Course Title: Multicultural Issues in Special Education
Course Line Number: RPSE 710
Course Credit: 3 credits
Class Meeting Time and Place: Monday 16:30-19:00 – Room: ED L177

Required Texts:


Instructor:
Aydin Bal, Ph.D.
Office: Education Building 1000 Bascom Mall, Room 403
E-mail: abal@wisc.edu
Office Hours: by appointment

Course Description:
This course is designed for graduate students interested in multicultural research. In this seminar, we will explore the role of culture and its implications for the construction of difference and deviance in national and international educational systems. A central goal of the course is to expose students to a more complex and instrumental view of culture and understand the key role cultural diversity, power, and privilege play in human affairs. More specifically, participants of this course will engage in a critical exploration and discussion of issues and trends in special education as they relate to the diversity of populations receiving special education services.

The course is organized around three broad contexts and relevant themes: (a) individual contexts (e.g., identity, and social agency); (b) institutional context (i.e., rules, roles, school climate,
educational opportunities, and systemic change); and (c) interpersonal context (e.g., power, positionality, and participation patterns).

An interdisciplinary and multi-methodological perspective informs the course; we will review selected scholarship from psychology, anthropology, sociology, and education. Descriptive and intervention research on teaching and learning and disability will be discussed in relation to special education system, research, and practice.

Course Content:

- Examine the meaning and significance of U.S. multicultural special education from historical and contemporary perspectives;
- Examine the political implications of power and privilege for dominant/non-dominant groups of students who receive special education;
- Examine key issues and trends in the research of multicultural special education, including methodological considerations and implications for future research;
- Explore social justice and equity examine them relationship to education and social construction of difference;
- Explore multiple perspectives regarding assessment and disproportionate representation of historically marginalized identified as having disabilities;
- Identify intra- and inter-cultural differences related to home-school collaboration throughout special education processes;
- Identify effective practices in the instruction of culturally and linguistically diverse children with disabilities, as well as gaps in the knowledge base;
- Identify topics of international special education concerns and examine connections to special education system;
- Explore related topics of interest to class participants and connect selected texts to these areas of interest; and,
- Utilize self-reflection as a tool for increasing individual and group competencies in social justice approaches to education research and instructional practice.

Course Grading Scale and Requirements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>Point Value</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Analytical reflections (13 x 10 pts.)</td>
<td>130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analytical summaries</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In-class participation</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Media Reviews</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Culminating activity</td>
<td>20</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>250</strong></td>
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</table>
**Evaluation Procedures:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage Required</th>
<th>Grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>100 – ≥ 93%</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt; 93 – ≥ 88%</td>
<td>A/B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt; 88 – ≥ 84%</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt; 84 – ≥ 79%</td>
<td>B/C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt; 79 – ≥ 74%</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt; 74 – ≥ 68%</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt; 68% or below</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Course/Assignment Policies:**

1. **Attendance:** It is imperative that you attend class. Three absences and/or tardiness may result in a drop of one letter grade. If something occurs which necessitates missing a class, you are responsible for turning in assigned work, obtaining class notes, handouts, and any additional assignments that occurred during the missed class.

2. **All assignments must be typed** (Times New Roman font style, double-spaced & 12 font size). Please pay attention to writing errors such as spelling, punctuation, and grammatical errors.

3. It is your responsibility to sign in each day that you are in class.

4. If you need to miss class due to participation in university-sanctioned events, you will need to speak to me prior to the missed class.

5. **Due dates are not flexible.** A penalty of 5 points per day will be deducted for late work. Moreover, late assignments will **not** be accepted more than one week after the due date.

6. If you have any questions, concerns, or require permanent or temporary disability accommodations/modifications, please see me*

7. “All forms of student academic dishonesty, including but not limited to, cheating, fabrication, facilitating academic dishonesty and plagiarism**” are prohibited conduct as outlined in the Student Code of Conduct and will be taken very seriously. To learn more about plagiarism and the appropriate ways to paraphrase and cite sources, please refer to the following UW website: www.wisc.edu/writing/Handbook/QuotingSources.html

*Academic Accommodations:

If you wish to have academic accommodations to curriculum, instruction, or assessment due to a documented disability, **please contact me** (abal@wisc.edu) in the first two weeks.

Accommodations will be made for students with disabilities who are registered with the McBurney Disability Resource Center (http://www.mcburney.wisc.edu/)
**Plagiarism:**
To take information directly from another source without giving credit or citing the original source is plagiarism. Plagiarism is one of the worst academic sins, for the plagiarist destroys the trust among colleagues and invalidates your credibility as an honest person. It violates the ethical codes of writing and research. Plagiarism in any form will not be tolerated since it violates university’s policies and standards.

All information accessible via the Internet should be assumed to be private property and subject to copyright protection. Internet sources should be credited appropriately, as with the use of any copyrighted material.

**Additional Notes:**
The schedule, policies, and assignments listed in this syllabus are subject to change in the event of extenuating circumstances or by mutual agreement between the instructor and the students.

**Course Assignments**

In-class Participation: Student participation is essential to the success of the course. A portion of your grade will be determined by seminar participation. You should complete the readings and actively participate in class discussions such as reading the assigned articles, sharing insights or questions about the course material, responding or providing feedback/clarification to questions posed by peers or me, contrasting the course readings with your own background experiences, and entertaining alternative points of view in the discussion of readings. You should refer the readings during your responses to questions or comments from others and relate practical and personal experience to the texts.

I expect you to pose critical questions during seminar. Clearly, you need to be present in class in order to participate in seminar. If you must miss a class, please let me know you will not be joining us. There is no need to share the reason for the absence; however, if you miss two classes your grade will be negatively impacted. In this case, you should make an appointment to discuss attendance issues with me.

Analytical Reflections: You are expected to submit electronically to the entire group a 1-2 pages (double-spaced) discussion related to a passage or quote from two of the weekly assigned readings. You are expected to submit 13 written discussions. Submit your comments to Learn@UW discussion board before class (by 11:59 PM on Sunday). Address the following issues:
1) Transcribe the passage or quote and identify the source.
2) Identify a theoretical and/or methodological issue or question for the group to discuss.
3) How does the selected passage/quote relate to your evolving understanding of the cultural nature of learning, development, and (dis)ability and the construction of difference?
Analytical Summaries: We will select one student every week to lead our collective construction of an analytical summary of course discussions. These summaries will be done in the last 10 minutes of class and should focus on the following three aspects:

- **Synthesis.** General agreements or conclusions as well as disagreements and tensions related to the topic under discussion. Conclusions or tensions can refer to (theoretical and/or methodological) insights gained through classroom discussion.
- **Moving forward.** How today’s discussion helped us refine our understanding of the target topic?
- **Refining ideas.** What are 2-3 questions or issues to pursue in future discussions?

Culminating Activity: Personal Reflection: This activity serves as a safe space for you to reflect on your learning during the semester. You will share to the class about the following two points: 1) Personal reflections on your learning, and 2) your future goals; how the class supports your research and/or teaching. You are welcome to share any artifacts you develop during the course. However, PowerPoint presentation is not required.

Technology Requirements:
Students must be able to access the course website, email, the internet, Adobe PDF Reader, and Microsoft Office software to participate in the course.

Course Website:
Directions:
1. Go to [www.wisc.edu](http://www.wisc.edu).
   - Find a quick link to Learn@UW in the My UW-Madison section in the right-hand side of the page, under the campus picture and search.
   - You can also access Learn@UW directly at [https://learnuw.wisc.edu/](https://learnuw.wisc.edu/)
2. After logging in, please read the instructions on the top of the center column and choose “Individuals with Disabilities” from “My Madison Courses” under 2017–Spring. This will bring you to the course home page. This home page is where we will post Online Reflections, course documents, messages, and grades.
   - In the upper left-hand tool bar on the course home page, you will find:
     - “Course Materials” that gives you access to course documents
     - “Discussion” that gives you access to post your Online Reflections, questions, and comments
     - “Grades” that shows your progress in the class.

For assistance with this, contact the DoIT Help Desk 264-HELP or [http://www.doit.wisc.edu/students/](http://www.doit.wisc.edu/students/)
# Readings and Assignments

(Additional readings may be assigned, as determined by the instructor)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Readings</th>
<th>Assignment Due</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1/23</td>
<td><strong>Introductions &amp; Overview</strong></td>
<td>Conner, D. J. (2008). Intro-Chapter 2.</td>
<td>Make your own syllabus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Topic</td>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>Analytical Discussion of Readings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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Media review: *Stress, Portrait of a Killer* (2008) 
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eYG0ZuT](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eYG0ZuT) |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Individual Plane: Culture, Learning &amp; Development</th>
<th>Interactional Plane: Communication, Participation, &amp; Discourse</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3/13</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/20</td>
<td>No Class</td>
<td></td>
<td><em>Spring Recess</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Conner, D. J. (2008). *Urban narratives - Chapters 10*  
Media review 1: *Batman*  
This radio podcast is available on the course website  
Media review 2: *Why Succeeding Against the Odds Can Make You Sick*  
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Methodology: Understanding Learning &amp; Development as Culturally Mediated Processes</th>
<th>Source 1</th>
<th>Source 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
Media review: 81 Words (Cultural-Historical Construction of Sexual Deviance and Disorders)  
This radio podcast is available on the course website | |
http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0246628/?ref_=ttpl_pl_tt | |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Readings</th>
<th>Discussion/Review</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Guest speaker:** Professor Lasse Lipponen, University of Helsinki

**Considerations:**
What are you interested in learning in this seminar?

How many pages should we read in a week?