all class assignments. Instructors will keep attendance records in all classes.

If a student misses two weeks of online participation, I will report the facts to the student's academic dean for appropriate follow-up. It is the student's responsibility to inform the instructor of any authorized absence, and to make up all work as determined by the instructor.

### **Statement of Inclusion/Non-Discrimination**

North Carolina Central University is committed to the principles of affirmative action and non-discrimination. The University welcomes diversity in its student body, its staff, its faculty, and its administration. The University admits, hires, evaluates, promotes, and rewards on the basis of the needs and relevant performance criteria without regard to race, color, national origin, ethnicity, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, age, disability, genetic information, veteran's status, or religion. It actively promotes diversity and respectfulness of each individual.

### **Student Accessibility Services**

Students with disabilities (physical, learning, psychological, chronic or temporary medical conditions, etc.) who would like to request reasonable accommodations and services under the Americans with Disabilities Act must register with the Office of Student Accessibility Services (SAS) in Suite 120 in the Student Services Building. Students who are new to SAS or who are requesting new accommodations should contact SAS at (919) 530-6325 or [SAS@nccu.edu](mailto:SAS@nccu.edu) to discuss the programs and services offered by SAS. Students who are already registered with SAS and who would like to maintain their accommodations must renew previously granted accommodations by visiting the SAS website at [www.nccu.edu/SAS](http://www.nccu.edu/SAS) and logging into **Eagle Accommodate**. Students are expected to renew previously granted accommodations at the beginning of each semester, preferably during the first two (2) weeks of class. Reasonable accommodations can be requested at any time throughout the semester; however, they will not be effective retroactively. Students are strongly encouraged to contact their professors to discuss the testing and academic accommodations that they anticipate needing for each class.

Students identifying as pregnant or other pregnancy-related conditions who would like to request reasonable accommodations and services under Title IX must register with the Office of Student Accessibility Services.

### **Confidentiality and Mandatory Reporting**

All forms of discrimination based on sex, including sexual misconduct, sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence, and stalking offenses, are prohibited under NCCU's Sexual Misconduct Policy (POL 01.04.4). NCCU faculty and instructors are considered to be **responsible employees** and are required to report information regarding sexual misconduct to the University's Title IX Coordinator. The Sexual Misconduct Policy can be accessed through NCCU's Policies, Rules and Regulations website at [www.nccu.edu/policies](http://www.nccu.edu/policies). Any individual may report a violation of the Sexual Misconduct Policy (including a third-party or anonymous report) by contacting the Title IX Coordinator at (919) 530-7944 or

TitleIX@nccu.edu, or submitting the online form through the Title IX Reporting Form located at [www.nccu.edu/titleix](http://www.nccu.edu/titleix).

### **Other Campus Programs, Services, Activities, and Resources**

Other campus resources to support NCCU students include:

- *Student Advocacy Coordinator.* The Student Advocacy Coordinator is available to assist students in navigating unexpected life events (e.g. short-term illness/injury, loss of a loved one, personal crises) and guide them to the appropriate University or community resources. Students may also receive assistance with resolving some emergency financial concerns; understanding NCCU policies, rules and regulations; or general problem-solving strategies. Contact Information: Student Services Building, Room G19, (919) 530-7492, [studentadvocacy@nccu.edu](mailto:studentadvocacy@nccu.edu).
- *Counseling Center.* The NCCU Counseling Center is staffed by licensed psychologists and mental health professionals who provide individual and group counseling, crisis intervention, substance abuse prevention and intervention, anger management, and other services. The Counseling Center also provides confidential resources for students reporting a violation of NCCU's Sexual Misconduct Policy. Contact Information: Student Health Building, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, (919) 530-7646, [counseling@nccu.edu](mailto:counseling@nccu.edu).
- *University Police Department.* The University Police Department ensures that students, faculty and staff have a safe and secure environment in which they can live, learn, and work. The Department provides a full range of police services, including investigating all crimes committed in and around its jurisdiction, making arrests, providing crime prevention/community programs, enforcing parking regulations and traffic laws, and maintaining crowd control for campus special events. Contact Information: 2010 Fayetteville Street, (919) 530-6106, [nccupdinfo@nccu.edu](mailto:nccupdinfo@nccu.edu).

### **BLACKBOARD:**

This class will utilize the campus "Blackboard" system. You will be required to log on to the Blackboard system in order to fulfill all assignments during the semester (e.g., complete discussion boards, submit assignments, obtain handouts). If you have questions about your Blackboard (Bb) account, please call Bb or the IT department **first** at 919-530-7676. I will use only your NCCU email address for contact.

### **FOLIOTEK:**

Foliotek is the electronic system for housing samples of your best work used by the School of Education and our Department. The Counseling Program Mental Health students **ONLY** will be required to upload the narrative assignment from this class into their electronic Foliotek portfolio. This announcement is to provide clarification of how this will work. The details are as follows:

- ☐ If you do not have a Foliotek account, follow the instructions given on our website ([www.nccuCounseling.com](http://www.nccuCounseling.com)) on the student page.
- ☐ These documents should be your best work and incorporate your instructors' feedback and/or suggestions.
- ☐ Faculty will evaluate your portfolio each semester so this will be an ongoing requirement.



## **TENTATIVE CLASS SCHEDULE & TOPICS** *(subject to change by instructor).*

**The class weeks will run from the first Sunday night at 11:59 pm (January 6<sup>th</sup>) until the following Sunday night at 11:59 pm.** The Blackboard shell for this class is organized by weekly modules for clarity of expectations. What is listed here is a topical outline with examination, quiz, and assignment due dates. I reserve the right to pace the course differently if something unusual occurs or if I believe your learning will be enhanced by doing so. Weekly readings will be posted for that particular week under weekly modules/course content.

**THIS IS INTENDED TO BE AN OVERVIEW ORGANIZED WEEKLY! DISCUSSION BOARDS WILL BE ASSIGNED MOST WEEKS DURING THE SEMESTER AND WILL VARY BETWEEN +10 THROUGH +20 POINTS IN VALUE EACH. You should watch the weekly modules on BB to see discussion instructions and specific due dates for assignments.**

- ☐ **Week 1 of Jan. 6th** Course orientation, expectations/introductions  
Introduction to the concept of death education.  
**Drop/Add Period Ends Jan. 11th at 4pm.**  
**Class Reflection Exercise #1 (+20 points)**
- ☐ **Week 2 of Jan. 13th** Grounding Definitions including loss, grief, crisis, trauma, reconciliation, narrative construction, healing of grief, outcomes of grief/trauma.  
ADEC Introduction and credentialing of grief counselors/educators.  
The intrinsic nature of the grief/trauma/crisis experience.  
Offering *presence* and *companionship*.
- ☐ **Week 3 of Jan. 20th** The historical evolution of grief theory and knowledge; Contemporary models of crisis, grief, & trauma – research & practice.  
**QUIZ #1 (+25 points)**
- ☐ **Week 4 of Jan. 27th** Reconciliation needs, diverse variations in individual experience, social support as a mediating factor.  
**Class Reflection Exercise #2 (+20 points)**
- ☐ **Week 5 of Feb. 3rd** Types of individual and group crisis events...acute, anticipated, catastrophic.  
**Last Day to withdraw from the university with a prorated tuition and fee adjustment is Feb. 8<sup>th</sup>.**

- ☐ **Week 6 of Feb. 10th** More on types of individual and group crisis events; Narrative Reconstruction; Complicated vs. uncomplicated grief.  
**QUIZ #2 (+25 points)**
  
- ☐ **Week 7 of Feb. 17th** Developmental perspectives on grieving – children, adolescents, adults of all ages.  
**NARRATIVE INTERVIEW DUE (+50 points)**
  
- ☐ **Week 8 of Feb. 24th** More on developmental perspectives  
**Class Reflection Exercise #3 (+20 points)**
  
- ☐ **Week 9 of March 3rd** Crisis Intervention Principles; Crisis across the lifespan; Psychological First Aid  
**Last Day to withdraw from the class with a WC is March 6<sup>th</sup>.**  
**Exam I (+100 points)**
  
- ☐ **Week 10 of March 10th** **Spring Break!**
  
- ☐ **Week 11 of March 17<sup>th</sup>** School crisis response  
Emergency Management – systems & principles
  
- ☐ **Week 12 of March 24th** Complicated vs. Uncomplicated Responses, Interventions  
**QUIZ #3 (+25 points)**
  
- ☐ **Week 13 of March 31st** Military Culture & Trauma  
DSM Indications/PTSD; Assessment and treatment planning  
**Class Reflection Exercise #4 (+20 points)**
  
- ☐ **Week 14 of April 7th** Expressive arts interventions  
**QUIZ #4 (+25 points)**
  
- ☐ **Week 15 of April 14th** Specific types of crises. Rituals of Closure.  
**Class Reflection Exercise #5 (+20 points)**
  
- ☐ **Week 16 of April 21st** **EXAM II (+100 points); Closure**

### **Selected References:**

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- Capuzzi, D. (2009). *Suicide prevention in the schools: Guidelines for middle and high school settings, second edition*. Alexandria, VA: American Counseling Association.
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