

**LIBS 497/PSY 497 – Don't Fear the Reaper: Death, Dying, and Rock & Roll**  
**Texas A&M University - Commerce – Spring Semester 2022**  
Web Enhanced Course – Mon/Wed/Fri 11:00-11:50 (203 Talbot Hall)

**Instructors:**

Dr. Ray Green

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Office Hours: Mon 8:00-8:30 a.m.; Thurs 10:00-11:00 or by appointment

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Office Hours: Mon and Wed 3:00-4:00; Tues 12:00-1:30 or by appointment

**Course Description:** This is the study of the processes of dying and the influence of the threat of death on human behavior as viewed through connections of popular music.

**Course Objectives**

1. To encounter and engage in readings, discussions, and activities as a means for generating synthesis, analysis and communication of critical thought
2. To apply the principles of interdisciplinary scholarship by reflectively and informatively examining experiences and settings of death, dying, grieving, and their ranges of expression
3. To prompt awareness and application of course content to personal self-reflection and expression

**Evaluation**

Museum Project:	25%
Reflective Short Papers:	40%
Memorial Project:	20%
Participation and Engagement:	15%

**Grading System**

A (exceptional) = 100 - 90%      B (good) = 89 - 80%      C (average) = 79 - 70%  
D (minimally sufficient) = 69 - 60%      F (failure) = <60%

We are believers in the intrinsic pursuit of knowledge and discovery. If you join us in that pursuit, there should be no worries or concerns of final grades. We start from a mindset that one begins at middle “C” (75%), and one proves their relative ability to shift above, shift below, or remain at that mark with their work. This is particularly true of participation and class engagement happenings.

**Covid 19 Considerations**

Please note that as of the writing of this syllabus, per university direction, this is planned to be an entirely face-to-face class with no scheduled virtual attendance option. Students, faculty, and staff are strongly encouraged to get vaccinated, wear a mask in public indoor settings, and wash hands frequently. These actions can reduce the spread of COVID-19. Review the whole of the university’s Spring 2022 [COVID-19 Management and Guidance Plan](#) thoroughly and be prepared to strictly adhere to it.

### **Please Note**

Popular culture and entertainment media use life as its muse. As such, it is comprised of the themes, subjects, and contents that contribute to everyday life. These contents, at times, can and do include aspects of violence, threat, sexuality, conflict, oppression, discrimination, inequality, profanity, varying ideology, crime, and impropriety. While effort has been taken to keep decorum in mind, engaging death, dying, and rock & roll as a scholarly pursuit is intended for collegiate/adult maturities and some of the examples encountered in the course will comprise aspects of these contents.

As well, often issues in this class will be personally relevant. If any of the material becomes distressing or raises concerns there are a number of help resources:

Raymond Green. Prairie Crossing. Phone #: 903-468-3001.

The Counseling Center, Halladay Student Services Building, Room 204, 903-886-5145 (Day). After 5pm your call will be routed to an off-campus counseling service that will provide aid and secure further emergency services if necessary. These services are free to TAMU-Commerce students.

### **Academic Dishonesty**

All coursework is to be an original work by the student and created specifically for fulfilling the requirements for this course. Plagiarism, cheating, or otherwise representing another's work or ideas as one's own without proper attribution will not be tolerated. It is the student's responsibility to:

1. research and write their own papers
2. give proper credit through documentation when using words or ideas of others
3. rely on their own knowledge when taking tests
4. refuse to give another student the opportunity to be dishonest

**Any act of academic dishonesty may result in the failure of the course** and may be subject to further disciplinary action by the university.

### **Readings**

There is a required text for the course:

Strong, C & Lebrun, B. (2020). *Death and the Rock Star*. New York: Routledge.

ISBN: 9780367598068

Paperback publisher price \$48.95

<https://www.routledge.com/Death-and-the-Rock-Star/Strong-Lebrun/p/book/9780367598068>

In addition to this text, there are a variety of additional readings which will be distributed through D2L.

### **Brief Assignment Explanations**

**Participation and Engagement:** The goal is to demonstrate communication, discussion, and interactive engagement. Students are expected to dialogue in a way that provokes, clarifies, challenges, and enlightens the course community.

Additional considerations of a student's relative level of engagement and academic integrity will also be made across all aspects of the course including but not limited to completion and quality of tasks and assignments, communications, following instructions and guidelines, and accessing materials.

**Museum Project:** Students will choose a topic that falls within the scope of death, dying, and rock & roll. Through a formal research process of the chosen topic, the student will compile and create the equivalent of a museum installation which includes the history, significance, and representative examples of the chosen topical focus. Project may be completed solo or in groups of 2 or 3. The installation will be publically presented to your class.

**Memorial Project:** Students will experience locations where death is memorialized (e.g. Cemeteries) as a point of departure for planning and articulating their own death ceremony.

**Reflective Short Papers:** At four points in the semester, students will reflect on the course as a whole as informed through course content.

### **“Attendance” policy, instructor’s rights and expectations**

All courses demand active participation and regular attendance. It is imperative that the student do all assigned work in a timely fashion. In particular, the benefits from discussion specifically depend on each student’s respective preparation and distinctive contribution. Failure to do so hurts not only the individual student, but the collective community as a whole.

Coursework is to be completed as assigned and is to be turned in via the D2L Brightspace dropbox no later than the formal due date. Any work turned in after due dates will incur a penalty respective of its relative degree of tardiness (to a point of no credit whatsoever). Failing to complete assignments not only inhibits the immediate learning process but, again, ultimately hurts the overall learning community as discussion of the process and its results can prove insightful as well.

### **Student Conduct**

Course participation includes aspects of respectful, thoughtful, class interaction and engagement in group discussions. This course’s expectations work in conjuncture with what the Student’s Guide Handbook describes as Civility in the Classroom (see p. 36). Additionally, all students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. (See Student's Guide Handbook, Policies and Procedures, Conduct, pg. 42).

### **Nondiscrimination Notice**

Texas A&M University-Commerce will comply in the classroom, and in online courses, with all federal and state laws prohibiting discrimination and related retaliation on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, age, genetic information or veteran status. Further, an environment free from discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression will be maintained.

## **ADA Statement**

### **Students with Disabilities**

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact:

#### **Office of Student Disability Resources and Services**

Texas A&M University-Commerce

Gee Library- Room 132

Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835

Fax (903) 468-8148

Email: [Sandi.Patton@tamuc.edu](mailto:Sandi.Patton@tamuc.edu)

Website: [Office of Student Disability Resources and Services](#)

## **Concealed Carry Notice**

Texas Senate Bill - 11 (Government Code 411.2031, et al.) authorizes the carrying of a concealed handgun in Texas A&M University-Commerce buildings only by persons who have been issued and are in possession of a Texas License to Carry a Handgun. Qualified law enforcement officers or those who are otherwise authorized to carry a concealed handgun in the State of Texas are also permitted to do so. Pursuant to Penal Code (PC) 46.035 and A&M-Commerce Rule 34.06.02.R1, license holders may not carry a concealed handgun in restricted locations.

For a list of locations, please refer to the [Carrying Concealed Handguns On Campus](#) document and/or consult your event organizer.

Web url:

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/34SafetyOfEmployeesAndStudents/34.06.02.R1.pdf>

Pursuant to PC 46.035, the open carrying of handguns is prohibited on all A&M-Commerce campuses. Report violations to the University Police Department at 903-886-5868 or 9-1-1.

## **A&M-Commerce Supports Students' Mental Health**

The Counseling Center at A&M-Commerce, located in the Halladay Building, Room 203, offers counseling services, educational programming, and connection to community resources for students. Students have 24/7 access to the Counseling Center's crisis assessment services by calling 903-886-5145. For more information regarding Counseling Center events and confidential services, please visit [www.tamuc.edu/counsel](http://www.tamuc.edu/counsel)

# TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS

## LMS

All course sections offered by Texas A&M University-Commerce have a corresponding course shell in the myLeo Online Learning Management System (LMS). Below are technical requirements

LMS Requirements:

<https://community.brightspace.com/s/article/Brightspace-Platform-Requirements>

LMS Browser Support:

[https://documentation.brightspace.com/EN/brightspace/requirements/all/browser\\_support.htm](https://documentation.brightspace.com/EN/brightspace/requirements/all/browser_support.htm)

YouSeeU Virtual Classroom Requirements:

<https://support.youseeu.com/hc/en-us/articles/115007031107-Basic-System-Requirements>

## ACCESS AND NAVIGATION

You will need your campus-wide ID (CWID) and password to log into the course. If you do not know your CWID or have forgotten your password, contact the Center for IT Excellence (CITE) at 903.468.6000 or [helpdesk@tamuc.edu](mailto:helpdesk@tamuc.edu).

**Note:** Personal computer and internet connection problems do not excuse the requirement to complete all course work in a timely and satisfactory manner. Each student needs to have a backup method to deal with these inevitable problems. These methods might include the availability of a backup PC at home or work, the temporary use of a computer at a friend's home, the local library, office service companies, Starbucks, a TAMUC campus open computer lab, etc.

## COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT

If you have any questions or are having difficulties with the course material, please contact your Instructor.

### Technical Support

If you are having technical difficulty with any part of Brightspace, please contact Brightspace Technical Support at 1-877-325-7778. Other support options can be found here:

<https://community.brightspace.com/support/s/contactsupport>

## Course Outline:

## Schedule of Activities

<u>Date</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Assignments</u>
Week of 1/10	Class Introduction	
Week of 1/17	Death Introduction	
Week of 1/24	Mortality and Immortality	<b>Reflective Paper 1</b>
Week of 1/31	Death and Memory	
Week of 2/7	More Death and Memory	
Week of 2/14	The Undead and the Uncanny	<b>Reflective Paper 2</b>
Week of 2/21	Goth, Metal, Death Metal, and Rap	
Week of 2/28	Morbidity, Violence, Suicide	
Week of 3/7	Altamont, Curtis, and Cobain	<b>Reflective Paper 3</b>
Week of 3/14	<b>Spring Break!!!</b>	
Week of 3/21	Mediating Death	<b>Memorial Project</b>
Week of 3/28	The Business of Death	<b>Reflective Paper 4</b>
Week of 4/4	Apocalypse Week	
Week of 4/11	Where are we now?	<b>Museum Project due</b>
Week of 4/18	Exhibition of Museum Project	
Week of 4/25	Exhibition of Museum Project	
Week of 5/2	Exhibition of Museum Project	
Week of 5/9	Final Meeting (during final exam slot)	