

Certificate Program

BEREAVEMENT STUDIES

The primary goal of the Bereavement Studies program is that of personal and professional life enhancement. The program is designed to educate in the complex process of dying, to guide in coping with grief and loss, and to empower by teaching spiritual practices conducive to healing and well-being of body, soul and spirit.

The training offered in the Maria College Bereavement program is not therapy; neither is it designed to produce therapists. Rather, it is intended to empower participants to accompany the bereaved through the normal process of grieving by listening, normalizing the process, validating feelings, educating and recommending interventions conducive to healing. Students are taught to recognize more complicated bereavement issues such as those related to murder, suicide and sexual abuse, making appropriate referrals to experts in the field.

Graduates of the Bereavement program whose personal and professional gifts warrant it, have been hired by funeral homes, hospices, churches, hospitals, nursing homes and other agencies. Students have utilized their bereavement training in prisons, child care settings, parishes, synagogues, schools, healthcare facilities and an area hospice house—as well as in their personal lives. One graduate has created a grief and loss center for disenfranchised grieving children. Others have gone on to further their education in related areas.

For Specific Program Information Contact:
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A Universal Concern of the Heart

While loss is a universal experience, the human propensity is to avoid the painful process of grieving. Unprecedented changes in all spheres of human endeavor, however, have brought into the light of consciousness the impact of both physical and symbolic losses. The economic situation, for example has resulted in not only the loss of jobs and money but also the security of the status quo, the illusion of control, a sense of identity, self-esteem and hope. Soldiers returning from Iraq struggle with losses related to physical disabilities and the ravages of post-traumatic stress disorder. In religion, healthcare, politics and the environment, structures as well as ways of doing and being have crumbled or ceased to serve us well.

Few are the programs equipped to intensively train participants to cope with overwhelming grief. Maria College is one of the few institutions across the country offering a broad spectrum of courses, which are both theoretical and practical. Instructors are not only academically qualified but also each has had significant clinical experience in working with the dying and bereaved.

Curriculum

Required Courses

CODE	COURSE NAME	CREDIT HOURS
Ber 100	Death, Dying and Bereavement	3
Ber 101	Accompanying the Dying Person and Family	3
Ber 103	Spirituality and Ritual	3
Ber 104	Children and Death	3
Total Credits		12

Elective Courses

Ber 102	Soul-Searching	1
Ber 106	Support Groups	3
Ber 107	Disenfranchised Grief	1
Ber 109	Traumatic Grief and Crisis Intervention	1
Ber 120	Healing Grief through the Arts	1
Ber 130	Spiritual Practices for Healing and Wholeness	2
Ber 220	Independent Study	1-6
Total Credits		10