Senate Reference No. 19-32

TO: James Toole, Chair, Senate Executive Committee

FROM: Vincent Maloney, Chair, Curriculum Review Subcommittee Vincent Maloney

DATE: February 3, 2020

SUBJECT: Department of Psychology

The Curriculum Review Subcommittee supports the proposal from the Department of Psychology for a Certificate in Death Education. We find that the proposal requires no Senate review.

Approving	Not Approving	Absent
Clare Cholewa		
Seth Green		
Teresa Hogg		
Carol Lawton		
Sarah LeBlanc		
Haowen Luo		
Vincent Maloney		
Jin Soung Yoo		

Degree/Certificate/Major/Minor/Concentration Cover Sheet

Date: 1/13/2020

Institution: Purdue

Campus: Fort Wayne

School or College: Arts and Sciences

Department: Psychology

Location: On Campus 50% or more online: Yes ○ No ●

County: Allen

Type: Majors/Concentrations: New

Program name:

Certificate in Death Education

Graduate/Undergraduate: Undergraduate

Degree Code: Other Certificate

Brief Description:

The certificate is intended to provide students with a substantial foundation of knowledge about death and the process of dying, as well as knowledge about bereavement, grief, and mourning. Students will obtain practice with essential skills needed to use that knowledge effectively on personal and professional levels. The curriculum consists of 24 hours of coursework in psychology, communication, human services, medical ethics, and gerontology, including a 3-credit practicum experience.

Rationale for new or terminated program:

Despite its certainty for every human being, few people ever receive formal death education—that is, systematic instruction and guided exploration of the multitude of issues surrounding the end of life. As a result, most people are ill-prepared to cope with death and dying when it touches their personal lives. Even those who encounter death and/or dying as professionals typically lack education about end of life. As a result, their abilities to provide structure and leadership for their bereaved or terminally-ill coworkers, patients, clients, or students are limited and largely uninformed. With the enhanced knowledge and awareness that come as a result of formal death education, those who complete the certificate will be positioned to contribute to their professions in a variety of ways—for example, by knowing how to support dying and/or bereaved people, and guide others toward a better understanding of the role of mortality in our lives. Through developing and refining their communication skills and cultural competencies around this most difficult and challenging topic, they will enhance their general ability to work effectively with people of all ages.

CIP Code: 422704

Name of Person who Submitted Proposal:

Carol Lawton

Contact Information (phone or email): lawton@pfw.edu

Request for a New Credit Certificate Program

Campus: Purdue University Fort Wayne

Proposed Title of Certificate Program: Certificate in Death Education

Projected Date of Implementation: Fall 2020

TYPE OF CERTIFICATE: (check one)

✓ UNDERGRADUATE CERTIFICATES – These programs generally require 12-29 credits of undergraduate-level academic work.

☐ GRADUATE CERTIFICATES – These programs generally require 12-29 credits of graduate-level academic work or undergraduate academic work carrying graduate credit.

☐ POST-BACCALAUREATE CERTIFICATES –These programs generally require 12-29 credits of undergraduate-level academic work, although students enrolling in these programs must have completed their baccalaureate degrees.

I. Why is this certificate needed? (Rationale)

This program will fill an educational gap that exists for most people around a fundamental life experience: Death. Very few people ever have any type of formal death education. Most people learn by experience—which is problematic, given our death-denying, death-and-mourning-avoidant culture. As a result, most individuals are ill-prepared to cope with the death and/or dying of a loved one in their personal lives. They are ill-prepared in their professional roles to provide structure and leadership for their bereaved or terminally-ill coworkers or patients or clients or students. Denial of one's mortality robs people of perspective, and is an impediment to informed and responsible advance-/end-of-life planning, the latter of which can leave family members in dire financial and emotional straits. The costs of unaddressed bereavement are significant; they manifest not just in one's own personal suffering, but also as lost productivity on the job, and as demands made on our mental and physical health care systems.

Students who complete this certificate will acquire knowledge about death and the process of dying, as well as knowledge about bereavement, grief, and mourning. As individuals having had a formal, organized death education of significant depth, they will be able to serve the organizations in which they work in unique ways. They will know how to support dying and/or bereaved people. They will develop or further refine "soft skill sets" around a most challenging topic (i.e., death), which will enhance their general ability to work effectively with people of all ages. This knowledge and these skills are absolutely essential for those students who wish to pursue careers in healthcare, education, and business.

Jobs through 2026 are projected to grow by 22.1% for mental health counselors in northeast Indiana and by 13.6-14.5% for healthcare practitioners, technicians, and support workers (http://www.hoosierdata.in.gov/FD/landing.aspx). Individuals who work in mental health and health care professions will be better able to perform their jobs

skillfully, having had a formal death education experience. Most if not all at some point in their careers will encounter bereaved and/or dying individuals who need providers/supporters who have acquired knowledge and skills around death and dying—at present, most do not have this kind of education or training.

II. List the major topics and curriculum of the certificate.

The curriculum of the certificate is intended to provide students with a substantial foundation of knowledge about death, dying, and bereavement, and practice with essential skills needed to use that knowledge effectively on personal and professional levels.

Total credits: 24

- COM 30300 – Intercultural Communication (3 cr.; P COM 11400*)
- HSRV 399 – Trauma and Grief (3 cr.)
- PHIL 31200 – Medical Ethics (3 cr.)
- PSY 37100 – Death & Dying (3 cr.; P 6 credits in PSY*)
- One of the following:
  PSY 23500 – Child Development (3 cr.; P PSY 12000*)
  PSY 36900 – Lifespan Development (3 cr.; P PSY 12000*)
- One of the following:
  COM 31000 – Family Communication (P: COM 11400*)
  COM 31300 – Introduction to Health Communication (3 cr.)
- One of the following:
  GERN 23100 – Introduction to Gerontology (3 cr.)
  PSY 36700 – Adult Development and Aging (3 cr.; P PSY 23500 or PSY 36900*)
- One of the following ***:
  PSY 4XXXX** – Death Education Practicum (3 cr.; P completion of 18 certificate hours)
  COM 49000 – Internship in Communication
  COM 39510 – Practicum in Communication
  GERN 49400 – Gerontology Practicum (3 cr.; P GERN 23100)
  HSRV 40000 – Internship I (3 cr.; P HSRV 31500, 32000, and 25100; C HSRV40100)

*Prerequisite courses may be waived on a case-by-case basis with certificate director's approval
**New course to be developed
***Course from this grouping must be approved by the certificate director

If a student were to take the prerequisites for the courses in the certificate curriculum in their freshman year, they should easily be able to complete the certificate program by the end of their senior year. For example, two of the courses for the certificate could be taken each semester of the sophomore year and then one per semester thereafter. Of course, it could also be completed within a shorter time frame. For many students, some of the courses in the certificate program will also fulfill requirements of their major or minor. PSY 23500 – Child Development or PSY 36900 – Lifespan Development should be taken near the beginning of coursework for the certificate and the practicum should be taken near the end.

III. What are the admission requirements?

Minimum GPA of 2.5.

IV. List the major student outcomes (or set of performance based standards) for the proposed certificate.

The major outcomes for students who have successfully completed the certificate are based on the recommendations of the Association for Death Education and Counseling. They include:

1. Improved ability to speak about death and dying, and to listen to others speak of both;
2. Knowledge about grief and mourning—normative and complicated/traumatic—and an ability to support others who are bereaved in an effective manner;
3. Heightened awareness of one's own mortality, and how to convert that awareness in order to live higher quality lives;
4. Practical knowledge about end-of-life care and advance planning;
5. An appreciation of historical, cultural, and religious differences surrounding death and dying.

V. Explain how student learning outcomes will be assessed (student portfolios, graduate follow up, employer survey, standardized test, etc.) and describe the structure/process for reviewing assessment findings for the purpose of ensuring continuous improvement of the certificate.

- Scores on established measures of death anxiety and other death-related attitudes (learning outcomes 2 and 5);
- Self-report narratives on the student's changed understanding of issues surrounding death and dying (learning outcomes 1 and 3);
- Survey of supervisors of the field experience required in the program (learning outcomes 2 and 4);
- Survey of certificate graduates after completion (learning outcomes 1-5).

One or two of these measures will be administered each year on a rotating basis and results will be used to improve the program as needed.

VI. Describe student population to be served.

Students most likely to be interested in this certificate program will be Purdue Fort Wayne students who are Psychology majors and minors, Human Services majors, Education majors, Gerontology certificate program students. Pre-med students (and possibly IU med students on the Fort Wayne campus) and community professionals working in hospice or long-term care facilities could be interested as well—particularly in the stand-alone option. A survey of 340 students in psychology, human services, and communication sciences disorders classes indicated that 24% were moderately likely to pursue the certificate, and 18% were quite likely or extremely likely to pursue it.

VII. How does this certificate complement the campus or departmental mission?

This certificate is consistent with the department's mission to provide students with a strong foundation in the scientific understanding of human behavior and mental processes, and with preparation for careers related to the field. The certificate is also consistent with the campus mission to make a positive impact on our students' lives and to empower everyone to improve our campus and our community.

VIII. Describe any relationship to existing programs on the campus or within the university.

There are no related existing programs on campus or within the university.

IX. List and indicate the resources required to implement the proposed program. Indicate sources (e.g., reallocations or any new resources such as personnel, library holdings, equipment, etc.)

The library allows full-text access to relevant journals, including *Death Studies*, *Omega: Journal of Death and Dying*, *Journal of Loss and Trauma*, *Journal of Personal and Interpersonal Loss*, and *Mortality.* Additional books not currently in library holdings are being requested.

X. A Liaison Library Memo

Memo attached.

XI. Describe any innovative features of the program (e.g., involvement with local or regional agencies, or offices, cooperative efforts with other institutions, etc.

The program will develop relationships with community agencies that serve as sites for the practicum experience. These relationships might facilitate job prospects for our graduates.

Liaison Librarian Memo

Date: 11/8/19

From: Sue Skekloff

To: Dr. Terri Swim, Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs

Re: Death Education Certificate Program, Psychology Department

Describe availability of library resources to support proposed new program:

The library currently subscribes to the databases and journals listed on the library resource questionnaire. I see no problem with library resource support for the program.

Comments:

The estimated future annual cost for new materials seems reasonable and items should be able to be purchased from the library's budget. If costs for new sources substantially increase, these may have to funded by an increase in the library's budget.

Sue Skekloff 11/8/2019

Liaison Librarian Signature *Date*

Please email academic_program@pfw.edu with questions about this form.
Send signed original to Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic Programs
Kettler Hall, Room 174