Essential Information
Please refer to the following resources for information essential for the successful completion of courses and degree programs at Nazarene Theological Seminary. Links to these resources are available in the Essential Information section at http://support.nts.edu.

- NTS Mission Statement & Purpose Degree Objectives
- Tips for online learning success
- NTS library services
- NTS textbook information
- Online technical requirements and Moodle support information
- NTS Student Handbook including statements on quality of work, plagiarism, and academic probation
- Handbook for Inclusive Language

Instructor Information
Professor: Judi Schwanz, Ph.D.  Email: jaschwanz@nts.edu
Office: (816) 268-5491
Office Hours: by appointment

Catalog Description
A study of the phenomena of transitions, loss and grief as they impact the individual and the church. This course includes the exploration of methods and means of ministering to the bereaved, and reflection on personal experiences of loss.

Course Narrative & Rationale
This course is designed to help the student understand the universal, multi-faceted human experience of loss and grief. Studies show that the majority of people turn to their spiritual leader first for help and counsel in times of tragedy and loss. Christian leaders in all areas of ministry have an incredible opportunity to participate with God in healing and helping a world full of hurting people.
Enhanced awareness of the pervasive nature of loss will lead to greater sensitivity and awareness for the spiritual helper. The pastor/counselor who understands the deep comfort found in the simple ministry of presence will be more likely to teach others how to provide care and extend ministry to the grieving. Reflective journaling, research and writing over a 14-week period, will be combined with guided discussion/lecture format during the in-class sessions.

**Degree Objectives**

The following M. Div. degree objectives are addressed in this course:

1. Mature knowledge of God and self, attained through practices of Christian formation and personal discipline
2. Cultivation of gifts, practical skills, and vocational identity as a minister of the Gospel of Jesus Christ through engagement in and reflection on the pastoral arts

**Course Outcomes**

Students in this course will have the opportunity to:

1. Explore their present feelings about loss, dying, death and grief. [Assignment #2]
2. Analyze grief as a stress in all life transitions and loss. [Assignments #1,2]
3. Understand the relationship between grief resolution and mental and spiritual health. [Assignments #1,2,3,4]
4. Reflect theologically on grief, loss and ministry to the dying and to the bereaved. [Assignments #1,2,3]
5. Develop a personal pastoral approach to bereavement ministry. [Assignments #3,4]
6. Plan steps to establish a congregational ministry for those experiencing loss. [Assignments #3,4]

**Church of the Nazarene COSAC Competencies**

CP 14 – Ability to appropriately express pastoral care & concern for individuals & families in crises, passages, & the normal routines of life
CP 15 – Ability to offer spiritual counseling & to discern for referral counseling needs beyond the minister’s ability
CP 16 – Ability to apply the knowledge of basic counseling gained from historic Christian & appropriate contemporary models

**Required Texts & Course Materials**


**Recommended Texts & Course Materials**

Brooks, James L. *The Unbroken Circle: A Toolkit for Congregations Around Illness, End of Life and Grief* [Paperback]


**Course Outline**

I. Loss and Grief: an Introduction  
   a. Compassion and Pastoral Care  
   b. Varieties of Loss  
   c. Tasks of Grief  
   d. Where is God in suffering?  
II. “Dying Well”  
   a. Theological reflection on death  
   b. End-of-life care  
   c. Funerals and Rituals  
III. Caring for the grievers  
   a. Children and grief  
   b. Congregational ministry

**Course Assignments & Requirements**

* Introduce yourself to the rest of the class (brief biographical information & description of current ministry context) via the forum on the course Moodle site – by December 22.

1. Reading of all texts prior to the first class session, January 28. The reading is essential to class participation. [Course outcomes #2,3,4]

2. Journal. Each student will maintain a journal in which he/she will *reflect theologically and personally* on the material in the textbooks and any additional materials read. For the *Speaking of Dying* text, the journal will consist of responses to the discussion questions at the end of each chapter. The student will submit journal entries according to the course calendar. Grading will be on the basis of interaction with the material, not on specific content. Material will be kept in strict confidence and only read by the professor. [Course outcomes #1,2,3,4]

3. Paper. Each student will choose a particular type of loss to research and will write a 15-17 page paper. A reference list reflecting a *minimum of 200 pages of reading* (in addition to course texts) on the given topic will be handed in along with the paper. The
paper will include a description of the loss and its effects, a theological reflection on the loss, a recommendation of pastoral and congregational response to the individual/family facing such a loss (including appropriate use of Scripture), and a list of appropriate resources. The student will prepare a one-page summary of this paper and resource list to be posted on Moodle for other students. The paper is due March 8. [Course outcomes #3,4,5,6]

4. Take home final exam. The exam will be posted on Moodle March 8 and a response (approximately 10 pages) is due on March 22. [Course outcomes #3,5,6]

**Distribution of Student Learning Hours**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>pre-module hours</th>
<th>module hours</th>
<th>post-module hours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Online Participation in forums, groups, etc.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Assignments and Learning Activities</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exams &amp; Quizzes</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Method for Submitting Assignments**

All assignments should be submitted through Moodle no later than 11:55 PM (Central Time) of the due date listed for the assignment.

**Form and Style Expectations**

All papers shall be written using Turabian format for form and style. The weekly journals will not be subject to this expectation.

**Inclusive Language**

NTS is committed to the equality of women and men. Recognizing that people have often used the English language in ways that imply the exclusion or inferiority of women, NTS urges students, faculty, and staff to avoid sexist language in public discourse, in classroom discussions, and in their writings. All written work presented to meet course requirements must use gender inclusive language.
Policy Regarding Late Work & Missed Exams
All written work is expected to be handed in by 23:55 (11:55 PM – Central Time) on the due date given. Late work will be marked down 10% for every week (or portion thereof) that it is late.

Course Grading
Class Participation – 20% of grade
Journal – 30% of grade
Research Paper – 25% of grade
Take-home final exam – 25% of grade

A = 93-100%
B = 85-92%
C = 77-84%
D = 69-76%
F = Below 69%

In accordance with the provisions of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, NTS is committed to providing students with disabilities the opportunity to participate and benefit from its programs and activities. Accordingly, NTS will make reasonable modifications to its programs and activities to accommodate otherwise qualified students with disabilities, unless such modifications would impose an undue burden on the operation of the particular program or activity or would fundamentally alter the nature or purpose of the program or activity. Students needing accommodations should contact the Office of the Registrar. They also should contact the instructor no later than the end of the first class session to discuss learning needs and adaptive strategies that have been beneficial for the student in the past.

Class Attendance
Attendance at classes is essential for realizing the maximum benefit of your education. Given the participatory nature of this course, class participation is part of the course grade, and will be impacted accordingly by absences.

If you must be absent because of extenuating circumstances, contact the professor as soon as possible to discuss the situation. If a student is absent for 8 hours of a one week module or is absent four or more weeks of the pre/post module, the professor may automatically fail the student.

Attendance records must be reported for those obtaining V.A. and Department of Education benefits. Students must make the professor aware if their attendance must be recorded.
### Course Calendar

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Assignment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dec 17-23</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Pre-Module begins - Introductions – post your introduction to the forum on Moodle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dec 24-30</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>No assignments due – enjoy time with your families (and hopefully, do some reading!)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dec 31-Jan 6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Read entire Boss text and journal on the reading; submit journal by Jan 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan 7-13</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Read entire Becvar text and journal on the reading; submit journal by Jan 13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan 14-20</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Read entire Craddock text and journal on the reading; submit journal by Jan 20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan 21-27</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Read entire Long text and journal on the reading; submit journal by Jan 27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan 28-Feb 3</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Module Face to Face begins - In class sessions at SNU Monday Jan 28- Friday Feb 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb 4-10</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Post-Module begins - Reading and Research Week for this course ☺</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb 11-17</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Weekly check-in on Moodle forum</td>
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<tr>
<td>Feb 18-24</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Weekly check-in on Moodle forum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb 25-Mar 3</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>Weekly check-in on Moodle forum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mar 4-10</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Research paper due March 8; Final exam posted on Moodle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mar 11-17</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>Course Evaluations (approximate release time by the Dean’s Office)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mar 18-22</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>Final exam due March 22</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>