Biological, Psychological, and Vocational Aspects of Disability
RPSE 505
Fall 2017

Course Instructor: Divya Parashar, Ph.D.
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418 Education

Class Location: Education, L196

Time: Monday
4:30 pm – 7:15 pm

My Office Hours: By Appointment

Teaching Assistants: Derek Ruiz, M.S., CRC
druiz2@wisc.edu

TA Office Hours: By appointment

Tony Reyes, M.S., CRC
areyes7@wisc.edu

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is designed to assist undergraduate students in rehabilitation psychology to develop knowledge of the biological, psychosocial, and vocational aspects of disability. Through this class we will be reminded again and again that, while diagnosis must be taken into account, there are many other factors that influence the lives of people with disabilities.

We will begin the class with an orientation to the biological aspects of disability and then expand to psychological and vocational aspects within the framework of the International Classification of Functioning. The class will conclude with a discussion on the current topics rehabilitation professionals would be faced with while working in the field of chronic illness and disability. It is intended that this course will provide a holistic perspective of disability that can inform students entering many diverse professions and give an introduction to the pivotal role health care professionals have in the field of disability.

COURSE GOALS

The goals of this course are to:

1. Develop an understanding of the various definitions and models of chronic illness and disability;
2. Gain a basic knowledge of the biological aspects of disability, including health conditions and body functions and structure;
3. Gain a basic knowledge of the individual’s response to disability, and the salient personal factors that affect the disability experience.
4. Consider the several aspects of disability, personal, and environmental factors with regards to psychosocial adaptation.
5. Gain a basic knowledge of salient environmental factors that affect the disability experience;
6. Gain a basic knowledge of the meaning and importance of activity and participation in the lives of people with disabilities.
7. Gain a basic understanding of the role of health care providers working with people with disabilities in facilitating an optimum quality of life.

MATERIALS AND RESOURCES

Course Webpage: Canvas - logon to the course homepage: https://canvas.wisc.edu
Required Texts: All readings will be posted on Canvas

LEARNER OUTCOMES & OBJECTIVES

The course is designed to enable students to:

1. Be able to gain a deeper understanding of the current conceptualizations of the disability experience.
2. Be able to recognize psychological and societal responses after being diagnosed with a chronic illness or disability
3. Be able to understand the rehabilitation implications of the disability experience with an emphasis on return to work/academics, and activities of daily living
4. Gain an understanding of the knowledge, skills, and attitude needed to provide competent services in the field of rehabilitation.
5. Be apprised of the current developments in the field of disability and rehabilitation.

COURSE FORMAT and METHODS OF INSTRUCTION

Class meetings are a time for synthesis and application of readings, knowledge, and prior experiences. The course will rely on using lecture, short videos, small-and large group discussions wherever feasible. Each of you brings a unique background of experience and perspectives on the material presented in this course. Please share these experiences and reactions with the instructor and the other class members.

DESCRIPTION OF ASSIGNMENTS

ENGAGE ACTIVITIES (15 points)

There will be a total of three engage activities worth 5 points each. These activities, will be posted on Canvas the Wednesday for it to be due in class the following Monday, must be completed before the beginning of class on the day it is due. Engage activities are designed to encourage meaningful learning of course material.
IN-CLASS ACTIVITIES (10 points)

An emphasis is made on collaborative learning in response to the material presented in class. The activities could range from engaging in small group discussions and turning in a brief summary of key points addressed; a brief write up on key take home points from the day’s lecture materials, or other details as requested. Two absences are allowed with prior information to the instructor ahead of time, unless an emergency arises. Points will be deducted for additional absences.

MEDIA PORTRAYAL OF DISABILITY PAPER (15 points)

Student will submit a 2 - 3 page paper analyzing the portrayal of disability in a film or television show. One goal of this assignment is to increase awareness of how portrayals of disability in popular culture may influence societal attitudes and beliefs about disability.

Papers must include the following:

a. A brief summary of the video or other media you selected, including the disability or disabilities that were portrayed in the film (3 points)

b. An analysis of how disability was portrayed (5 points)
   - Include examples from the media selected to back up your points

c. The potential societal influence of the portrayal of disability (5 points)
   - What might be the conscious or subconscious take home message about disability?

Be sure to heavily emphasize the information discussed in class to this point. Paper should be in APA style format, no greater than 1” margins, double-spaced. Grammar, punctuation, and spelling will be considered in the grading (2 points)

These instructions as well as a grading rubric will be provided on Canvas.

BIOPSYCHOSOCIAL ASPECTS OF A DISABILITY PAPER (30 points)

Students will complete a detailed 7-8 page (APA format) paper on a selected disability. The paper must address the biological aspects of the disability, functional limitations, psychosocial aspects, rehabilitation implications, and current issues in the area of the disability addressed. Additional details of this assignment as well as a grading rubric will be provided on Canvas.

EXAM (30 points)

There will be one exam worth 30 points. The exam may be a combination of multiple-choice, short answer, fill-in-blank, and short essay.
COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Assignments & Points

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<th>Points/each</th>
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<tr>
<td>Engage Activities</td>
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<td>15</td>
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<td>In-class activities</td>
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<tr>
<td>Exam</td>
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<tr>
<td>Media Portrayal of Disability Paper</td>
<td>15</td>
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<tr>
<td>Biopsychosocial Aspects of a Disability Paper</td>
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<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
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Evaluation and Grading:

You are responsible for your own grade. It is recommended that you keep a running total of the points you have earned throughout the semester. This will tell you where you stand at any given time.

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<td>94 % - 100 %</td>
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<td>87 % - 93 %</td>
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<td>80 % - 86 %</td>
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* Students performing at this level should have contact with the instructor to determine a plan for improvement.

Late Assignments: All written assignments are due before the start of class on the day they are due. Late assignments will receive an automatic 15% grade deduction for each day of the first two days an assignment is overdue and a 5% grade deduction for each day that it is late thereafter unless there are extenuating circumstances.

ACCOMMODATIONS

The University of Wisconsin-Madison supports the right of all students to a full and equal educational opportunity. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Wisconsin State Statute (36.12), and UW-Madison policy (Faculty Document 1071) require that students with disabilities be reasonably accommodated in instruction and campus life. Reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities is a shared faculty and student responsibility. Students are expected to inform the instructor, of their need for instructional accommodations by the end of the third week of the semester, or as soon as possible after a disability has been incurred or recognized. I will then work either directly with you or in coordination with the McBurney Center to identify and
provide reasonable instructional accommodations. Disability information, including instructional accommodations as part of a student’s educational record, is confidential and protected under FERPA.

COURSE SCHEDULE and ASSIGNED READINGS

September 11th:
- Introduction and course overview
- What is chronic illness and disability?
- Definitions & experiences

Assigned Readings:


Due: Engage activity # 1

September 18th:
International classification of functioning, disability, and health (ICF) as a conceptual framework of disability

Assigned Readings:

September 25th:
- Individual’s response to disability
- Role of onset, type, and diagnosis of the disability

Assigned Readings:


Due:
Engage activity # 2.

October 2nd:
- Adjustment & adaptation to disability
- Disability and the relevance of Quality of Life

Assigned readings:


Due:
Selection of Disability for Biopsychosocial Aspects Paper Due

October 9th:
- Sexuality and disability
- Family response & adaptation to disability

Assigned readings:

October 16th:
- Societal responses to disability
- Attitudes, Perceptions, stigma

Assigned readings:


Due:
Engage activity # 3

October 23rd:
- Psychology of the injured worker
- Vocational aspects of disability

Assigned readings:


October 30th:
Biopsychosocial conceptualization of two disabilities

Assigned Readings:
To be decided.

Due:
Media portrayal of disability paper
November 6th:  
- The pivotal role of health care providers in the field of disabilities: Advent of positive psychology  
- Discussion on Exam  

Assigned readings:  


November 13th:  
EXAM

November 20th:  
- Living, aging, death, and disability

Assigned readings:  


November 27th:  
- Current disability issues: Assessment, research, legislation

Assigned readings:  
To be decided.

December 4th:  
- Health promotion & wellness

Assigned readings:  

Additional reading to be decided.
December 11th: - Current disability issues: Culture & disability


Due: Biopsychosocial aspects of disability paper

*Please note that this syllabus is subject to change with notice.*