



Course Outline

COURSE DESCRIPTION: This course is designed for individuals who have been or will be called upon to provide care, support, and advocacy for someone who is facing the end of their life. Students in this course develop an understanding of how the continuity of care and advocacy they provide complements the end of life care provided by the medical community and hospice palliative care workers and volunteers.

Module	Goals & Objectives
Module 1: Introduction- role scope, ethics	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Discuss the value of hospice palliative support to the dying and their families;• Develop the ability to describe end-of-life care and the role of the end-of-life doula;• Understand the limits of doula standards and scope of practice;• Discuss ethical and legal responsibilities of end-of-life doulas.
Module 2: History	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Gain insight into the history of the role of the death doula and its impact on today's role;• Understand historical norms and the impacts on deathcare;• Ability to place medical and technological advancement within the historical context.
Module 3: Current Societal Trends	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Discuss changing demographics and the effect on the health care system;• Understand the macro level influences and challenges on death care provision;• Develop awareness of marginalized populations' challenges within the Canadian health care system.
Module 4: Cross cultural Humility/Systemic bias	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Discuss the need for cross cultural sensitivity regarding religious beliefs and spiritual practices surrounding dying and death;• Gain insight into the impact one's own bias can have in care situations;• Study the way systemic bias effects language and culture.



Module 5: Listening & Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develop the ability to initiate and conduct conversations about death and dying;• Demonstrate effective listening strategies and conflict resolution techniques;• Develop an understanding of trauma informed care responses;• Gain understanding of death literacy and its effect on care provision outcomes.
Module 6: Family Dynamics	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develop awareness of the end-of-life doula's role in facilitating family meetings/conversations;• Acquire a knowledge of what constitutes a client's support system and how to work effectively with all parties involved in care;• Develop the ability to recognize the need for and establish necessary professional boundaries and maintaining neutrality.
Module 7: Self-Care & Grounding - client and practitioner	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develop tools for grounding both client and practitioner;• Learn how to set professional boundaries;• Understand the importance and practice of effective self-care.
Module 8: Companioning/Vigiling/Comfort care	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Discuss the signs and symptoms of approaching death;• Understand vigiling and vigil support;• Increase knowledge and surrounding the range of medical and non-medical interventions available to increase comfort;• Develop tools for providing complementary supports.
Module 9: End-of-Life Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Understand the importance of and develop familiarity with using tools available for end-of-life planning;• Demonstrate how to complete an Advanced Care Plan and/or serious illness plan;• Become familiar with end-of-life processes, forms, and legalities;• Explore the use of and effectiveness of legacy projects.
Module 10: Dying Differently	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Gain knowledge in end-of-life options available to clients and the appropriate referral processes;• Develop an awareness of the sensitivity around dying options and resulting care needs;• Understand the limits to working with traumatic deaths such as accidents or suicides



Module 11: Post-death Practices & Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Understand and discuss funeral options and legalities;• Develop familiarity with the various post death options for disposition;• Emphasize the importance of collegial relationships with death service providers.
Module 12: Grief	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Demonstrate an understanding of the complexity of grief;• Develop tools for an effective response to expressions of grief in others;• Discuss the variety of coping mechanisms the bereaved may employ;• Become knowledgeable in how to access grief resources.
Module 13: Rituals and Ceremony	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Gain insight into the importance of ritual and ceremony in end-of-life care and bereavement;• Examine the power of various techniques in providing space for grief and meaning making.
Module 14: Community Practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Explore the importance of developing a community of practice for end-of-life doula work;• Understand the challenges in positioning an emerging compassionate, entrepreneurial role within Canadian society.
Module 15: Tools for Practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develop an understanding of the end-of-life doula role as a professional practice;• Discuss contracts, initial phone calls, interviews, safety and boundaries;• Encourage further training and knowledge acquisition for the role.

COURSE DETAILS

This course is typically delivered in a 5-day classroom-based in-person format. However, we do offer evening, weekend, and online classes.

Learning Resources:

- Classroom slides
- Textbook: Fersko-Weiss, H. (2017). *Caring for the dying*. MA: Conari Press or
- Fersko-Weiss, H. (2020). *Finding Peace at the End of Life: A Death Doula's Guide for Families and Caregivers*.



This book is available through the Douglas College Coquitlam [Campus Bookstore](#) and can be ordered online before the course start date.

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Department: COQ-BREV-End of Life Doula

Course: BREV 1100

Allow 1-2 weeks for processing and delivery.

Access to online platforms is a necessity therefore a well-functioning Internet connection and computer system are essential, including an operating camera and microphone.

Assignments: Students will be asked to complete two take home assignments and participate in in-class assignments and discussions.

Grading: Final assessment for the program is based on Mastery or Non-Mastery of the curriculum. A Continuing Professional Education course completion document is issued on successful Mastery.

A recognition of completion is issued upon full mastery of the curriculum; but please allow 2-4 weeks for processing. These documents are issued to the name(s) and mailed to the address that a student provides at the time of their registration.

Please note that a digital recognition of completion will be provided at this time, and these will be sent electronically to students within the above-mentioned time frame.