

George Mason University
College of Education and Human Development
Counseling and Development

EDCD 797.004 – Grief Counseling
1 Credit, Spring 2019
Saturday, April 20th & Sunday, April 21st 9:00 AM – 4:30 PM
Krug Hall Room 107 - Fairfax

Faculty

Name: Ramya Avadhanam, Ph.D., NCC
Office Hours: None; please communicate via email or in-person during class time.
Office Location: Krug Hall Room Suite 202
Office Phone: 703-993-2087 (C&D Office)
Email Address:

Prerequisites/Corequisites

Admission to the CNDV program, EDCE 603.

University Catalog Course Description

Advanced topics in education

Course Overview

Examines grief and loss issues in counseling through personal and theoretical lenses/frameworks. Promotes awareness and understanding of individual as well as systemic influence on the client/counselor relationship. Investigates multiple forms of loss (e.g. ambiguous loss, anticipatory loss, collectivistic grief, etc.) and variables that interact with the grief and loss process such as spirituality, religion, culture, family, and personal process.

Explores extensively the above issues through individual and group process experience that enables the development of interpersonal awareness, sensitivity to grief and loss, and theoretical knowledge in terms of how to approach clients.

Course Delivery Method

This course is taught through a combination of lecture, class discussion, small group discussion, assigned readings, experiential exercises, multi-media presentations, dyadic practice, and possible guest lecture(s) to advance and evaluate students' knowledge and skills.

Learner Outcomes or Objectives

This course is designed to enable students to do the following:

1. To educate, understand, and increase awareness regarding grief and loss in order to strengthen the counseling relationship through a counselor trainee's intrapersonal process and increase in theoretical knowledge.

2. To acknowledge and appreciate the unique nuances and experiences during times of grief and loss.
3. To gain insight into the complexity of culture and its effect on the client/counselor relationship.
4. To increase awareness of how one's cultural background, experiences, belief system, attitudes, values and biases influence the counseling process.

Professional Standards (CACREP)

EDCD 797 is a special topics course and meets the requirement that all master's students take 2-3 credits of special topics course work. This 1-credit course will contribute to counseling students' knowledge of a particular population of clients.

EDCD 797 fulfills the requirements of the following professional organizations

Virginia Department of Education requirement for school counseling licensure that candidates understand the knowledge, skills and processes of individual counseling. Virginia Department of Health Professions requirement that Licensed Professional Counselor candidates complete graduate study in theories and techniques of counseling and psychotherapy. Council for the Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) core requirement described in Section II.K.e: Helping relationships: An understanding of counseling and consultation processes. American Counseling Association Code of Ethics requirement that counselors establish counselor education and training programs that integrate academic study and supervised practice.

Required Texts

None

Course Performance Evaluation

Students are expected to submit all assignments on time in the manner outlined by the instructor (e.g., Blackboard, Tk20, hard copy).

Assignments and Examinations

- **Other Requirements**

Attendance: In accordance with the policies of the Counseling and Development Program, on-time attendance at both class meetings is expected. Late arrival to class will be considered an absence. Due to the short nature of this class, **any unexcused absences will result in loss of course credit.** Attendance is required for all classes. Excused absences are permitted for illness, religious holidays, or emergency situations only; documentation is required for the absence to be considered excused. Work-related absences are not considered excused.

Course Requirements: Each student is expected to: (1) attend each class, (2) arrive on time and stay for the entire class period, (3) participate in discussions and in-class exercises (4) submit assignments by the end of day on the Sunday one week after the class.

- **Grading**

A = 97-100 A- = 94-96 B+ = 91-93 B = 87-90 B- = 84-86 C = 80-83 F = < 79

All CEHD undergraduate and graduate students are held to the university grading policies as described in the Academic Policies section of the current catalog, which can be accessed at <http://catalog.gmu.edu>. Those students enrolled in a CEHD Licensure Graduate Certificate program, however, must earn a B- or better in all licensure coursework. A degree-seeking graduate student will be dismissed after accumulating grades of F in two courses or 9 credits of unsatisfactory grades (C or F) in graduate courses. A 3.0 grade point average is required for completion of the graduate degree.

Professional Dispositions

Students are expected to exhibit professional behaviors and dispositions at all times.

See <https://cehd.gmu.edu/students/polices-procedures/>

Given the workshop nature of the course, students are expected to maintain confidentiality about material shared by one another.

Class Schedule

Class	Date	Schedule by Hour	Topic(s)	Assignments
1	04/20/19	9:00 am – 10:30 am	<p>Introduction to Instructor and the Course</p> <p>Have students take the Death Counseling Survey and/or the Grief Counseling Experience and Training Survey.</p> <p>Check-in with each member... and ask the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Why are students taking the course and what do they hope to learn from it? 2. Select a Grief and Loss Website discuss benefits and limitations 3. How is grief portrayed in the media? And how does that impact the target audience? 4. List 5 organizations or community resources in a particular region that provide grief and loss counseling services 	

		10:30 am – Noon	<p>Definition and Impact of Grief Counseling/Client Implications (ES/MS, Undergraduate Statistics) Counseling Training Implications (CACREP Programs)</p>	
		Noon – 12:30 pm	Lunch Break	
		12:30 pm – 2:00 pm	The Grief Wheel and Other Models of Grief	
		2:00 pm – 2:30 pm	Symbolic Activities (e.g., creating a ritual, three-piece clay or yard activity)	
		2:30 pm – 4:30 pm	<p>Group Media Activity and Process</p> <p>▶ Students watch a movie/tv show where grief is the prominent theme then answer the following questions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How did you feel watching the film/series? 2. Which of the characters did you identify most with and why? 3. What did you learn about grief and loss from the film/series you were not previously aware of? 4. How might the media affect how counselors approach working with grief and loss? 5. Pick one character you would most/least like to work with and discuss why. <p>What issues would you expect that person to bring to counseling?</p>	

			How would you address these issues?	
2	04/21/19	9:00 am – 10:00 am	Check-in with each member. Were any losses triggered? What has been their internal process after learning the information? Has their perspective shifted, and if so how?	
		10:00 – Noon	<p>Grief and Loss Interview Assignment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Interview a person of their choosing and connect course content to their experience ▶ Then, synthesize what you learned about yourself and about grief counseling from completing the assignment. <p>*The instructor is the only one that provides feedback however there is a small group process.</p>	
		Noon – 12:30 pm	Lunch break	
		12:30 pm – 1:30 pm	What does the literature say regarding grief and loss interventions?	
		1:30 – 4:00 pm	Role plays, fish bowls, demonstration of button grief/loss activity, etc.	
		4:00 – 4:30 pm	Students will re-take the assessments to assess if (perceived) grief competency has improved.	<p>Short Grief and Loss Topic Paper</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You will write a 5-page personal reflection paper using APA 6th edition guidelines on a specific grief and loss topic of

				<p>your choice that has occurred in your life including but not limited to infertility, loss of a family pet, job loss, chronic illness, divorce, etc.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You will choose 2 different grief theories/models to conceptualize your process and discuss respective interventions from those theories/models that you believe would help a counselor match your needs/where you are at. • Please look at the rubric. Assignment is due by Sunday, April 28.
--	--	--	--	---

Note: Faculty reserves the right to alter the schedule as necessary, with notification to students.

Core Values Commitment

The College of Education and Human Development is committed to collaboration, ethical leadership, innovation, research-based practice, and social justice. Students are expected to adhere to these principles: <http://cehd.gmu.edu/values/>.

GMU Policies and Resources for Students

Policies

- Students must adhere to the guidelines of the Mason Honor Code (see <https://catalog.gmu.edu/policies/honor-code-system/>).

- Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing (see <http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/policies/responsible-use-of-computing/>).
- Students are responsible for the content of university communications sent to their Mason email account and are required to activate their account and check it regularly. All communication from the university, college, school, and program will be sent to students **solely** through their Mason email account.
- Students with disabilities who seek accommodations in a course must be registered with George Mason University Disability Services. Approved accommodations will begin at the time the written letter from Disability Services is received by the instructor (see <http://ods.gmu.edu/>).
- Students must follow the university policy stating that all sound emitting devices shall be silenced during class unless otherwise authorized by the instructor.

Campus Resources

- Support for submission of assignments to Tk20 should be directed to tk20help@gmu.edu or <https://cehd.gmu.edu/aero/tk20>. Questions or concerns regarding use of Blackboard should be directed to <http://coursesupport.gmu.edu/>.
- For information on student support resources on campus, see <https://ctfe.gmu.edu/teaching/student-support-resources-on-campus>

For additional information on the College of Education and Human Development, please visit our website <https://cehd.gmu.edu/students/>.