

“The mission of Tyndale Seminary is to provide Christ-centred graduate theological education for leaders in the church and society whose lives are marked by intellectual maturity, spiritual vigour and moral integrity, and whose witness will faithfully engage culture with the Gospel.”

Semester, Year	Spring/Summer, 2026
Course Title	CULTURAL AND GENDER DYNAMICS IN GRIEF, DEATH AND DYING
Course Code	PAST TH54 1S
Date	May 11, 2026 to May 15, 2026 MONDAY – FRIDAY
Time	9:00 AM – 4:00 PM
Delivery Format	SYNCHRONOUS ONLINE
Class information	The classes will be livestreamed Monday to Friday, from 9am to 4pm.
Instructor	ROBERT G PATTERSON, D.Min. Email: rpatterson@tyndale.ca
Office Hours	Meetings and discussions live streamed or by appointment.
Course Materials	Access course material at classes.tyndale.ca or other services at Tyndale One . Course emails will be sent to your @MyTyndale.ca e-mail account only.

I. COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course explores the ways in which gender and culture dynamics influence one’s understanding and expression of suffering and grief, as well as the process of recovery from loss. Consideration will be given to mourning traditions of different cultures and the need for self-awareness, sensitivity and understanding of various culture and gender dynamics. Effective helping strategies for caring for dying and bereaved persons from diverse backgrounds will be considered.

Models for gender differences, and cultural approaches will be analyzed and investigated.

II. LEARNING OUTCOMES

At the end of this course, students will be able to:

1. Identify the expression of grief as impacted by gender and culture.
2. Describe the ethical issues to be faced when caring for those who grieve from different cultural and religious traditions.

3. Examine one's personal assumptions, biases, attitudes and reactions to suffering, death and dying.
4. Apply practices that will enable one to grieve their losses and grow through the process of adversity and death.
5. Demonstrate competence to engage with grieving individuals in a positive, confident and caring approach in light of the good news of Jesus Christ.

III. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

A. REQUIRED READING

Moll, Rob. [*The Art of Dying: Living Fully into the Life to Come*](#). Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2010. ISBN: 9780830837366.

Parkes, Colin, Patricia Laungani, and William Young. [*Death and Bereavement Across Cultures*](#). London: Routledge, 1997. ISBN: 9780415131377.

B. SUPPLEMENTARY / RECOMMENDED READING AND TOOLS

Tyndale recommends [STEPBible](#) – a free and reputable online resource developed by Tyndale House (Cambridge, England) – for word searches of original-language texts, as well as for topical searches, interlinear texts, dictionaries, etc. Refer to the library for other [online resources for Biblical Studies](#).

C. ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING

1. Reflection Paper: Due on June 2, 2026, 30% of final grade

Read Rob Moll's *The Art of Dying: Living Fully Into the Life to Come*. The book is specific, direct and intensive in its coverage of end-of-life issues: family relationships, spiritual preparedness, end-of-life wishes with family, setting up a context for the 'good death', and being present with the dying. Write a 7-10 page double spaced paper that explores what you would consider the key elements of a "dying well".

2. Website Review: Due on June 30, 2026; 20% final grade

Provide a careful and thorough examination of the grief support website: <https://griefstories.org>. Evaluate critically the relative strengths and weaknesses of this web resource. Do not merely summarize but rather seek to express the elements of the website that you find the most personally helpful as you consider grief care. Explain your cognitive, effective, behavioural and valuational (meaning to you) responses to the website. The review should be 5-6 pages in length, double-spaced.

3. Essay: Due on July 14, 2026; 50% of final grade

Describe an experience of loss, grief, and death that has been of significance to you. Give a detailed outline of the grief experience. Relate the contents of the paper to course textbooks, lectures, and consult with at least five academic articles.

Length: Reports should be approximately 10 - 12 typed, double spaced pages in length. Follow the outline provided below with the understanding that the questions are suggestive, not prescriptive. In other words, include each of the four sections, but you do not need to answer all the questions in each section.

Select and Narrate an Experience (What happened?) – Two page

- The best learning and most fruitful reflections are sparked by the selection of an experience that caused puzzlement, uncertainty, self-doubt, value conflict, dilemma, or dissonance
- between one's expressed and operative theology. Therefore, a messy situation may make
- the most fruitful case study.
- Briefly narrate the experience. Describe what happened (not what you felt or what should
- have happened) answering the basic questions of "who, what, when, where, and how."
- Narrow the focus by identifying one segment of the experience that represents a key issue concerning your response to the grief experience.
- Describe how you specifically responded at the time (provide a short verbatim or summary). What were you thinking and feeling as you went through this experience?
- Describe the response of others.

Analyze the Experience - Three pages

- What key issues do you see as being significant in this situation (e.g. interpersonal dynamics, social forces, cultural issues, gender issues, value conflicts, assumptions, attitudes, theological differences, personality concerns, miscommunication, etc.).
- In what manner did I response to this grief instrumentally? Who has modeled instrumental grieving for you, explain?
- In what manner did I response to this grief intuitively? Who has modeled intuitive grieving for you, explain?
- Did this grief experience bring to light an underlying issue?
- How does this grief experience challenge your personal values, convictions, and faith tradition?
- You might even want to think about how you decided to write the narrative – did you use a narrative chronological or thematic approach? Why?
- What was done well? What were the areas that were not addressed well?

Reflect on the Experience - Three pages

- What key theological themes does this experience evoke or challenge?
- What Biblical principles or stories seem applicable in this context?
- Are there lingering issues and what are they?
- What learning and insights from your theological studies or from your personal faith experiences are relevant?
- What do the textbooks have to offer?
- Reflect on your feelings and thoughts – why did you react this way?
- Examine the response of the different key players – what about their actions or reactions made it easier or harder for the change to occur?

Assess Your Learning – Two Page

- What does this grief situation reveal about the nature of change?
- How might things have been done differently?
- How might things be done differently moving forward?
- What insights have surfaced from your reflection that you can take with you into a similar situation in the future?
- How has this experience challenged and/or affirmed your personal beliefs and theological convictions?
- What have you learned about yourself and your identity as a ministering person?
- How will this change your behaviour, or your philosophy and practice of grief care as you move forward?
- What practical steps will you need to take as a result

D. SUMMARY OF ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING

Evaluation is based upon the completion of the following assignments:

Assignments	Value	Due Date
1. Paper on <i>The Art of Dying: Living Fully Into the Life to Come</i>	30%	June 2, 2026
2. Review of Grief Stories website	20%	June 30, 2026
3. Case study	50%	July 14, 2026
Total		100%

IV. COURSE SCHEDULE, CONTENT AND REQUIRED READINGS

Date	Topic
May 11	
AM	Introduction Class orientation

PM	Thanatology basics, background, history Grief and Gender
May 12	
AM	Grief and Gender continued
PM	Grief and socialization
May 13	
AM	Manifestation of grief
PM	Models of Grief Intuitive and Instrumental grief responses Grief Pattern Inventory
May 14	
AM	Grief and culture, Western grief issues
PM	Grieving and belief systems
May 15	
	Grief and Culture continues A glimpse at grieving in Asian cultures Conclusion

V. SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

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- Castle, Jason, and William Phillips. "Grief Rituals: Aspects that Facilitate Adjustment to Bereavement." *Journal of Loss & Trauma* 8, no. 1 (2003): 41–71.
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- Crunk, Elizabeth, Laurie Burke, and Mike Robinson. "Complicated Grief: An Evolving Theoretical Landscape." *Journal of Counseling & Development* 95, no. 2 (2017): 226–33.
- Doughty, Caitlin. *Smoke Gets in Your Eyes and Other Lessons from the Crematory*. New York: Northcott, 2015.
- Dresser, Norine, and Freda Wasserman. *Saying Goodbye to Someone You Love: Your Emotional Journey Through End-of-Life and Grief*. New York: Demos Medical Publishing, 2010.
- Frank, Arthur W. *The Wounded Storyteller*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2013.
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- Heath, Yvonne. *Love Your Life to Death: How to Plan and Prepare for End of Life So You Can Live Life Fully Now*. Canada: Marquis Publishing, 2015.
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VI. GENERAL REQUIREMENTS FOR ALL COURSES

A. EQUITY OF ACCESS

Students with permanent or temporary disabilities who need academic accommodations must [contact](#) the [Accessibility Services](#) at the [Centre for Academic Excellence](#) to [register](#) and discuss their specific needs. *New students* must self-identify and register with the Accessibility Office at the beginning of the semester or as early as possible to access appropriate services. *Current students* must renew their plans as early as possible to have active accommodations in place.

B. REQUIREMENTS FOR LIVESTREAM INTERACTION (*SYNCHRONOUS ONLINE COURSE ONLY*)

- Livestream attendance for the entire duration of the class at announced times
- Headphones (preferred), built-in microphone, and web-camera
- Well-lit and quiet room
- Stable high-speed internet connection, preferably using an Ethernet cable over Wi-Fi
- Full name displayed on Zoom and Microsoft Teams for attendance purposes*
- A commitment to having the camera on to foster community building*

**exceptions with permission from professor*

C. GUIDELINES FOR INTERACTIONS

Tyndale University prides itself in being a trans-denominational community. We anticipate our students to have varied viewpoints which will enrich the discussions in our learning community. Therefore, we ask our students to be charitable and respectful in their interactions with each other, and to remain focused on the topic of discussion, out of respect to others who have committed to being a part of this learning community. Please refer to "Guidelines for Interactions" on your course resource page at classes.tyndale.ca.

D. GUIDELINES FOR THE SUBMISSION OF WRITTEN WORK

Grading Rubric

Please consult the rubric provided for each assignment on your course resource page at classes.tyndale.ca.

Academic Integrity

Integrity in academic work is required of all our students. Academic dishonesty is any breach of this integrity and includes such practices as cheating (the use of unauthorized material on tests

and examinations), submitting the same work for different classes without permission of the instructors; using false information (including false references to secondary sources) in an assignment; improper or unacknowledged collaboration with other students, and plagiarism (including improper use of artificial intelligence programs). Tyndale University takes seriously its responsibility to uphold academic integrity, and to penalize academic dishonesty. Please refer to the [Academic Integrity website](#) for further details. Students must review the policies and procedures regarding Artificial Intelligence (AI) outlined in [Academic Calendar](#) and consult guidance from their course instructors.

For proper citation style, consult [Citation Guides](#) for different styles. Students are encouraged to consult [Writing Services](#).

Students should also consult the current [Academic Calendar](#) for policies and expectations on Attendance and Classroom Expectations, Academic Honesty, Gender Inclusive Language in Written Assignments, Late Papers and Extensions, Return of Assignments, and Grading System.

Turnitin Text-Matching Software

Tyndale has a subscription to Turnitin, a text-matching software that ensures the originality of academic writing and verifies the proper citation of all sources. The instructor for this course will use Turnitin for assignments submitted through your course resource page at classes.tyndale.ca. Upon submission, you will receive a summary that includes your submitted files along with a similarity report generated by Turnitin. Please be aware that Turnitin can also detect AI-generated content from tools like Grammarly, so students should be mindful of when using such software. It's advisable to confirm with your instructor before using any AI tools into your assignments. Below are some useful resources:

- [Student](#) Guides for Turnitin via classes.tyndale.ca course resource page
- Interpreting Similarity ([Guide](#), [Video](#), [Spectrum](#))

Research Ethics

All course-based assignments involving human participants requires ethical review and may require approval by the [Tyndale Research Ethics Board \(REB\)](#). Check with the Seminary Dean's Office (seminaryoffice@tyndale.ca) before proceeding.

Late Papers and Extensions Policy

All papers and course assignments must be submitted by the due dates indicated in the course syllabus. Unless the instructor already has a policy on grading late papers in the course syllabus, grades for papers submitted late without an approved extension will be lowered at the rate of two-thirds of a grade per week or part thereof (e.g., from "A+" to "A-," from "B" to "C+"). Please note that some programs, such as cohort-based or intensive courses, may follow a different policy due to the nature of the program.

Faculty may not grant an extension beyond the last day of exams for the semester. Requests for extensions beyond this date must be addressed in writing to the Registrar by filling out the [Extension Request Form](#). The application will be considered only in cases such as a death in the family, medical emergency, hospitalization of oneself or immediate family member or prolonged illness requiring treatment by a physician. Factors such as assignments for other courses, holidays, and technology-related difficulties are insufficient grounds for requesting an extension.

A temporary grade of incomplete (“I”) may be granted by the Registrar. Once an extension is granted, it is the student’s responsibility to contact the instructor and make satisfactory arrangements to complete the outstanding work. A grade of “F” will be recorded for students who do not complete the outstanding work by the deadline.

E. COURSE EVALUATION

Tyndale Seminary values quality in the courses it offers its students. End-of-course evaluations provide valuable student feedback and are one of the ways that Tyndale Seminary works towards maintaining and improving the quality of courses and the student’s learning experience. Student involvement in this process is critical to enhance the general quality of teaching and learning.

Before the end of the course, students will receive a MyTyndale email with a link to the online course evaluation. The link can also be found in the left column on the course page. The evaluation period is 2 weeks; after the evaluation period has ended, it cannot be reopened.

Course Evaluation results will not be disclosed to the instructor before final grades in the course have been submitted and processed. Student names will be kept confidential, and the instructor will only see the aggregated results of the class.

F. LIBRARY RESOURCES

[Tyndale Library](#) supports courses with [e-journals, e-books](#), and the [mail delivery of books](#) and circulating materials. See the [Library FAQ page](#).

G. GRADING SYSTEM & SCALE

For each course’s grading rubric, please refer to your course syllabus or [classes.tyndale.ca](#). For general grading guidelines, refer to Seminary [Grading System & Scale](#).