

PHIL 225 (A01): Death and Dying | Fall 2024

Monday & Thursday, 1:00-2:20pm

Cornett Building, B143

CRN: 12621



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)
Associate Professor, Department of Philosophy



My office hours are Monday and 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 email me to request an appointment. I do my very best to reply to emails within 24 hours (excluding weekends).



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

Interpretation of these grades is up to the discretion of the instructor. If you believe a grade that you receive from a TA is unfair, please begin by discussing it with the TA who graded your assignment in a respectful, open-minded manner. If you remain unsatisfied, you can appeal your grade to the instructor. The new grade will apply, whether it is higher or lower.



Course Components:

Participation	10%
Close Reading Assignment	20%
Philosophical Essay	30%
Essay Progress Check-In	5%
Final Course Reflection	35%

Students must write the Close Reading Assignment, Philosophical Essay, and Final Course Reflection and receive a participation grade of no less than 5/10 to complete the course. Failure to do so will result in a grade of N.



All students have 5 allotted grace points. A 'grace point' delays the due date of a required assignment by one day. Grace points can be used in any combination without justification but cannot be reused or traded. To use grace points, clearly indicate the number used with your assignment submission. Other requests for extensions will be granted only in exceptional circumstances and must be made using UVIC's 'Request for In-Course Extension' form.² Late work after grace points are used will be penalized 5% per day until the assignment is submitted.

Students are responsible for tracking the number of grace points used (I also track them). Any attempt to re-use grace points in the hope that the grader does not notice will result in a deduction of 5% in addition to whatever late penalty applies.

Note on extensions for students registered with the Centre for Accessible Learning (CAL): Because there is already flexibility built into the course for assignment due dates, CAL students are expected to use grace points *before* asking for further extensions, and to follow the standard course policy on requesting additional extensions (i.e., using UVic's 'Request for In-Course Extension Form'). Students can indicate that they are requesting additional extensions as per their CAL accommodations. However, please note that accommodations through CAL are not blanket extensions on all work or a license to submit work after the course has ended.

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

² You can access this form here: https://www.uvic.ca/students/academics/academic-concessions-accommodations/request-for-academic-concession/forms/uvic_undergraduate_request_for_in-course_extension.pdf

Course & University Policies:



Students with diverse learning styles and needs are very welcome in this course. If you have a disability/health consideration that requires accommodation, please approach me and/or the Resource Centre for Accessible Learning as soon as possible.³ Students who require academic accommodations must be registered with CAL to receive them.



Plagiarism and other forms of academic misconduct are serious offences and will not be tolerated. It is students' responsibility to fully understand rules of academic integrity.⁴ Depending on the severity of the case, penalties include a warning, a failing grade, a record on the student's transcript, or suspension. The University's policy on academic integrity is not limited to plagiarism. Hiring an editor 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.⁵

You may not use GenAI at all in this course, for any reason, for the purposes of brainstorming, writing, or editing your assignments. You are here to learn how to think, create, evaluate and communicate. The assignments in my courses are designed to teach *you* these skills. I trust that all students in my courses will honour this policy.



All course 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 requires written permission of the instructor, except under fair dealing or another exception in the Copyright Act.⁶ Violations may result in disciplinary action under the Resolution of Non-Academic Misconduct Allegations policy.⁷ 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. Racism, sexualized violence, or any form of discrimination, bullying or harassment will not be tolerated. 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. Students and staff are expected to be familiar with University policies, including the Tri-Faculty's *Standards for Professional Behaviour*.⁸

³ For further information, see <https://www.uvic.ca/info/accessibility/index.php>

⁴ For more information, see <https://www.uvic.ca/library/help/citation/plagiarism/index.php>

⁵ For more information, see <https://www.uvic.ca/students/academics/academic-integrity/index.php>

⁶ For more information, see <https://www.uvic.ca/library/featured/copyright/>

⁷ For more information, see <https://www.uvic.ca/universitysecretary/assets/docs/policies/AC1300.pdf>

⁸ For more information, see <https://www.uvic.ca/services/advising/advice-support/academic-units/student-code-of-conduct/index.php>

COURSE SCHEDULE:

<i>Welcome!</i>	Sept. 5	Welcome! No readings.
<i>What is Death?</i>	Sept. 9	Arthur Caplan, "Death: An Evolving, Normative Concept" <i>Suggested:</i> Susana Monsó, "What Animals Think of Death"
<i>Is Death Bad?</i>	Sept. 12	Epicurus, <i>Letter to Menoeceus</i>
	Sept. 16	Thomas Nagel, "Death" <i>Suggested:</i> Amy Olberding, "Is the Death of an Elder Worse than the Death of a Young Person?"
	Sept. 19	Amelie Rorty, "Fearing Death"
<i>Resisting Death</i>	Sept. 23	Lori Gruen, "Death as a Social Harm"
	Sept. 26	Martha Nussbaum, "Ageing, Stigma, and Disgust"
	Sept. 30	No class. National Day for Truth and Reconciliation.
	Oct. 3	Christopher Wareham, "How Can Life-Extending Treatments be Available for All?"
<i>Choosing to Die</i>	Oct. 7	Stephen Cave, "Frozen Dead Guys"
	Oct. 10	James Rachels, "Active and Passive Euthanasia" Close Reading Assignment due October 11, 11:59pm.
	Oct. 14	No class. Thanksgiving Day.
	Oct. 17	Kayla Wiebe and Amy Mullin (2024), "Choosing Death in Unjust Conditions" <i>Suggested:</i> Timothy Christie and Madeline Li (2024), "Medically Assisted Dying in Canada and Unjust Social Conditions: A Response to Wiebe and Mullin"
<i>Thoughts in the Face of Death</i>	Oct. 21	Hane Htut Maung, "Externalist Arguments against MAID for Psychiatric Illness"
	Oct. 24	Audre Lorde, "The Transformation of Silence into Language and Action" <i>Start:</i> Luc Bovens, "Death"
<i>Respect for the Dead</i>	Oct. 28	Bovens, Continued; Val Plumwood, "Toward a Food-Based Approach to Death"
	Oct. 31	ESSAY WRITING WORKSHOP.
	Nov. 4	Joel Feinberg, "The Mistreatment of Dead Bodies"
	Nov. 7	Barry Lam, "Is it Moral to Respect the Wishes of the Dead, Above the Living?" Essay Progress Check-In due November 8, 11:59pm.
<i>Relating to the Dead</i>	Nov. 11	No class. Remembrance Day.
	Nov. 14	Kathryn Norlock, "Real (and) Imaginal Relationships with the Dead" Philosophical Essay due November 15, 11:59pm.
	Nov. 18	Robert C. Solomon, "On Grief"
	Nov. 21	Michael Cholbi, "Madness and Medicine"
<i>The Death of Humanity</i>	Nov. 25	Macelester Bell, "Forgiving the Dead"
	Nov. 28	Elizabeth Finneron-Burns, "What's Wrong with Human Extinction?"
	Dec. 2	TBD or catch-up. Final Course Reflection due December 6, 11:59pm.