SOUTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY
MORTUARY SCIENCE AND FUNERAL SERVICE
MASTER SYLLUS

COURSE NO., HOURS, TITLE: MSFS 269-3 Cremation and the Disposing of Our Dead

PROGRAM MISSION STATEMENT:

The mission of the Mortuary Science and Funeral Service program is to challenge students to achieve academic and professional excellence; prepare students to acquire entry level positions in the funeral service profession; provide quality instruction and stay current with trends of the profession; cultivate and maintain excellent relations with local, state, and national organizations; enhance university and community relations; and work toward the continued improvement of the Mortuary Science and Funeral Service program as an ongoing process.

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

The student will study the process of dying and the history of death disposal with emphasis on cremation. The student will examine how religion has played a part in the increase/decrease in acceptance as cremation being a method of disposing of the dead. Students will review cremation trends in the U.S. and the legal formality of cremation authorization and the cremation process. Students will explore how the death care industry is marketing cremation and analyze how the industry has adapted to consumer demands.

Lecture Hours:

PREREQUISITE TO: None

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

Upon satisfactory completion of this course the student should be able to:

1. Explain and compare the various ways in which death comes;

2. Compare the various ways in which death occurs;

3. Explain the evolution of cremation in society;

4. Identify and explain the various religious traditions regarding cremation;

5. Explain the impact cremation has on ecology and the impact of the “green” movement;

6. Explain the purpose for the necessary paper work and signatures required for a cremation;

7. Understand the value the death care industry has to society; and
8. Compare and contrast the marketing and merchandising of cremation and disposing of the dead.

TOPICAL OUTLINE:

1. Dying and the consequences........................................45%
2. Need of Disposing of the Dead................................... 5%
3. History of Cremation..................................................25%
4. Cremation and Religious Traditions.............................10%
5. Cremation-Rules, Regulations, Ecology....................... 5%
6. Marketing/Merchandising Cremation Services Trends......... 10%

TEXTBOOKS:


INSTRUCTOR:    Dr. Thomas Shaw

OFFICE HOURS:  Also by appointment.
                Room 123 - College of Applied Sciences & Arts
                Phone:  453-7217
                E-Mail: saja@siu.edu

ATTENDANCE:
ATTENDANCE IS REQUIRED. You are responsible for attending all classes and completing all course requirements. You will be allowed three absences during the semester. After the third absence the student will have two (2) points deducted from their total points for each absence. REMEMBER: If you miss a class, it is YOUR responsibility to contact the instructor and obtain any outside work assignment.

This is a reading intensive class. Participation in class discussion is a vital component in the evaluation process. Absences will negatively impact your grade.

You are required to be present at the time the class is scheduled to begin. Once the doors are shut and the class has started, do not interrupt the class by coming in late.
GRADES:
Grades will be determined on a percentage basis as applied to the total number of possible points accumulated throughout the semester. The percentage breakdown is as follows:

92 to 100% earns you an A
83 to 91% earns you a B
75 to 82% earns you a C
74 ≤ earns you an F

EXAMINATIONS and QUIZZES:

There will be two hourly exams given during the semester including the final. Make up exams are generally NOT PERMITTED.

During the semester there will be assignments that are to be completed. These assignments may be individual or group activities. All assignments must be completed and turned in on or before the due date. All assignments must be typed; double space, with one (1) inch margins, and have a cover page unless other parameters are given.

ASSIGNMENTS:

1. What experiences have you had with death? 2 page reflective paper detailing your death experiences. Was it a person, pet, object, relationship? Attempt to compare your thoughts/feelings regarding these occurrences. (15 Points)

2. Paper 1: Investigate an ancient culture that cremated their dead. (5 pages, 5 references, 30 points)

3. Weekly thought papers formalizing thoughts/ideas regarding week’s discussion. (Due Monday-10 Points each)

4. Field trip to a funeral home/crematory (5 Point)

5. Investigate death in our music—Review 5 songs describing death; compare their themes and describe what you believe the intent of the song is. (2 Pages- 20 Points)

6. Death Journal—(20 Points—1 week collect news articles regarding death [minimum number of articles 25]. Prepare a summation and trend or common methods of demise)

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES:

Southern Illinois University Carbondale is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for study and work. Because some health and safety circumstances are beyond our control, we ask that you become familiar with the SIUC Emergency Response Plan and Building
Emergency Response Team (BERT) program. Emergency response information is available on posters in buildings on campus, available on BERT’S website at www.Bert.siu.edu. Department of Safety’s website www.dps.siu.edu (disaster drop down) and in Emergency Response Guideline pamphlet. Know how to respond to each type of emergency.

Instructors will provide guidance and direction to students in the classroom in the event of an emergency affecting your location. It is important that you follow these instructions and stay with your instructor during an evacuation or sheltering emergency. The Building Emergency Response Team will provide assistance to your instructor in evacuating the building or sheltering within the facility.

*Changes may be made to this syllabus during the semester, as needed at the instructor’s discretion.*