



Thanatology 2232F (670)
Summer 2026
Children And Death: Theory And Interventions

Course Information:

Calendar Description: An examination of children's understanding of death, the dying child, children and funerals, specific ages and interventions for the grieving child, the family system and death, and death and trauma.

Prerequisite(s):

Anti-requisite(s): Childhood and Youth Studies 2232F/G.

Extra Information: 3 lecture hours; cross-listed with Childhood and Youth Studies 2232F/G.

Course Weight:0.50 **Breadth:**Category A
Subject Code: THANAT

Notice: Unless you have either the requisites for this course (fulfilment of pre-requisites, no anti-requisite conflicts), or special permission from your Dean to enroll in it, you may be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. This decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary pre-requisites.

*King's University College
Western University*

**THANATOLOGY 2232F/670 ~ COURSE SYLLABUS
CHILDREN AND DEATH
Summer 2026**

Instructor: Adam Koenig M.A., RP, CCC, CT
Office location: Online
E-mail: akoenig@uwo.ca
Office hours: By appointment (Zoom)

HOW TO CONTACT ME

Contact me by email akoenig@uwo.ca and **please include the class course number in the subject line**. I will try and return a response within at least 48 business hours Monday – Friday 9am-5pm

OFFICE HOURS

Virtual via Zoom. Email akoenig@uwo.ca to set up meeting

COURSE DESCRIPTION

An examination of children's understanding of death, the dying child, children and funerals, specific ages and interventions for the grieving child, the family system and death, and death and trauma in children.

COURSE LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- 1. The child's perspective.** To understand what it is like to be a bereaved child or adolescent. To identify the distinct characteristics of grief in young persons and how do these differ from adult grief.
- 2. The perspective of those who experience a child's death.** To understand societal perspectives, as well as parents, siblings, other relatives, friends, teachers, and others close to the child.
- 3. The helper's perspective.** To describe how teachers, therapists, social workers, clergy, health care professionals, emergency response professionals and others can provide effective support to the bereaved child/adolescent and their families.

Thanatology 2232F is an academic university level course. While the course may contribute to the student's personal growth, grades will be assigned on the basis of academic achievement and mastery over the material covered. It is recommended that a student who is recently bereaved consider not taking Thanatology 2232. Please see the instructor privately if you have any questions.
Anti-requisite: Thanatology 107.

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Mode of Instruction

The 670 section code is used for “distance studies” courses. **This class is designed to be asynchronous, meaning we will not have a regular, mandatory time when the entire class must be online. This course begins on May 4th, 2023 and continues until July 24th, 2026, honouring all important dates derived from University approved guidelines and academic policies <https://www.kings.uwo.ca/current-students/academic-resources/academic-dates-and-events/>**

COURSE MATERIALS

This course will require the following:

- Stable high speed internet connection will likely be needed to stream video content for film review assignment (purchase of hard copy or access to streaming services may be required)
- Webcam (potentially for presentation)
- Microphone
 - Arnold, C. (Ed). (2017). *Understanding child and adolescent grief: Supporting loss and facilitating growth*. Routledge. <https://www.taylorfrancis.com/proxy1.lib.uwo.ca/books/edit/10.4324/9781315164250/understanding-child-adolescent-grief-carrie-arnold-robert-neimeyer-darcy-harris> (Cost: \$79.50) (Available through Library as E-book) (Available for free through Library as E-Text)
 - Traher, C. & Breen, L. J. (2023). *The Routledge international handbook of child and adolescent grief in contemporary contexts*. Routledge. <https://www.taylorfrancis.com/books/edit/10.4324/9781003221692/routledge-international-handbook-child-adolescent-grief-contemporary-contexts-carrie-traher-lauren-breen> (Cost: \$250.88) (Available for free through Library as E-Text)
 - Online readings available on OWL

Recommended

- *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association 7th ed.*

Weekly lecture material may include PowerPoint presentations, film/youtube clips, case studies, podcasts, or lecture notes and will include material not contained the text. Supplementary reading material will also be assigned and will be placed on reserve in the library or posted on OWL. *No attempt will be made to cover all the assigned readings in lectures or in online discussions. Students are responsible for reading and understanding the assigned portions of the textbook and supplementary reading list, even if this material is not covered in lectures or online discussions.*

METHODS OF EVALUATION

Team Film Review Presentation	25%
Storybook review (Independent Essay)	30%
Participation	20%
Final Exam	25%

FRIDAY MAKE-UP EXAMS

Please note that Friday, Make-Up Exams may only be written with the instructor's consent.

Team Film Review Presentation (25%)

Students will record a group presentation (in a randomly assigned group) on a preselected film by the instructor. Students will demonstrate understanding of course concepts by applying them to the film (Only the instructor will see and hear the presentation). Presentation is due **June 12th 10am**. No late penalty will be imposed for the first 48 hours after the deadline, in case of extenuating circumstances. Students should plan to submit by the deadline. Because the submission deadline for this assessment already includes flexibility, the instructor reserves the right to deny academic consideration for assignments submitted past the 48-hour window.

Individual Storybook Review (30%)

Students will complete a 6-7-page individual book review. Criteria for this assignment can be found on OWL under *Assignments*. Storybook Review **due July 3rd 10am**. No late penalty will be imposed for the first 48 hours after the deadline, in case of extenuating circumstances. Students should plan to submit by the deadline. Because the submission deadline for this assessment already includes flexibility, the instructor reserves the right to deny academic consideration for assignments submitted past the 48-hour window. An essay, meeting assignment guidelines, must be submitted in the course in order to be eligible to pass the course.

Participation (20%)

Forum discussions are held through OWL. Participation in the discussion forums is critical for maximizing learning experiences in any distance education course. In this course students are required to be part of an online community of learners who collectively interact through discussion. Students will be expected to lead a week of forum discussion in smaller groups as well as actively engage with their group in the other designated forum discussion weeks. Your final mark will reflect your consistent participation, as well as the quality of each contribution. Details will be posted on OWL to review. Forum weeks are noted below. Because the submission deadlines for this assessment already includes flexibility, the instructor reserves the right to deny academic consideration for missed participation.

Throughout the course you are expected to interact regularly with other students, course activities, and with me, as your instructor. The course is designed to structure and guide some self-paced elements as well as offer interactive opportunities for community learning. Each student brings their own knowledge, experience, and interests to our learning community, we will build on that and use our course material (readings, discussions, lessons, etc.) to amplify learning for everyone. We will each be responsible for our own learning progress and also for contributing to the growth of our learning community through our participation in all course activities and assessments. We will be ready to engage and connect meaningfully. We will be present, professional, respectful and ready to contribute to our group.

All students are expected to engage online in a professional and respectful manner. This includes all interactions with peers, as well as communication between TAs or your Professor. Failure to do so will result in academic discipline.

- Course content created by a faculty member is considered the faculty member's intellectual property; it should not be distributed, shared in any public domain, or sold by a student or other third party without prior written consent of the faculty member

All assessment or examinations done online are expected to be done by the student registered in this course, following the instructions outlined by the Assignment.

There may be opportunities to present personal experiences and feelings to the class. We must respect each person's contribution of what may often be painful experiences (at the same time appropriate limits to self-disclosure or to the time allotted to individuals will be upheld when personal narratives are shared) and agree to hold each other's contributions *strictly confidential*. This is an academic course and all participants are expected to complete the course requirements to a high standard in order to receive credit. One's strong feelings or experiences will not substitute for effort and academic achievement. While this course will be made richer by the sharing of personal narratives, it is NOT the purpose of this course to resolve emotions related to student life losses and experiences. As instructor of the course, I will be respectful of professional boundaries by not counselling any student on personal issues other than to suggest a referral to student services or another professional

FINAL Exam (Date: TBD Online) (25%)

Final assignment will assess knowledge of the lectures, readings, embedded video/audio content. The final assignment will be comprised of essay application question(s). *The final exam is cumulative. Students are responsible for material covered in the lectures, all supplementary readings, in lecture videos, podcasts, and news articles in the course. Final exam cannot be handed in "late" and student will receive 0% if the exam is not submitted on time.*

DROP DATE

The last day to drop this course without academic penalty is **July 14, 2024**.

ACADEMIC CONSIDERATIONS FOR ABSENCES, MISSED ASSESSMENTS

A student seeking academic considerations for any work worth less than 10% must contact the instructor. *Any absence for legitimate reasons will be dealt with by re-weighting the term work grade accordingly or setting a timeframe to submit work at a later date.* If documentation is required for either medical or non-medical academic accommodation, then such documentation must be submitted by the student directly to the appropriate Faculty Dean's Office and **not to the instructor**. Once the petition and supporting documents have been received and assessed, appropriate academic consideration shall be determined by the Dean's Office in consultation with the student's instructor. Whenever possible, students who require academic considerations should provide notification and documentation in advance of due dates, examinations, etc. These documents will be retained in the student's file, and will be held in confidence in accordance with the University's Official Student Record Information Privacy Policy. Once the petition and supporting documents have been received and assessed, appropriate academic accommodation shall be determined by the Academic Counselling/Dean's Office in consultation with the student's instructor(s)

Attendance Policy

Any student, who, in the opinion of the instructor, is absent too frequently from class will be reported to the Dean (after due warning has been given).

Debarment of Students from Writing the Final Examination

1. A student may be debarred from writing the final examination for failure to maintain satisfactory academic standing throughout the academic year.
2. Any student who, in the opinion of the instructor, is absent too frequently from class or laboratory periods in any course will be reported to the Dean of the Faculty offering the course (after due warning has been given). On the recommendation of the department concerned, and with the permission of the Dean of the Faculty, the student will be debarred from taking the regular examination (meaning they will be ineligible to write the final exam) Students who miss more than 3 classes will be recommended to be debarred from the final exam.

Late assignments/Make ups

All assignments are to be submitted on the due date and time. The penalty is 5 marks/day late when submitted past the submission window of 48 hours noted in the syllabus where relevant and assignments that are more than 4 days late from the initial due date will receive 0%

Additionally:

Advise the instructor if you are having problems completing the assignment on time, prior to the due date of the assignment. When possible, illness and personal crises must be announced **prior to the deadline**.

2. If seeking extensions for missed work or current circumstances, please consider the application for academic accommodation on Medical/Compassionate grounds from the academic advising office

3. Be prepared to provide documentation.

4. AAO approved missed exam will have a make-up exam

5. If students are granted Academic Consideration, work will be due 2 days after the end of the period for which the student received Academic Consideration

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following Web site:

https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf

Within this course, use of generative artificial intelligence (AI) tools (such as, but not exclusive to, ChatGPT, translation tools, and grammar-checking tools) is not permitted for written work submitted

for evaluation. Unauthorized use of AI will be subject to academic discipline. Students should not have AI tools write any part of their assignments or papers, either by copying and pasting or by paraphrasing the output.

Notice of Turnitin Use: All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com (<http://www.turnitin.com>).

GENDER-BASED SEXUAL VIOLENCE

King's at Western is committed to reducing incidents of gender-based violence (GBSV) and providing compassionate support to anyone who is going through or has gone through these traumatic events. If you are experiencing or have experienced GBSV (either recently or in the past), you will find information about support services for survivors, including emergency contacts at the following website:

[Mental Health and Wellness at King's – King's University College](#)

You can reach some supports at King's by emailing CARE@kings.uwo.ca or calling 519-930-4640 to reach a social worker who can offer help.

You can reach some supports at King's by emailing CARE@kings.uwo.ca or calling 519-930-4640 to reach a Case Manager/Social worker who can offer help.

You can also reach Western's Gender-Based Violence & Survivor Support Case Manager by [email](#) or by calling 519-661-3568.

Course Schedule

Week Of:

W1 May 5 Introduction and Developmental considerations ~ Attachment
Reading: Chapter 1 & 2 Arnold (2017)
Ch 1 Attachment as a Context of Development PDF (Davies found on OWL)
Welcome Forum

W2 May 12 Developmental considerations ~ Brain basics
Reading: Chapter 2 Arnold (2017)
Ch 4 Traher and Breen (2023)
Ch 2 Brain Development PDF (Davies found on OWL)
Forum #1

W3 May 19 Disenfranchised grief and Death of a parent
Reading: Chapters 4 & 5 Arnold (2017)
Ch 2 in Traher and Breen (2023)
Forum #2

W4 May 26 Death of a friend and Children with life-limiting illness
Reading: Chapters 7 & 8 Arnold
Forum #3

W5 June 2 Death of a sibling and pet
Reading: Chapter 6 Arnold (2017)
Ch 6 Traher and Breen (2023)

W6 June 9 Trauma and grief complications

Reading: Chapter 9 Arnold (2017)
Ch 12, 20 Traher and Breen (2023)

***** June 12th 10:00am Group Film Review Presentation due*****

W7 June 16 Grief and loss experienced by Indigenous and Black Youth

Reading: Chapter 11 Arnold (2017)
Ch 11, 26 Traher and Breen (2023)

Forum #4

W 8 June 23 Suicide in children and adolescents

Reading: Chapter 10 Arnold (2017)

W9 June 30 Assessing grief and loss in children and adolescents

Reading: Chapter 3 Arnold (2017)
Ch 22 Traher and Breen (2023)

Forum #5

***** July 3rd 10:00am Book Review due*****

W10 July 7 Loss and resilience in GSM youth

Reading: Chapter 12 Arnold (2017)
Ch 13 Traher and Breen (2023)

W11 July 14 Grief, adolescents, and social media

Reading: Chapter 13 Arnold (2017)
Ch 23, 25 Traher and Breen (2023)

Forum #6

W12 July 21 * SHORT WEEK* Resilience, self-care, and ethics

Reading: Chapters 14, 15

King's University College General Course Policies 2025-2026

1. Academic Accommodations, Consideration for Absences

Academic Accommodation (Accessibility)

Accessibility Services works to ensure that academic programs are accessible to all students, and supports students who may have a condition related to, but not limited to, vision, hearing, mobility, different ways of learning, mental health, chronic illnesses, chronic pain, autism spectrum disorder, ADD/ADHD, and temporary conditions (beyond short-term academic consideration). Accessibility Services provides recommendations for accommodation based on medical documentation or psychological and cognitive assessment. The accommodation policy can be found here [Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities](#). Information on Accessibility Services at King's can be found [here](#).

Academic Consideration for Student Absence

If a student is unable to meet a course requirement due to substantial but temporary extenuating circumstances (medical or compassionate), they should follow the procedures below.

In some cases, where instructors have built flexibility into their assessments, this flexibility will already address consideration needs.

Requests for academic consideration should be directed to the Academic Advising Office of your faculty/college of registration. Requests must be made as soon as possible and no later than 48 hours after the missed assessment.

As a rule, documentation is required for academic consideration. For academic consideration requests on medical grounds, the Student Medical Certificate is available at [here](#).

Students are permitted one academic consideration request without supporting documentation per term per course. Instructors may designate one assessment per half-course weight as requiring formal supporting documentation. Please refer to the course outline for each course. For further information, please see:

<https://mykings.ca/intranet/app/#/academics/academic-advising/academic-consideration-requests-and-student-absence-portal>

Absences from Final Examinations

If you miss the Final Exam, contact the Academic Advising Office of your faculty/college of registration as soon as you are able to do so. They will assess your eligibility to write the Special Examination (the name given by the University to a makeup Final Exam).

You may also be eligible to write the Special Exam if you are in a “Multiple Exam Situation” (e.g., more than 2 exams in 23-hour period, or more than 3 exams in a 47-hour period).

If a student fails to write a scheduled Special Examination, the date of the next Special Examination (if granted) normally will be the scheduled date for the final exam the next time this course is offered. The maximum course load for that term will be reduced by the credit of the course(s) for which the final examination has been deferred. See the Academic Calendar for details https://academicsupport.uwo.ca/accessible_education/exams/index.html.

Religious Accommodation

Students should consult the University's list of recognized religious holidays, and should give notice in writing to the instructor and Academic Advising Office if a course requirement will be affected by a religious holiday/observance. Notice must be given as early as possible, and no later than two weeks prior to an examination, and one week prior to a midterm test date. It is the responsibility of such students to inform themselves concerning the work done in classes from which they are absent and to take appropriate action.

2. Support Services

Accessibility, Counselling and Student Development at King’s University College:

<https://mykings.ca/intranet/app/#/student-supports-and-services>

Students experiencing emotional or mental health distress can access services at King’s University College: <https://mykings.ca/intranet/app/#/student-supports-and-services/personal-counselling>

Good2talk is a good online and phone 24/7 resource for students and is available in English, Mandarin, and French: <https://good2talk.ca>, 1-866-925-5454

MentalHealth@Western provides a complete list of options about how to obtain help: <https://www.uwo.ca/health/psych/index.html>

Academic Support Services at King’s University College:

<https://mykings.ca/intranet/app/#/academics/academic-advising>

GBSV Support:

King’s is committed to reducing incidents of gender-based and sexual violence and providing compassionate support to anyone who has gone through these traumatic events. If you have experienced sexual or gender-based violence (either recently or in the past), you will find information about support services for survivors, including emergency contacts at: <https://mykings.ca/intranet/app/#/student-supports-and-services/campus-safety-and-reporting/gender-and-sexual-violence>

You can reach someone supports at Kings by emailing Care@kings.uwo.ca or calling 519-930-4640 to reach a social worker who can offer help.

You can also reach Western’s Gender-Based Violence & Survivor Support Case Manager by [email](#) or by calling 519-661-3568.

See also https://www.uwo.ca/health/student_support/survivor_support/get-help.html

University Students' Council offers many valuable support services for students, including the health insurance plan: <http://westernusc.ca/services/>

3. Statement on Use of Electronic Devices

Use of Electronic Devices: Unless explicitly stated otherwise, you are not allowed to have a cell phone, or any other electronic device, with you during tests or examinations. Unauthorized possession of such a device during a test or examination constitutes an academic offence.

Use of Laptops, Tablets, and Smartphones in the Classroom: King's University College at Western University acknowledges the integration of new technologies and learning methods into the curriculum. The use of electronic devices such as laptop computers, tablets, or smartphones can contribute to student engagement and effective learning. At the same time, King's recognizes that instructors and students share jointly the responsibility to establish and maintain a respectful classroom environment conducive to learning.

The use of electronic devices by students during lectures, seminars, labs, etc., shall be for matters related to the course at hand only. Students found to be using electronic devices for purposes not directly related to the class may be subject to sanctions under the Student Code of Conduct; see <https://mykings.ca/intranet/app/#!/student-supports-and-services/campus-safety-and-reporting/student-code-of-conduct>

Inappropriate use of electronics (e.g., laptops, tablets, smartphones) during lectures, seminars, labs, etc., creates a significant disruption. As a consequence, instructors may choose to limit the use of electronic devices in these settings. In addition, in order to provide a safe classroom environment, students attending in-person class sessions are strongly advised to operate laptops with batteries rather than power cords.

4. Statement on Academic Offences

King's is committed to academic integrity. Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, is posted at [here](#).

It is expected that students will submit work that is truly their own, completed without external assistance (human or artificial) except as explicitly permitted by the course instructor. Check with your instructor on what tools, including generative AI (ChatGPT, translation tools, grammar-checking tools) are permitted in the course. Because a tool is permitted in one course, that does not mean it is permitted in other courses.

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system; see <https://elearningtoolkit.uwo.ca/tools/OriginalityReports-TurnItIn.html>.

Computer-marked multiple-choice tests and/or exams may be subject to submission for similarity review by software that will check for unusual coincidences in answer patterns that may indicate cheating.

5. Copyright of Course Material

Lectures and course materials, including PowerPoint presentations, tests, outlines, and similar materials are protected by copyright. Faculty members are the exclusive owner of copyright in those materials they create. Students may take notes and make copies for their own use. Students may not allow others to reproduce or distribute lecture notes and course materials publicly (whether or not a fee is charged) without the express written consent of a faculty member.

Unauthorized sharing of class content is subject to academic discipline.

Similarly, students own copyright in their own original papers and exam essays. If a faculty member wishes to post a student's answers or papers on the course website, they should ask for the student's written permission.

6. Use of Recordings

Participants in this course are not permitted to record the sessions, except where recording is an approved accommodation and/or the participant has the prior written permission of the instructor. Unauthorized recording and/or sharing of class content is subject to academic discipline.

7. Policy on Attendance

Any student who, in the opinion of the instructor, is absent too frequently from class or laboratory periods in any course, will be reported to the Dean of the Faculty offering the course, after due warning has been given. On the recommendation of the department concerned, and with the permission of the Dean of that Faculty, the student will be debarred from taking the regular examination in the course.

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Unauthorized sharing of class content is subject to academic discipline.

Similarly, students own copyright in their own original papers and exam essays. If a faculty member wishes to post a student's answers or papers on the course website, they should ask for the student's written permission.

6. Use of Recordings

Participants in this course are not permitted to record the sessions, except where recording is an approved accommodation and/or the participant has the prior written permission of the instructor. Unauthorized recording and/or sharing of class content is subject to academic discipline.

7. Policy on Attendance

Any student who, in the opinion of the instructor, is absent too frequently from class or laboratory periods in any course, will be reported to the Dean of the Faculty offering the course, after due warning has been given. On the recommendation of the department concerned, and with the permission of the Dean of that Faculty, the student will be debarred from taking the regular examination in the course.