Course Description: This will be an introduction to different topics in philosophy which are related to the nature of death and dying.

Goals: In addition to getting basic training in philosophy, you will (i) learn how to articulate philosophical theories and arguments; (ii) write clearly and precisely; (iii) develop the ability to see both sides of a philosophical theory or argument (pros and cons); and (iv) prepare for further work in philosophy.

[This book is based on Shelly Kagan’s lectures at Yale. You could watch the lectures at: https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLEA18FAF1AD9047B0&feature=plcp ]

All the other readings will be made available online.
[Please note that some of the readings will be technical and require a background in philosophy of mind, logic, and metaphysics. So, I will assume that you have a background in these areas.]

How to do the Readings: Ideally, your approach will be something like this:
• Do a careful reading of the text, marking crucial passages.
• Return to the crucial passages and work through them.
• Set down terminology in your own terms.
• Identify the main theses and diagram or outline the argument.
• Evaluate the argument.
• Write down your questions and comments.

The writing down component is important. What you think you know in your head doesn’t always translate when you have to make it explicit in writing or speech.

Forum discussion: You are expected to participate in the forum discussions. You are required to post (at least) four questions every week from the readings and respond to other students’ questions. The questions should be posted on Monday (by 11:55 pm)
and the responses should be posted by the following Saturday (11:55 pm). Don’t post your responses at the last moment otherwise other students could not respond to you. I will grade your discussions based on (1) your participation and (2) the content of your questions and answers. You need to show that you understand the text, can articulate the main arguments presented in the texts, and can assess their validity and soundness. You do not need to agree with what is presented in the readings. However, no matter whether you agree or disagree with a thesis, you need to be able to argue for your view.

**Essay:** For your paper, the default approach is to pick a theme or an argument discussed in the readings and explain it well. You also need to develop and defend your own original thesis and argument on a topic related to the course. It is critical that you make reference to the appropriate course readings. You may also go beyond them and find relevant readings on your own.

**Late Work:** You are responsible for turning your work in on time. You are always welcome to turn your work in early. Late work will lose one letter grade for each day of delay. Only under very exceptional circumstances will late work be accepted for full credit. Exceptional circumstances must be discussed with me before the work is due in order to obtain an extension. If you are not in class when something is due, you should email it to me by the time the class meets.

**Evaluation:**
**Forum discussion:** 50% [questions should be posted every Monday before 11:55 pm, and every forum will be closed on Saturday 11:55 pm]
**Essay:** 25% [due: 3/15/2016] 2000+_100 words]
**Final exam (in-person):** 25% [5/5/16, 8:00 am]

**How to succeed in this course:** (i) do the assignments, (ii) write on narrow topics, (iii) take your writing seriously (work on your writing; edit, edit, edit), (iv) before turning your work in, get feedback from your peers and use it to improve the work, (v) use instructor feedback to improve subsequent work.

**The last day to drop the course without a “W” is Tuesday, January 26. The last day to drop the course with by Withdrawal is Monday, March 21.**

**Current Academic Integrity Policy:**
[http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/academic-integrity-policy/](http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/academic-integrity-policy/)
Violations include: cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, denying others access to information or material, and facilitating violations of academic integrity. Bottom line:
Don’t cheat, don’t plagiarism. I realize that students are not always clear about what counts as plagiarism. Here is the Rutgers policy:

Plagiarism: Plagiarism is the use of another person’s words, ideas, or results without giving that person appropriate credit. To avoid plagiarism, every direct quotation must be identified by quotation marks or appropriate indentation and both direct quotation and paraphrasing must be cited properly according to the accepted format for the particular discipline or as required by the instructor in the a course. Some common examples of plagiarism are:

- Copying word for word (i.e. quoting directly) from an oral, printed, or electronic source without proper attribution.
- Paraphrasing without proper attribution, i.e., presenting in one’s own words another person’s written words or ideas as if they were one’s own.
- Submitting a purchased or downloaded term paper or other materials to satisfy a course requirement.
- Incorporating into one’s work graphs, drawings, photographs, diagrams, tables, spreadsheets, computer programs, or other nontextual material from other sources without proper attribution.

Self-Reporting Absence Application: Students are expected to attend all classes; if you expect to miss one or two classes, please use the University absence reporting website https://sims.rutgers.edu/ssra/ to indicate the date and reason for your absence. An email is automatically sent to me.

Tentative Calendar
Note 1: This calendar is tentative and subject to revision at the instructor’s discretion.

Note 2: All the other (non-optional) readings will be uploaded on Sakai.

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<th>Week</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Reading</th>
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<td>Thinking about death/ Intro to modality</td>
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<td>Week 2</td>
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<td>Dualism vs. Physicalism</td>
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<td>Week 3</td>
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<td>Arguments for the existence of the soul</td>
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<td>Week 4</td>
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<td>Descartes’ argument</td>
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<td>Week 5</td>
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<td>Plato on the immortality of the soul</td>
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<td>Week 6</td>
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<td>Personal Identity</td>
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<td>Week 7</td>
<td>Choosing between the theories</td>
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<td>Week 8</td>
<td>The nature of death</td>
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<td>Week 9</td>
<td>Two surprising claims about death</td>
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<td>Week 10</td>
<td>The badness of death</td>
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<td>Week 11</td>
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<td>Week 12</td>
<td>The value of life</td>
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<td>Week 13</td>
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<td>Week 15</td>
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**STUDENT-WELLNESS SERVICES:**

**Just In Case Web App**
http://codu.co/cee05e
Access helpful mental health information and resources for yourself or a friend in a mental health crisis on your smartphone or tablet and easily contact CAPS or RUPD.

**Counseling, ADAP & Psychiatric Services (CAPS)**
(848) 932-7884 / 17 Senior Street, New Brunswick, NJ 08901/ rhscaps.rutgers.edu/
CAPS is a University mental health support service that includes counseling, alcohol and other drug assistance, and psychiatric services staffed by a team of professional within Rutgers Health services to support students’ efforts to succeed at Rutgers University. CAPS offers a variety of services that include: individual therapy, group therapy and workshops, crisis intervention, referral to specialists in the community and consultation and collaboration with campus partners.
Violence Prevention & Victim Assistance (VPVA)
(848) 932-1181 / 3 Bartlett Street, New Brunswick, NJ 08901 /vpva.rutgers.edu/
The Office for Violence Prevention and Victim Assistance provides confidential crisis intervention, counseling and advocacy for victims of sexual and relationship violence and stalking to students, staff and faculty. To reach staff during office hours when the university is open or to reach an advocate after hours, call 848-932-1181.

Disability Services
(848) 445-6800 / Lucy Stone Hall, Suite A145, Livingston Campus, 54 Joyce Kilmer Avenue, Piscataway, NJ 08854 / https://ods.rutgers.edu/
The Office of Disability Services works with students with a documented disability to determine the eligibility of reasonable accommodations, facilitates and coordinates those accommodations when applicable, and lastly engages with the Rutgers community at large to provide and connect students to appropriate resources.

Scarlet Listeners
(732) 247-5555 / http://www.scarletlisteners.com/
Free and confidential peer counseling and referral hotline, providing a comforting and supportive safe space.