

**Sul Ross State University – Behavioral and Social Science  
Department  
PSY 4310 Course Syllabus**

<b>Course Title:</b>	Grief & Bereavement
<b>Required Texts (2):</b>	Mio, J. S., Domenech Rodríguez, M. M., Barker, L. A., & Gonzalez, J. (2019). <i>Multicultural Psychology</i> . (5 <sup>th</sup> ed.). New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
<b>Contact Information:</b>	Alicia M. Trotman, PhD – <a href="mailto:alicia.trotman@sulross.edu">alicia.trotman@sulross.edu</a>
<b>Office (LH 306) Hours:</b>	Tuesdays & Thursdays (3:30 to 5:30pm), Wednesdays (2:00 to 4:00pm) & Fridays (Online 2:00 to 5:00pm) Appointment: <a href="https://calendly.com/amtsulross/office-hours-appointment">https://calendly.com/amtsulross/office-hours-appointment</a>

### Description

Grief is a painful, complex, and universal emotion occasioned by loss, death, and/or separation from a loved person, object or pastime. This course will explore the multiple dimensions of grief and bereavement by familiarizing students with dynamics of loss, normal and atypical/pathological grief, influenced by culture. Emphasis will be placed on understanding the conceptualizations and process of loss and grief, theories of recovery, including the role of spirituality (i.e., faith) and insights from the social/behavioral sciences.

### Course Objective:

This course is designed to provide a sincere understanding of grief and bereavement, and to discuss applications of the material to your everyday life. Research and biographies related to grief and bereavement as driven by significant past and current events will be explored. In addition, we will analyze the experiences of human beings from non-dominant backgrounds as well as foster thought and feeling of philosophies and processes of grief and bereavement.

### Student Learning Outcomes:

Throughout the course, you will be encouraged to think about how the research presented can shed light on events going on around the world and in your own lives. Briefly stated, the objectives of this course include (though are not limited to):

1. Develop knowledge and understanding of the dynamics and process of grief and bereavement.  
**Method of Formative Assessment:** Assignments, group presentation, reflection and exams
2. Learn to identify the manifestations of normal grief and be able to differentiate normal grief from atypical/complicated grief;  
**Method of Formative Assessment:** Group presentation, reflection and exams
3. Be able to distinguish grief from depression and gain understanding of special types of losses;  
**Method of Formative Assessment:** Group presentation and exams
4. Gain understanding of family dynamics in relation to grief, develop awareness of ethnic variations and cross-cultural dynamics in patterns of grieving and gender dynamics in the context of grief.  
**Method of Formative Assessment:** Assignments, group presentation, reflection and exams

### Course Requirements:

1. The text must be obtained (online, offline or older edition is acceptable).
2. Respect for students and lecturer must be maintained at all times when we meet. Respect is a basic human characteristic that entitles each person to their own right and identity. It also helps to nurture a healthy learning environment. If you recognize that respecting others may be a problem, please be courteous and alert me or more suitable personnel (e.g. Sul Ross State University psychologists, family members, lecturers, close friends) and or refer to the Student Conduct and Discipline section of the [SRSU Student Handbook](#).
3. During the course of this class, you may have strong emotional/psychological reactions to the course material and/or discussions. If you feel that you are having difficulty with the learning environment, please discuss this with me immediately before continuing the course. Counseling and Accessibility Services (<http://www.sulross.edu/section/2408/counseling-accessibility-services>) can provide brief, short-term individual and group counseling or refer you to off-campus providers. You have already paid for these services through your Student Service Fee, whether you use them or not.

### American with Disabilities ACT Statement:

SRSU Disability Services. Sul Ross State University (SRSU) is committed to equal access in compliance with Americans with Disabilities Act of 1973. It is SRSU policy to provide reasonable accommodations to students with documented disabilities. It is the student's responsibility to initiate a request each semester for each class. Alpine students seeking accessibility/accommodations services must contact Mary Schwartze Grisham, M.Ed., LPC, SRSU's Accessibility Services Coordinator at 432-837-8203, or email [mschwartz@sulross.edu](mailto:mschwartz@sulross.edu). Our office is located on the first floor of Ferguson Hall – room 112, and our mailing address is P.O. Box C-122, Sul Ross State University, Alpine, Texas, 79832.

For more information see: <https://www.sulross.edu/counseling-and-accessibility-services/>

### Library Services Statement

The Bryan Wildenthal Memorial Library in Alpine. Offers FREE resources and services to the entire SRSU community. Access and borrow books, articles, and more by visiting the library's website, [library.sulross.edu](http://library.sulross.edu). Off-campus access requires logging in with your LobolD and password. Librarians are a tremendous resource for your coursework and can be reached in person, by email ([srsulibrary@sulross.edu](mailto:srsulibrary@sulross.edu)), or phone (432-837-8123).

### Honoring Academic Integrity

Any instance of academic misconduct such as (1) turning in an identical written assignment for another course without approval, (2) copying from any source without proper citation, (3) crossing the boundary of what is allowed in a group project, (4) lying in connection with your academic work, (5) cheating, (6) plagiarism, (7) misrepresenting facts and/or collusion are contrary to the purpose of any educational institution and will be dealt with **most severely** to the extent of the university's disciplinary policy and/or through legal action if indicated. An instructor who determines that a student has been dishonest academically can at a minimum issue no credit for the assignment/exam, and/or pursue more severe penalties, including but not limited to failing the course. Before the penalty is imposed, the student has the right to appeal to the division chairperson or Assistant Provost for the Academic Affairs. Further information about *Academic Honesty* can be read in the [SRSU Student Handbook](#) and procedures for dealing with these acts are outlined in the [Academic Honesty Policy](#) under Undergraduate Academic Regulations.

**Cell Phone and Computer Use** - During the entire class period, you should be fully engaged in the day's activity. Please be advised that computer or cell phone use not pertaining to the class activity or discussion will be noted and result in being marked "absent" for the day.

## Observing Class guidelines

### Class Participation

This is a course that requires online discussion and experiences. **Class attendance IS REQUIRED and participation is important.** Class participation and attendance will be worth 20% of the final grade, and includes prompt and regular attendance, active listening, writing, participating via an online poll or quiz, and engaging in online discussions. Besides attendance, all other forms of participation judged subjectively by me that showcases active involvement will increase your participation grade. Excused absences due to established religious observance, or emergency, university-authorized, legal or medical issues and events will not count toward the absence limit but do require written documentation. At your earliest convenience, arrange to make up any missing work as far in advance of your absence as possible. If you are unable to attend a class session for other circumstances, please discuss the reason with me and make arrangements with another student to obtain any notes, handouts or assignments you may have missed. **Excessive unexcused absences (more than 3 missed class sessions) WILL result in a failing grade for the course.**

*Online Meetings* – We may have online Microsoft Teams meetings held on **Wednesdays 2:00 to 2:50pm.** I will be elaborating further on the textbook readings and answer your questions about assignments.

*DISTANCE EDUCATION STATEMENT*- Students enrolled in distance education courses have equal access to the university's academic support services, such as library resources, online databases, and instructional technology support. For more information about accessing these resources, visit the SRSU website. Students should correspond using Sul Ross email accounts and submit online assignments through Blackboard, which requires secure login information to verify students' identities and to protect students' information. The procedures for filing a student complaint are included in the student handbook. Students enrolled in distance education courses at Sul Ross are expected to adhere to all policies pertaining to academic honesty and appropriate student conduct, as described in the student handbook. Students in web-based courses must maintain appropriate equipment and software, according to the needs and requirements of the course, as outlined on the SRSU website.

### THE ONLINE SUPPORT DESK

The Support Desk is where you can direct your more technical questions. For example, if you are having issues submitting a document, getting videos to play, or you are dealing with a technical error in the course. The support desk is open 24 hours a day/7 days a week for your convenience. You can reach the support desk:

- By calling 888.837.6055
- Via email [blackboardsupport@sulross.edu](mailto:blackboardsupport@sulross.edu)
- Using resources from the Technology Support tab within blackboard
- Clicking the Support Desk graphic on the course homepage

*REGULAR COMMUNICATIONS WITH THE PROFESSOR* - It is essential that you keep me current on your progress and any difficulties you may be having so that I can respond in real time to support your success.

GENERAL QUESTIONS are to be posted to a discussion board for all. For PERSONAL or PRIVATE ISSUES email me at [alicia.trotman@sulross.edu](mailto:alicia.trotman@sulross.edu) or call me at 432-837-8147. I strive to respond as soon as possible. If you do not receive a reply within 24 hours during the work week, please resend your email. The most efficient way of contacting me is by email, meeting with me during our weekly Zoom meetings or scheduling a meeting with me at <https://calendly.com/amtsulross-office-hours> which provides you with contact hours for the rest of the semester.

## COURSE BEHAVIORS - RESPECT AND DISRUPTIONS

Watch the VIDEO on NETTIQUETTE - [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FWMk\\_Zv7nB8](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FWMk_Zv7nB8) and <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=80uRE972uQ0>

You are encouraged and expected to openly engage in discussions, ask questions, share ideas, and express your thoughts in this web-based course in the same manner as in a face-to-face course. Please treat each other with dignity and respect and avoid disruptive behaviors. You are responsible for knowing what behaviors are acceptable versus unacceptable as referred to in the Student Conduct and Discipline section of the SRSU Student Handbook.

## CHILDREN IN THE CLASSROOM

The policy described here is thus, a reflection of my own beliefs and commitments to student, staff, and faculty parents.

1. All exclusively nursing/breastfeeding babies are welcome in class as often as is necessary to support the nursing/breastfeeding relationship. Because not all nursing parents can pump sufficient milk, and not all babies will take a bottle reliably, I never want students to feel like they have to choose between feeding their baby and continuing their education. You and your nursing baby are welcome in class anytime.
2. For older children and babies, I understand that minor illnesses and unforeseen disruptions in childcare often put parents in the position of having to choose between missing class to stay home with a child and leaving him or her with someone you or the child does not feel comfortable with. While this is not meant to be a long-term childcare solution, occasionally bringing a child to class in order to cover gaps in care is perfectly acceptable.
3. I ask that all students work with me to create a welcoming environment that is respectful of all forms of diversity, including diversity in parenting status.
4. In all cases where babies and children come to class, I ask that you sit close to the door so that if your little one needs special attention and is disrupting learning for other students, you may step outside until their need has been met. Non-parents in the class, please reserve seats near the door for your parenting classmates.
5. Finally, I understand that often the largest barrier to completing your coursework once you become a parent is the tiredness many parents feel in the evening once children have finally gone to sleep. The struggles of balancing school, childcare and often another job are exhausting! I hope that you will feel comfortable disclosing your student-parent status to me. This is the first step in my being able to accommodate any special needs that arise. While I maintain the same high expectations for all student in my classes regardless of parenting status, I am happy to problem solve with you in a way that makes you feel supported as you strive for school-parenting balance.
6. Don't forget to check out and utilize the ADA-compliant SRSU Lactation Room on the 2nd floor (Room 205) of Lawrence Hall!

### Late Assignments/Projects

You are expected to meet assignment deadlines. Assignments submitted after their due dates will be marked as **zero**. Late projects or reflections will be reduced by 10% for the first day of lateness and an additional 40% for lateness beyond that for unexcused absences. For excused absences (university-authorized, legal or medical issues), speak with me **before the absence** so arrangements can be made.

## EVALUATION

### *Assignments and Journal Exercises*

These assignments identified by (A) and journal exercises by (J) are short answer or essay questions you'll be asked to answer individually. These exercises are based on your understanding of the most pertinent concepts from assigned chapters of the readings that will be discussed using [Perusall](#). These exercises are worth thirty (30) points.

### *Loss Project*

During the semester, each student will maintain an on-going self-project. These projects are not group projects and must be conducted individually. You must identify experiences that connect with loss. Your experiences may promote self-understanding and self-improvement that can be monitored on a weekly basis. The purpose of the project is to provide a work-in-progress where you apply conceptualizations in the course to your situation. You are expected to choose experiences that are meaningful and important, and you should select activities that you feel comfortable discussing with others because you will report on your project in three digital reports to the professor and in one oral presentation to the entire class. You will report on the progress of this project each week to gain feedback on your experiences. Experiences that are deemed commonplace, immoral, illegal, or distasteful will not be approved (at the instructor's discretion).

- ✚ Describe the nature of your multi-faceted loss.
  - Report #1 – Identify your loss.
  - Report #2 – Apply one or two processes to disentangle your loss.
  - Report #3 – This is where you creatively illustrate how you can begin the healing process for the loss.

For each time you commit to your weekly activity, you must write, draw or create a journal entry of your experience. In addition, you must choose **one** concept learned in class and relate it to each journal entry. The concept **must** come from theories we learned about in the assigned readings. *You can create this report using the [Portfolio feature](#) in Blackboard.*

Throughout the semester, your three digital reports must contain 2-4 typewritten pages in APA format delivered in writing, and pictures, presenting an account of your semester-to-date monitoring and analysis of ONE or TWO emotions discussed in class. This project is due on **May 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2022**. The presentations that are based on this project will be completed during finals week. You will present your digital portfolio showing ways you integrated grief and bereavement processes discussed in class as pertinent to your self-analysis. A rubric for assessment will be provided.

*Grading*

Students are expected to complete reading assignments prior to class sessions and to engage in thoughtful discussions in light of these assignments.

<b>Grading:</b>	<b>1000 points total</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Assignments (A)	100 (10 @ 30 points each)	30%
Attendance/Participation:	200 points total (20 @ 10 points each)	20%
Journaling Exercises (J)	300 (10 @ 30 points each)	30%
Loss Project (LP)	200 points	20%

**Course Outline**

*(This schedule and the topics listed below are subject to modification by the instructor.)*

**Unit 1**

<b>Day</b>	<b>Content</b>
Week of January 18 <sup>th</sup>	Reading Syllabus and Accessing Books
Homework	Accessing Perusall
Week of January 25 <sup>rd</sup> MODULE 1	Perusall: Reading 1 (Jan. 24 <sup>th</sup> – Last day for late registration and schedule changes) (Jan. 25 <sup>th</sup> – Last day to drop classes without creating an academic record)
Homework	Journal Exercise 1 (J1)
Week of January 30 <sup>th</sup> MODULE 2	Perusall: Reading 2
Homework	Assignment 1 (A1)
Week of February 6 <sup>th</sup> MODULE 3	Perusall: Reading 3
Homework	Journal Exercise 2 (J2) & Assignment 2 (A2); Loss Project
Week of February 13 <sup>th</sup> MODULE 4	Perusall: Reading 4
Homework	Journal Exercise 3 (J3) & Assignment 3 (A3); Loss Project
Week of February 20 <sup>th</sup> MODULE 5	Perusall: Reading 5
Homework	Journal Exercise 4 (J4) & Assignment 4 (A4); Loss Project
Week of February 27 <sup>th</sup> MODULE 6	Perusall Reading 6
Homework	Loss Project
Week of March 6 <sup>th</sup> MODULE 7	Perusall: Reading 7 <b>First report of Loss Project due</b>
Homework	Journal Exercise 5 (J5) & Assignment 5 (A5); Loss Project
Homework	Enjoy Spring Break!

## Unit 2

Day	Content
Week of March 20 <sup>th</sup> MODULE 9	Perusall: Reading 8
Homework	Journal Exercise 6 (J6) & Assignment 6 (A6); Loss Project
Week of March 27 <sup>th</sup> MODULE 10	Perusall: Reading 9
Homework	Loss Project
Week of April 3 <sup>rd</sup> MODULE 11	Perusall: Reading 10 Second report of Loss Project due Good Friday – April 7 <sup>th</sup> (No classes)
Homework	Loss Project
Week of April 10 <sup>th</sup> MODULE 12	Perusall: Reading 11 April 14 <sup>th</sup> : LAST Day to withdraw from the 16-week course with grade of 'W' April 14 <sup>th</sup> : LAST Day to apply for May/December graduation without a late fee
Homework	Journal Exercise 7 (J7) & Assignment 7 (A7); Loss Project

## Unit 3

Day	Content
Week of April 17 <sup>th</sup> MODULE 13	Perusall Reading 12
	Journal Exercise 8 (J8) & Assignment 8 (A8); Loss Project
Week of April 24 <sup>th</sup> MODULE 14	Perusall: Reading 13
	Journal Exercise 9 (J9) & Assignment 9 (A9); Loss Project
Week of May 1 <sup>st</sup>	Perusall: Reading 14
Homework	Journal Exercise 10 (J10) & Assignment 10 (A10); Loss Project
Week of May 8 <sup>th</sup>	Review and obtain feedback for Loss Projects
Homework	Work on final presentation Final report of Loss Project due
<b>Monday May 16<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Final Presentations: 3:00 to 5:00pm</b>