

PHIL 225 (A02): Death and Dying | Fall 2023

Mon & Thurs, 1:00-2:20, Cornett Building B135

CRN: 12672



All of us will die at some point in the future. But this fact can seem 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 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; our duties to those who have died; how we face our own deaths; and how we cope with the deaths of others.



Dr. Katie Stockdale (katiestockdale@uvic.ca)



My office hours are Monday & Thursday, 11:30-12:30, and by appointment. You can find me in Clearihue B312.



You are welcome to visit me in office hours any time. If you cannot make my office hours, please feel free to email me to request an appointment (in person or by Zoom). I do my very best to reply to emails within 24 hours but I generally do not reply to emails on evenings or weekends. My pronouns are she/her; please feel free to let me know your name/pronouns as well.



This course is *in-person only*. Class attendance is required, and lectures will not be recorded.



Our course website is on Brightspace.



All required readings will be available on the course website.

Territory Acknowledgement: We acknowledge and respect the ɫəkʷəŋən peoples on whose traditional territory the university stands and the Songhees, Esquimalt and WSÁNEĆ peoples whose historical relationships with the land continue to this day.

Evaluation¹:



A	B	C	D	F
Superior 90-100 (A+)	Good 77-79 (B+)	Adequate 65-69 (C+)	Minimal 50-59	Inadequate 0-49
85-89 (A)	73-76 (B)	60-64 (C)		
80-84 (A-)	70-72 (B-)			



Class Reflections (x3, 5% each)	15%	Throughout the course.
Close Reading Assignment	20%	October 13, 11:59pm.
Philosophical Essay	30%	November 10, 11:59pm.
Take-home Exam	35%	Released Dec. 6, 9:00am. Due Dec. 8, 11:59pm.



All students have one no-questions-asked extension to use on either the Close Reading Assignment or Philosophical Essay. Extensions are for 4 days following the deadline. *You do not need to ask whether you may use your free extension.* Just write 'free extension' at the top of your assignment and hand it in by the extended deadline. After the free extension is used, I will not grant extensions with the exception of serious illness or personal emergency (e.g., hospitalization; death in the family). All other late assignments will receive a deduction of 5% per day (including weekend days).

Course Policies:



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 Accessible Learning as soon as possible. Staff are available by appointment to assess specific needs, provide referrals and arrange appropriate accommodations. The sooner you let us know your needs the quicker we can assist you in achieving your learning goals in this course.²



Academic integrity is intellectual honesty and responsibility for academic work that you submit. 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.

¹ For further detail, see <https://www.uvic.ca/calendar/undergrad/index.php#/policy/S1AAgoGuV>

² For further information, see <https://www.uvic.ca/info/accessibility/index.php>

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 student's responsibility to know them. If you are unsure about the standards for citations or for referencing your sources, ask your instructor.³ Depending on the severity of the case, penalties include a warning, a failing grade, a record on the student's transcript, or a suspension. The University's policy on academic integrity is not limited to plagiarism. Hiring an editor for your assignment without the instructor's approval, submitting a paper from the Internet, and having someone else write even parts of your paper are examples of academic dishonesty. You should review this policy in detail.⁴



All course content and materials are made available by instructors for educational purposes and for the exclusive use of students registered in their class. Material is protected under copyright law, even if not marked with a ©. Any further use or distribution of materials to others requires written permission of the instructor, except under fair dealing or another exception in the Copyright Act.⁵ Violations may result in disciplinary action under the Resolution of Non-Academic Misconduct Allegations policy (AC1300).⁶ Evidence that you are circulating materials without permission will be referred to the Chair of the Philosophy Department for investigation.



The University is committed to promoting critical academic discourse while providing a respectful and supportive learning environment. All members of the university community have the right to this experience, and the responsibility to help create such an environment. *The University will not tolerate racism, sexualized violence, or any form of discrimination, bullying or harassment.* Please be advised that by logging into UVic's learning systems and interacting with online resources you are engaging in a university activity. All interactions within this environment are subject to the university expectations and policies. Any concerns about student conduct, may be reviewed and responded to in accordance with the appropriate university policy. To report concerns about online student conduct: onlineconduct@uvic.ca.

³ For more information, see <https://www.uvic.ca/library/help/citation/plagiarism/index.php>

⁴ For more information, see <https://www.uvic.ca/students/academics/academic-integrity/index.php>

⁵ For more information, see <https://www.uvic.ca/library/featured/copyright/>.

⁶ For more information, see <https://www.uvic.ca/universitysecretary/assets/docs/policies/AC1300.pdf>

Course Schedule: Students will be notified of any changes on the course website and in class.

Welcome!	W1: Sept. 7	Welcome! No readings.
What is Death, & Is it Bad?	W2: Sept. 11	Arthur Caplan, "Death: An Evolving, Normative Concept" Susana Monsó, "What Animals Think of Death"
	W2: Sept. 14	Epicurus, <i>Letter to Menoecus</i>
	W3: Sept. 18	Thomas Nagel, "Death"; <i>Suggested:</i> Amy Olberding, "Is the Death of an Elder Worse than the Death of a Young Person?"
	W3: Sept. 21	Amelie Rorty, "Fearing Death"
Resisting Death	W4: Sept. 25	Lori Gruen, "Death as a Social Harm"
	W4: Sept. 28	Martha Nussbaum, "Aging, Stigma, and Disgust" <i>September Class Reflection due by Oct. 1, 11:59pm</i>
	W5: Oct. 2	Christopher Wareham, "How Can Life-Extending Treatments be Available for All?"
	W5: Oct. 5	Stephen Cave, "Frozen Dead Guys"
Choosing to Die	W6: Oct. 9	THANKSGIVING.
	W6: Oct. 12	James Rachels, "Active and Passive Euthanasia" <i>Close Reading Assignment due Oct. 13, 11:59pm.</i>
	W7: Oct. 16	Hane Htut Maung, "Externalist Arguments against Medical Assistance in Dying for Psychiatric Illness"
Thoughts in the Face of Death	W7: Oct. 19	Audre Lorde, "The Transformation of Silence into Language and Action"
	W8: Oct. 23	Luc Bovens, "Secular Hopes in the Face of Death"
Respecting the Dead	W8: Oct. 26	Val Plumwood, "Toward a Food-Based Approach to Death"
	W9: Oct. 30	ESSAY WRITING WORKSHOP. <i>October Class Reflection due by Nov. 1, 11:59pm.</i>
Relating to the Dead	W9: Nov. 2	Joel Feinberg, "The Mistreatment of Dead Bodies"
	W10: Nov. 6	Barry Lam, "Is it Moral to Respect the Wishes of the Dead, Above the Living?"
	W10: Nov. 9	Kathryn Norlock, "Real (and) Imaginal Relationships with the Dead" <i>Philosophical Essay due Nov. 10, 11:59pm.</i>

The Death of Humanity

- W11: Nov. 13 Robert C. Solomon, "On Grief"
W11: Nov. 16 Michael Cholbi, "Madness and Medicine"
- W12: Nov. 20 Macelester Bell, "Forgiving the Dead"
W12: Nov. 23 Elizabeth Finneron-Burns, "What's Wrong with Human Extinction?"
- W13: Nov. 27 TBD – catch up day or class decides.
W13: Nov. 30 Course Review.
November Class Reflection due by Dec. 1, 11:59pm.
- W14: Dec. 4 No class – invitation to attend Dr. Stockdale's public lecture (Zoom) for Auburn University.
Take-home exam due Dec. 8, 11:59pm.