I. COURSE DESCRIPTION:
Informed by theology and focused on skills for practical ministry, this course provides more preparation for dealing with situations of grief than the introductory course is able to provide for this essential area of ministry.

II. TEXTBOOKS:
   Required Reading:
   Recommended Reading:

III. COURSE GOALS
This course is designed to enable students to develop competence in the skills and perspectives necessary for leadership in the formation of disciples by introducing students to the importance of being able to deal with grief within ministry that requires their self-awareness regarding how they face grief and understanding of the experience of grief from losses of all kinds.

IV. SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES
   • Students will demonstrate through class discussions, role-play and written assignments how they are able to offer care for those experiencing grief.
   • Students will demonstrate comfort in dealing with grief situations through role-play in class and presentations of written casework.

V. TEACHING STRATEGIES
The design of this course is based on the conviction that class members learn from their experiences, from one another and not only from the assignments and the instructor. I expect to be a learner in the process as well. The course will make use of case studies, role-play lecture and discussion.
VI. CALENDAR OF TOPICS AND READINGS:

Read Kelley’s book prior to the beginning of class.

April 29
- **Introductions:**
  - Introduction to the Course and Participants
  - Shaping Our Class Covenant
  - Facing Your Own Death

May 6
- **Theological Reflections on Grief**
  - A Test for our Theologies
  - Dynamics of Grieving
  - Telling the Story

May 13
- **Suicide and Survivors**
  - The Role of Forgiveness in Grief Experiences
  - Things We Say to Help and Why
  - Recommended Reading: *Long Shadowed Grief*

May 20
- **Grief in Unexpected Places**
  - Practice in Facing Grief

VII. SEMINARY STANDARDS

A. **Inclusive Language**

   United Theological Seminary has an official policy regarding the use of Inclusive Language. The policy may be found in the Seminary Catalog and further explained in the Student Handbook.

B. **Academic Integrity**

   Student integrity regarding all work assigned in this class is a basic expectation of the Seminary community. A detailed policy regarding what constitutes a violation of academic integrity can be found in the Student Handbook.

VIII. EVALUATION

A. **Assignments**

   1. **Read:** *Grief: Contemporary Theory and the Practice of Ministry.*
      - Smith’s book, *Long Shadowed Grief* is highly recommended.
   2. **Participation** in class that will be evaluated according to quality and not quantity.
   3. **Self-Evaluation and Feedback:** During the last five minutes of every class session each participant will write a paragraph evaluating their own participation in that day's class session and saying whatever else they want to say to the instructor at that time. These papers will be handed in at the end of the class session and handed out at the next class session. You are encouraged to leave some margins on the paper for the instructor's responses.
4. One paper to be selected from the following options.

- Choose a particular grief issue and write a paper in which you deal with the issue from a **theological perspective** and **reflect on your proposed ministry to such a situation**.
- From your **current ministry** select a situation of grief of someone in your congregation. Deal with this in terms of a case in which you present the situation and then **reflect on it theologically and finally develop and evaluate your ministry to the situation**.
- Approach grief as a society or church issue and develop a **theological position and address a ministry that will enable others to deal with grief more constructively**. For instance, how might you have some impact on the people of a congregation in their ways of understanding and responding to loss—their own losses as well as the losses of others?
- Focus on **developing a program** in your congregation (real or imagined) that would be **preventative**: How to keep people from following a tendency to avoid grief that participates in preventing others from experiencing grief. This would also have to **include a theological base**.
- Other possibilities **may** be acceptable—**just ask**!

**Due Date:** May 29 (It will be earlier, if you are graduating.)

**Specifications for Writing the Paper:**
Read over what is expected for that paper. **You are responsible for including all that is expected** (what we agree on in class). In writing papers, always **type double spaced** and **proofread**. When you quote some author or scripture, be sure to **note your source** (including page number; or book, chapter, and verses of scripture).

**B. Method of Determining Grade**
- Class Participation: 30%
- Final Paper: 70%

**IX. STUDENT COURSE EVALUATIONS**
It is **very important** for students to submit a course evaluation toward the end of the semester. Instructors do not see the student evaluations at all until after the instructors have submitted the students’ final official grades. Students should feel free to evaluate the course without any negative ramifications.

I appreciate receiving comments, especially if you have something to offer that will help me improve my teaching.
REFERENCES:

Jackson, Edgar N. Cuando Alquien Muere.
Smith, Harold Ivan. Grieving the Death of a Mother. ISBN 97808006643472.
Smith, J. Alfred, Jr. Blessed Are They That Mourn…for They Shall Be Comforted.
Weatherhead, Leslie. The Will of God.
Weaver, Andrew J. and Howard Stone, eds. Reflections on Grief and Spiritual Growth. ISBN 9780687065080.
Westberg, Granger E. Good Grief. ISBN 9780687074822.