

1-24-2002

## Curricular Report No. 2001-2002-4A from the Graduate Council to the Faculty Senate: Proposed Certificate Program in Thanatology

University of Rhode Island Faculty Senate

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UNIVERSITY OF RHODE ISLAND

MEMORANDUM

OFFICE OF THE PROVOST AND VICE PRESIDENT FOR ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

Carlotti Administration Building

Kingston Rhode Island 02881-0806

Phone 401-874-4408 or 4410

Fax 401-874-7149

TO: Harold D. Bibb, Associate Dean, Graduate School

FROM: M. Beverly Swan, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs

DATE: November 23, 2001

SUBJECT: Post-baccalaureate Certificate in Thanatology

On Wednesday, November 21, 2001, the Council of Deans reviewed the proposal for a Post-baccalaureate Certificate in Thanatology. The Council unanimously supported the proposal. This program will be valuable not only to nurses but to those in state agencies and other areas where an enhanced knowledge of death and dying will allow them to do their jobs better.

We look forward to positive action of this proposal.

rbh

- c: C. B. Peters
S. B. Grubman
D. F. Joseph
R. C. Rhodes

RECEIVED stamp with date DEC 4 and handwritten signature Faculty Senate



Faculty Senate

Serial Number #01-02--10

TO: President Robert L. Carothers
FROM: Chairperson of the Faculty Senate

- 1. The attached BILL, titled Curricular Report No. 2001-2002-4A from the Graduate Council to the Faculty Senate: Proposed Certificate Program in Thanatology is forwarded for your consideration.
2. The original and two copies for your use are included.
3. This BILL was adopted by vote of the Faculty Senate on January 24, 2002.
4. After considering this bill, will you please indicate your approval or disapproval. Return the original or forward it to the Board of Governors, completing the appropriate endorsement below.
5. In accordance with Section 10, paragraph 4 of the Senate's By-Laws, this bill will become effective February 14, 2002 three weeks after Senate approval, unless: (1) specific dates for implementation are written into the bill; (2) you return it disapproved; (3) you forward it to the Board of Governors for their approval; or (4) the University Faculty petitions for a referendum. If the bill is forwarded to the Board of Governors, it will not become effective until approved by the Board.

January 25, 2002
(date)

C. B. Peters
Chairperson of the Faculty Senate

ENDORSEMENT

TO: Chairperson of the Faculty Senate
FROM: President of the University

Returned.

- a. Approved \_\_
b. Approved subject to final approval by Board of Governors [checked]
c. Disapproved \_\_

2/1/02
(date)

President

**UNIVERSITY OF RHODE ISLAND  
The Graduate School**

**Curricular Report from the Graduate Council to the Faculty Senate  
Report No2001-2002 – 4A  
Post-baccalaureate Certificate program in Thanatology  
As approved by the Faculty Senate on January 24, 2002**

At Meeting No. 370, held on 23 March, 2001, the Graduate Council approved the following proposal that is now submitted to the Faculty Senate.

**SECTION I  
BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

**ABSTRACT**

The Graduate Council approved a proposal from the College of Nursing for a Post-baccalaureate Certificate program in Thanatology. The interdisciplinary program would involve not only the College of Nursing, but also the College of Arts and Sciences and the College of Human Sciences and Services. Because no new resources would be required for the implementation of the proposal, and because the proposal was deemed to be of significant merit, it is forwarded at the Class A\* level.

**BACKGROUND**

Care of the dying and bereaved will be the focus of the Post-baccalaureate Certificate Program in Thanatology. The program is based on a holistic approach that examines issues of the quality of life of clients and their families. Physical, emotional, and spiritual needs of the dying will be addressed; and ethical, legal, political, cultural and socioeconomic factors also will be incorporated. Approaches for meeting these needs will be based on theories, research, and professional experience.

The proposal was reviewed under the process established by the Faculty Senate in which the Graduate Council serves as the Coordinating and Review Committee. Announcements of the receipt of the proposal were sent to the President and Joint Educational Policy Committee, the Provost and the Council of Deans, the Budget Office, and Department Chairs and Directors. Recommendations were sought from each of these, and the comments received are appended. Comments and recommendations have been kept on file in the Graduate School.

The proposal received the support of the Joint Educational Policy Committee, the Council of Deans, and the Budget Office, which noted that the certificate program would require no new resources and that it demonstrated a collaboration among the three participating colleges that utilizes existing faculty and courses.

**SECTION II  
RECOMMENDATION**

The Graduate Council approved the proposal for the Post-baccalaureate Certificate program in Thanatology, at its meeting number 370 on 23 March, 2001, and forwards it to the Faculty Senate at the Class A\* level.

\*Approved at Class C level.

## Proposal for Post Baccalaureate Certificate in Thanatology

**1. Names of colleges and departments involved:**

College of Arts and Sciences  
Department of Philosophy  
Department of Political Science  
Department of Psychology  
College of Human Science and Services  
Department of Human Development and Family Studies  
Program in Gerontology  
College of Nursing

**2. Title of proposed program:** Interdisciplinary Certificate Program in Thanatology

**3. Intended date of program implementation:** May, 2001

**4. Anticipated date for granting of first certificate:** December, 2002

**5. Intended location of program:** Kingston and Providence campuses

**6. Description of the program:**

a. Focus of the program

Care of the dying and the bereaved will be the focus of this program in thanatology. It is based on the belief that a holistic approach is essential for quality of life of clients and their families. Physical, emotional, and spiritual needs of the dying will be addressed. Ethical, legal, political, cultural, and socioeconomic factors also will be incorporated. Approaches for meeting these needs will be based on theories, research, and professional experience.

b. Need

This program will meet growing needs in the workforce for personnel who are educationally prepared to work with the dying and their families. Issues related to mortality across the lifespan are receiving increased interest within our society. Patients and their families are demanding better care through the dying process and assistance with moral/ethical issues. Professionals for whom this program will have relevance include nurses, social workers, counselors, psychologists, hospice workers, clergy and lay ministers, teachers, emergency medical workers, fire fighters, funeral home directors, program developers, and policy makers.

c. Courses

Participants will be required to complete 15 credits of thanatology courses. All students must take the three-credit course, Contemporary Thanatology (NUR523) unless they can demonstrate their knowledge of the content in this course through a portfolio that will be evaluated by a faculty committee. The remaining 12 credits may be selected from the following courses:

HDF421	Death, Dying and Bereavement
HDF471X	Responding to Grief
NUR524	Exploring Loss through Creative Arts
NUR525	Spirituality of Loss and Death for Health Professionals
NUR526	Loss Across the Lifespan

NUR529	Special Topics in Thanatology
PHL401	Death and the Meaning of Life
PSC440	The Politics of Being Mortal
PSY554Q	Psychology of Traumatic Stress
Indep. Study	Use department code for independent study

d. Potential benefits

The courses will augment existing professional programs in that electives from the thanatology program may be applied toward professional degree programs. Additionally, these courses will help prepare students for international certification through the Association of Death Educators and Counselors. The courses should also provide opportunities for self-growth and for learning ways of relating more effectively to co-workers who have lost loved ones.

e. Admission criteria

Participants will be required to have a baccalaureate degree for admission into the certificate program. Permission to enroll in a course may be granted to those not enrolled in the certificate program and to senior level students by the course instructors.

f. Completion requirements

Students will be required to successfully complete the selected courses (15 credits) with an average grade of "B" or above in five or less years.

g. Faculty

Faculty teaching in the program will have graduate faculty status or a masters degree with extensive experience in the field of thanatology. Adjunct faculty will have a masters degree or above and experience in the field of thanatology. The following faculty members currently teach the listed courses:

Human Development and Family Studies: Gene Knott Nursing: Pat Burbank, Carolyn Hames, Ginette Ferszt, and Jean Miller; Adjunct faculty in nursing: Annette Pleau, Lori Shulkin Lowngier, Rose R. Pavlow, Marcia Spindell, and Naida Weisberg Philosophy: Lynn Pasquerella Political Science: Al Killilea Psychology/Counseling Center: James Campbell

h. Delivery format

The required course, Contemporary Thanatology (NUR523), will be offered through a seminar format while a Web-based course is being developed. The content for this course requires a large amount of reading which lends itself to a Web-based course with focused questions about the readings. Since all students will be required to take this course, use of the web should facilitate entry into the field and practical access. The elective courses will be delivered through a traditional format using a variety of teaching-learning methods, but will be evaluated for a blend of traditional and non-traditional methods. Most courses will be offered after 4 p.m. to accommodate working students. Some courses will be offered on weekends and in concentrated summer sessions.

i. Student progress

Advising prior to admission will be done by faculty teaching thanatology courses from the various departments. The professor occupying the Weyker Endowed Chair in Thanatology, with assistance from the Thanatology Committee, will oversee and monitor

student progress. Students who do not maintain a "B" average will be counseled out of the program.

j. Administration of the program

The certificate program will be administered in the College of Nursing, since the Weyker Endowment in Thanatology is housed in this college and will fund the program. The person occupying the Weyker Endowed Chair will coordinate the program with guidance from the Thanatology Committee. The occupant of the Weyker Endowed Chair reports to the Director of the Graduate Program in Nursing and to the Dean of the College of Nursing. Annual reports are made to the Rhode Island Foundation where the endowment rests. Funds for running the program, including the partial salary of the endowed chair, come from the Weyker Endowment in Thanatology. Consequently, there should not be budget implications for the College of Nursing.

k. Evaluation

i. Input:

Student characteristics at admission  
Faculty and support staff characteristics  
Curriculum--reflects course objectives, literature and workplace needs  
Educational environment  
Library resources--number of journals and books  
Instructional resources--quality/number of audiovisual resources  
Clinical resources--available sites for independent studies

ii. Processes:

Teaching effectiveness--Student Evaluations of Teaching (SETs)  
Faculty performance--self evaluations and peer reviews  
Faculty development--continuing education; attendance at meetings  
Student development--self evaluations  
Educational environment--informal evaluations by students and faculty  
Course effectiveness--informal evaluations by thanatology committee  
Academic policies and procedures--ease of process; reports of problems

iii. Outcomes:

Student progression and achievement--number of students who complete the courses and the program; number of students who pass the exam for international certification  
Relevance and program satisfaction--exit interviews  
Scholarship--student and faculty publications  
Service--community service contributions of students and faculty  
Impact on professional and health care community--follow-up surveys to institutions where students are employed

**7. Time frame:**

December-March, 2001: Approve program

March-May, 2001: Advertise program and courses  
Advise students  
Admit students to program

May and beyond: Offer courses and evaluate program

Thanatology Course Plan\*

YEAR	FALL	SPRING	SUMMER I	SUMMER II
2000-2001 HDF471 NUR489X PSC440	HPR351 PSY554Q NUR360	HDF421	NUR523	NUR529
2001-2002 NUR527 HPR351 HPR 119	NUR525 NUR523 HDF	NUR524 NUR526 PSY554Q	NUR526	NUR527
2002-2003 NUR527 HDF	NUR523 PSY554Q	NUR525	NUR523	NUR529

Course codes:

HPR 119	Loss and Grief in Children and Adolescents
HPR351	Honors Seminar in Interdisciplinary Studies: Impact of Death on Behavior
HDF421	Death, Dying and Bereavement
HDF471X	Responding to Grief
NUR360	Impact of Death on Behavior
NUR524	Exploring Loss through Creative Arts
NUR525	Spirituality of Loss and Death for Health Professionals
NUR526	Loss Across the Lifespan
NUR527	Palliative Care (forthcoming)
NUR529	Special Topics in Thanatology
PHL401	Death and the Meaning of Life
PHP	Palliative Care: Pharmacotherapeutics
PSC440	The Politics of Being Mortal
PSY554Q	Psychology of Traumatic Stress

\*Additional courses will be added to the schedule from the above list.