



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**  
**Fall 2017**  
**Distance Education**

**Instructor:** Dr. Peggy P. Whiting, Ed.D., NC Licensed Professional Counselor Supervisor, K-12 Licensed School Counselor, Certified Thanatologist  
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**Phone:** (919) 530-6182  
**Email:** pwhiting@nccu.edu  
**Office Hours:** This semester you may meet with me either on campus or by phone on these days:  
Monday 2-4pm; Tuesday 1-4pm; Wednesday 11-3pm; Thursday 10-noon.  
Please email me to schedule.  
Other times by appointment. Please feel welcome to email & schedule.

**Required Textbooks:**

Kanel, Kristi (2015). *A guide to crisis intervention (5<sup>th</sup> edition)*. Stamford, CT: Cengage Learning.

Worden, W. (2009). *Grief counseling and grief therapy (4<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., Winokeur, 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.

Webber, J., & Mascari, J. B. (2016). *Disaster mental health counseling: A guide to preparing and responding, fourth edition*. Alexandria, VA: American Counseling Association Foundation.

**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 loss and traumatic events.

**Expanded Course Information:**

This course is a requirement for 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 and psychology. 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 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 and mourning; the exploration of developmental differences in the way grief is experienced; the principles and skills of counselors dealing with those in trauma and crisis; the impact of diversity upon the individual's experience of grief; *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. Loss reconciliation unfolds when an individual can successfully expand the narrative to add greater depth of meaning of life experiences, including those of grief 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 grief sources and processes. We will experiment with some means for encouraging grief 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 context. Personal experiences can be rich illustrations of the content of the class. Confronting our own grief 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 grief 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 counseling national standards listed in Section II. These include curricular experiences and demonstrated knowledge in the areas of roles and responsibilities as members of crisis management response teams (G.1.c); theories of transitions across the lifespan (G.3.a); effects of crises, disaster, & trauma events (G.3.c); understanding of developmental crises, disability, addictive behavior, psychopathology, and environmental factors as they affect both normal and abnormal behavior (G.3.f); and crisis intervention and suicide prevention models, including the use of psychological first aid strategies (G.5.g). Additionally, this course responds to the specialty standards for clinical mental health counseling including understanding of the impact of crises, disasters, and other trauma-causing events (A.9); understanding of the operation of an emergency management system (A.10); understanding of the principles of crisis intervention (C.6); understanding the appropriate use of diagnosis during crises (K.5); and differentiation between diagnosis and developmentally appropriate reactions to crises (L.3).

### **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 G.3.c; CMHC A.9)
- **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 G.3.a & f)
- **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 G.5.g; CMHC C.6)
- **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 G.1.c; CMHC A.10)
- **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 G.3.f)

- **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, and the stress and social support assessments. (CACREP G.5.g; CMHC K.5 & L.3)
- **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 G.5.g; CMHC K.5 & L.3)
- **Apply diagnostic criteria and skills for distinguishing 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 K.5 & L.3)
- **Access professional organizations, journals, crisis management resources, and clinical methodologies.** This will be assessed through the examinations and the class exercises that require students to access grief resources and writings. (CACREP G.1.c; CMHC A.10, C.6)

#### **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 October 6th.**
- **Quizzes:** Each student is expected to complete quizzes on the assigned readings and content for most weeks. 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:** Each student is expected to complete class assignments that relate to the major modules of the class. These exercises will include journals, a trauma assessment of an individual client, completion of stress and social support assessments, and case examples of treatment methodologies with clients in grief. These will be assigned at strategic weeks during the semester. (100 total points).
- **Discussion Boards & Journal Entries:** 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. Additionally, each student will be expected to keep a reflective journal. This journal 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.

**Grading Scale:**

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

Class exercises	= 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. As of Fall 2017 NW and NF attendance grades will no longer be assigned.

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.

## **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 80.07.1). 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/retrieve.cfm?id=450](http://www.nccu.edu/policies/retrieve.cfm?id=450). 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) 530-6334 or [TitleIX@nccu.edu](mailto:TitleIX@nccu.edu), or submitting the online form through <http://www.nccu.edu/administration/dhr/titleix/index.cfm>.

## **STUDENT DISABILITY 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 Disability Services (SDS) in Suite 120 in the Student Services Building.

Students who are new to SDS or who are requesting new accommodations should contact SDS at (919) 530- 6325 or [sds@nccu.edu](mailto:sds@nccu.edu) to discuss the programs and services offered by SDS. Students who are already registered with SDS and who would like to maintain their accommodations must

renew previously granted accommodations by visiting the SDS website at [www.nccu.edu/sds](http://www.nccu.edu/sds) 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.

### **OTHER CAMPUS PROGRAMS, SERVICES, ACTIVITIES, AND RESOURCES:**

- *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, Suite 236, (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, 2nd 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, [nccupinfo@nccu.edu](mailto:nccupinfo@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) 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 (August 13<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. Weekly readings will be posted for that particular week under weekly modules/course content.

- **Week 1**  
**Aug. 13th** Course expectations/introductions  
What is death education?
- **Week 2**  
**Aug. 20th** 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 experience. Offering *presence* and *companionship* to grieving persons.  
**QUIZ #1.**
- **Week 3**  
**Aug. 27th** The historical evolution of grief theory and knowledge; Contemporary models of grief & trauma – research & practice  
**QUIZ #2.**
- **Week 4**  
**Sept. 3rd** Reconciliation needs, diverse variations in grief, social support as a mediating factor.  
**QUIZ #3. Class Exercise 1**
- **Week 5**  
**Sept. 10th** Types of individual and group crisis events...acute, anticipated, catastrophic.  
**QUIZ #4.**
- **Week 6**  
**Sept. 17th** More on types of individual and group crisis events.  
**Class Exercise 2. NARRATIVE INTERVIEW DUE.**
- **Week 7**  
**Sept. 24th** Developmental perspectives on grieving – children, adolescents, adults of all ages. **QUIZ #5.**

- **Week 8**  
**Oct. 1st** More on developmental perspectives  
**EXAM #1.**
  
- **Week 9-10**  
**Oct. 8th** Crisis Intervention Principles; Crisis across the lifespan; Psychological First Aid  
**QUIZ #6.**
  
- **Week 11**  
**Oct. 15th** Military Culture & Trauma; School crisis response; Emergency Management – systems & principles  
**QUIZ #7.**
  
- **Week 12**  
**Oct. 22nd** Complicated vs. uncomplicated clinical interventions.  
**QUIZ #8.**
  
- **Week 13**  
**Oct. 29th** Catch up Week
  
- **Week 14**  
**Nov. 5<sup>th</sup>** DSM Indications/PTSD; Assessment and treatment planning  
**QUIZ #9. Class Exercise 3**
  
- **Week 15**  
**Nov. 12th** Expressive arts interventions  
**QUIZ #10.**
  
- **Week 16**  
**Nov. 19-27th** Specific types of crises. Rituals of Closure. **Class Exercise 4**
  
- **Nov. 30<sup>th</sup>** **FINAL EXAM – written exam and case example**

## **Selected References:**

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- Balk, D.E., & Corr, C.A. (2009). *Adolescent encounters with death, bereavement, and coping*. New York, NY: Springer Publishing Company.
- Becvar, D.S. (2001). *In the presence of grief: Helping family members resolve death, dying, and bereavement issues*. New York, NY: The Guilford Press.
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- Bradley, L. J., Hendricks, B., & Whiting, P.P. (2016). Wills: An ethical responsibility. *The Family Journal: Counseling & Therapy for Couples and Families*, Sage Publications, 1-3.
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- DeSpelder, L.A., & Strickland, A.L. (2011). *The last dance: Encountering death and dying* (9<sup>th</sup> ed.). Mountain View, CA: Mayfield Publishing Company.
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- Doka, K.J. (Ed.). (2008). *Living with grief: Children and adolescents*. Washington, DC: Hospice Foundation of America.
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