

Syllabus for PSY-3000

THANATOLOGY: AN UNDERSTANDING OF DEATH AND DYING

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Thanatology: An Understanding of Death and Dying will provide students with a broad and general introduction to the study of death and dying. It is designed to help students understand the nature, course, and process of the experience of dying and death in our present-day society.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

After completing this course, you should be able to:

- CO 1** Recognize death as a universal phenomenon that is constructed differently among different societies and throughout history and examine the institutional structures of the death system in contemporary American culture.
- CO 2** Assess the theories of death researchers and describe the views of people who are dying or have faced their own death or the death of loved ones.
- CO 3** Develop self-reflection about death and dying in order to assess your beliefs and attitudes about the subject.
- CO 4** Acquire consistency between your behavior and beliefs about dying and death in order to better prepare for your own mortality and become a compassionate caregiver.

COURSE MATERIALS

You will need the following materials to complete your coursework. Some course materials may be free, open source, or available from other providers. You can access free or open-source materials by clicking the links provided below or in the module details documents. To purchase course materials, please visit the [University's textbook supplier](#).

Required Textbook

- Kastenbaum, R. (2012). *Death, society, and human experience* (11th ed.). Boston, MA: Pearson.

COURSE STRUCTURE

Thanatology: An Understanding of Death and Dying is a three-credit course consisting of **nine** modules. Modules include study materials, and activities.

ASSESSMENT METHODS

For your formal work in the course, you are required to participate in online discussion forums, complete written assignments, and take two proctored online exams. See below for more details.

Consult the Course Calendar for due dates.

Promoting Originality

One or more of your course activities may utilize a tool designed to promote original work and evaluate your submissions for plagiarism. More information about this tool is available in [this document](#).



Discussion Forums

In addition to an ungraded "Introductions" forum, you are required to participate in **five** graded online class discussions.

Communication with your mentor and among fellow students is a critical component of online learning. Participation in online class discussions involves two distinct activities: an initial response to a discussion question and at least two subsequent comments on classmates' responses.

All of these responses must be substantial. Meaningful participation is relevant to the content, adds value, and advances the discussion. Comments such as "I agree" and "ditto" are not considered value-adding participation. Therefore, when you agree or disagree with a classmate or your mentor, state **and support** your position.

You will be evaluated on the quality and quantity of your participation, including your use of relevant course information to support your point of view, and your awareness of and responses to the postings of your classmates. Remember, these are discussions: responses and comments should be properly proofread and edited, mature, and respectful.

Written Assignments

You are required to complete **eight** written assignments: **six** essay assignments and **two** journal assignments. The written assignments are on a variety of topics associated with the course modules.

For each essay assignment, you must select two questions to answer from those that are listed. Read through the pertinent essay assignment questions before you begin each module. Your answers to these essay questions should be well developed and convey your understanding of the course materials. Formulate responses in your own words (do not merely copy answers from your reading material). When you feel it is appropriate to use material from your readings, be sure to cite it properly by giving page numbers in parentheses or using footnotes or endnotes. Your answers to each essay assignment question should be no longer than two double-spaced, typed pages or equivalent. Please identify which questions you have chosen to answer.

For each journal assignment, you must answer one from each pair of questions. Preview the two journal assignments before you begin your first reading assignment. These journal assignments require self-reflection. You will improve your self-reflection by integrating the material you read in each module and applying your critical thinking skills. Your response to each journal assignment question should be no less than three double-spaced, typed pages or equivalent.

Prepare your written essay and journal assignments using whatever word processing program you have on your computer. Include your name at the top of the paper, as well as the course name and code and the semester and year in which you are enrolled.

Before submitting your first assignment, check with your mentor to determine whether your word processing software is compatible with your mentor's software. If so, you can submit your work as you prepared it. If not, save your assignment as a rich-text (.rtf) file, using the Save As command of your software program. Rich text retains basic formatting and can be read by any other word processing program.

Examinations

For a list of key concepts that may appear on your exams, refer to the study guides available in the Examinations section of the course website.

You are required to take **two** proctored examinations: a midterm and a final.

To prepare for both exams, it is suggested that you reread the relevant parts of the text, highlighting major points. You may also find it helpful for review to answer all the relevant essay assignment questions.

Both exams require that you use the University's [Online Proctor Service](#) (OPS). Please refer to the "Examinations and Proctors" section of the Online Student Handbook (see [Student Handbooks](#) in the General Information area of the course website) for further information about scheduling and taking online exams and for all exam policies and procedures. You are strongly advised to schedule your exam within

the first week of the semester.

Online exams are administered through the course website. Consult the Course Calendar for the official dates of your midterm exam week.

Midterm Examination

The midterm exam consists of multiple choice and essay questions. The exam is two hours long and covers all material assigned in modules 1-4. This is a proctored, closed-book exam.

Final Examination

The final exam consists of multiple choice and essay questions. The exam is two hours long and covers all material assigned in modules 5-9. This is a proctored, closed-book exam.

Statement about Cheating

You are on your honor not to cheat during the exam. Cheating means:

- Looking up any answer or part of an answer in an unauthorized textbook or on the Internet, or using any other source to find the answer.
- Copying and pasting or in any way copying responses or parts of responses from any other source into your online test. This includes but is not limited to copying and pasting from other documents or spreadsheets, whether written by yourself or anyone else.
- Plagiarizing answers.
- Asking anyone else to assist you by whatever means available while you take the exam.
- Copying any part of the exam to share with other students.
- Telling your mentor that you need another attempt at the exam because your connection to the Internet was interrupted when that is not true.

If there is evidence that you have cheated or plagiarized in your exam, the exam will be declared invalid, and you will fail the course.

GRADING AND EVALUATION

Your grade in the course will be determined as follows:

- **Online discussions (5)**—10 percent
- **Essay assignments (6)**—30 percent
- **Journal assignments (2)**—10 percent
- **Midterm exam (proctored, modules 1–4)**—25 percent
- **Final exam (proctored, modules 5–9)**—25 percent

All activities will receive a numerical grade of 0–100. You will receive a score of 0 for any work not submitted. Your final grade in the course will be a letter grade. Letter grade equivalents for numerical grades are as follows:

A	= 93–100	C+	= 78–79
A–	= 90–92	C	= 73–77
B+	= 88–89	C–	= 70–72
B	= 83–87	D	= 60–69
B–	= 80–82	F	= Below 60

To receive credit for the course, you must earn a letter grade of C or better (for an area of study course) or D or better (for a course not in your area of study), based on the weighted average of all assigned course work (e.g., exams, assignments, discussion postings, etc.).

STRATEGIES FOR SUCCESS

First Steps to Success

To succeed in this course, take the following first steps:

- Read carefully the entire Syllabus, making sure that all aspects of the course are clear to you and that you have all the materials required for the course.
- Take the time to read the entire Online Student Handbook. The Handbook answers many questions about how to proceed through the course, how to schedule exams, and how to get the most from your educational experience at Thomas Edison State University.
- Arrange to take your examination(s) by following the instructions in this Syllabus and the Online Student Handbook.
- Familiarize yourself with the learning management systems environment—how to navigate it and what the various course areas contain. If you know what to expect as you navigate the course, you can better pace yourself and complete the work on time.
- If you are not familiar with Web-based learning be sure to review the processes for posting responses online and submitting assignments before class begins.

Study Tips

Consider the following study tips for success:

- To stay on track throughout the course, begin each week by consulting the Course Calendar. The Calendar provides an overview of the course and indicates due dates for submitting assignments, posting discussions, and scheduling and taking examinations.

- Check Announcements regularly for new course information.

Using AI Ethically: A Guide for TESU Students

TESU's [Academic Code of Conduct](#) permits student AI use in support of their writing and research process--not as a replacement for original writing. Document AI use with an acknowledgment statement at the end of each assignment, noting the tools and prompts used. Cite any AI-generated content on the References page. Please review [Using AI Ethically: A Guide for TESU Students](#) for more detailed information.

COMMITMENT TO DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION

Thomas Edison State University recognizes, values, and relies upon the diversity of our community. We strive to provide equitable, inclusive learning experiences that embrace our students' backgrounds, identities, experiences, abilities, and expertise.

ACCESSIBILITY AND ACCOMMODATIONS

Thomas Edison State University adheres to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA, 1990; ADAAA, 2008) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. The Office of Student Accessibility Services (OSAS) oversees requests for academic accommodations related to disabilities; a student who is pregnant, postpartum, or a student parenting a newborn who is not the birth parent [as covered under NJSA18A]; and students requesting academic accommodation for a short-term/temporary illness and/or injury. Information can be found on the [Office of Student Accessibility Services](#) webpage and questions can be sent to ADA@tesu.edu.

ACADEMIC POLICIES

To ensure success in all your academic endeavors and coursework at Thomas Edison State University, familiarize yourself with all administrative and academic policies including those related to academic integrity, course late submissions, course extensions, and grading policies.

For more, see:

- [University-wide policies](#)
- [Undergraduate academic policies](#)
- [Undergraduate course policies](#)
- [Graduate academic policies](#)
- [Graduate course policies](#)

- [Nursing student policies](#)
- [Nursing graduate student policies](#)
- [International student policies](#)
- [Academic code of conduct](#)