



**EDUC/PSYC 354: Critical Disabilities Studies**  
**Course Syllabus**  
**Summer Session I 2023**

**Instructor:** Melanie McCallum, MBChB, MPH

**Credits:** 3

**Prerequisites:** None

**Class Hours:** Tuesday and Thursday 2:15 p.m. – 5:45 p.m.

**Office Hours:** by appointment on Tuesday or Thursday (after class)

**Course Type:** Standard Course

**Lab Fee:** \$ 65.00

**Course Description**

The course will examine theories and models on critical disability studies from an international and cross-cultural perspective. Through discussion of readings, sharing of experiences, group work, and focused assignments, students will increase their understanding on how culture influences our perspectives and behaviours towards disability, as well as reflect on the several approaches underlining the integration and inclusion of people with disabilities into society.

The goal of this course is to foster greater awareness of the experiences of disabled people and reflection on inclusion of individuals with disabilities into the society by assuming a critical perspective. The course is designed for students willing to broaden their cultural perspectives, develop a heightened sense of intercultural awareness and sensitivity, and see different communities from a comparative, global standpoint. Students who commit to this course should keep an open mind, be motivated to actively learn, and be flexible.

**Learning Outcomes and Assessment Measures**

By the end of the course, students will be able to:

<b>Learning Outcomes</b>	<b>Assessment Measures</b> <b>Course requirements that will be used to assess students' achievement for each learning outcome</b>
Explain their knowledge and comprehension of key concepts and theories in critical disability studies	Midterm and Final Exam
Respond appropriately when engaging with people with disabilities	Class exercises
Demonstrate enhanced intercultural competencies and communication skills	Class discussion, Reflective Paper

Engage in critical observation, reflection, and thinking	Field trip and exercises in class
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## Course Materials

### Readings

A course reader, including all the indicated readings, will be available. The Moodle course page is the primary location for readings and assignments.

### Assessment

Attendance	10%
Reading Highlights	15%
Reflective Paper	25%
Mid Term	25%
Final Exam	25%

### Grading

Letter grades for student work are based on the following percentage scale:

Letter Grade Range	Numerical Score Equivalent	Student Performance
A A-	93% - 100% 90% - 92%	Exceptional Excellent
B+ B B-	87% - 89% 83% - 86% 80% - 82%	Superior
C+ C C-	77% - 79% 73% - 76% 70% - 72%	Satisfactory
D+ D D-	67% - 69% 63% - 66% 60% - 62%	Low Pass
F	59% or less	Fail (no credit)

*Please note: decimal numerals between 1-4 are rounded down while 5-9 are rounded up: e.g., expect 89.4 to be 89.0 while 89.5 to round up to 90.*

### Course Requirements

Grades are based on the following:

#### *Attendance (10%)*

Attendance is an important part of this course. You have one "sick day," per Institute policy. As long as you are at all the other meetings, you will receive the full 100% for this part of your grade. There are no make-ups offered for attendance.

#### *Reading Highlights (15%)*

Each lesson, students are required to read the assigned reading and submit three to five reading highlights to the instructor. Highlights are a short collection of 85-character bullet points (including spaces) that convey the core messages and provide a quick textual overview of the reading. These bullet points describe the essence of the reading and highlight what is distinctive about it.

### *Reflective Paper (25%)*

Students will have to submit a reflective paper at the end of the course. They will be required to select and discuss a topic from the lesson in a personal reflection, citing five recent authoritative sources. The paper should be approximately 2,500 words long. A specific paper handout will be provided at the beginning of the course.

### *Mid-Term Exam (25%) and Final Exam (25%)*

Students will be required to complete written midterm and final exams. Both exams will consist of different types of questions (e.g., definitions, short essays, short answers), and at least 50% of these exams will be essay questions that will require students to utilize critical thinking skills and to apply knowledge learned from class and from required readings. Students will be asked to describe and discuss key concepts in the field of critical disabilities and apply these concepts to case examples. Students will need to describe various research methods as well as their strengths and limitations.

### Attendance Policy

Class attendance (in person or through live connection) is mandatory. All students are allowed 1 “sick day” (i.e. unexcused absence), which does not need to be justified. It is the student’s responsibility to keep it in case of real necessity. i.e., sickness or any other unforeseen inconvenience that may prevent students from being in class. More than 1 absence will affect your final grade by 4% per absence. Excessive unexcused absences (4 or more) may result in a failing grade or disciplinary action. Three late arrivals to or early departures from class will count as an unexcused absence. It is the student’s responsibility to be aware of the number of absences or late arrivals for each course, and to ask the instructor when in doubt.

If students miss class, they are responsible for obtaining class notes from other students and/or for meeting the professor during office hours. Any work missed in class because of an excused absence may be made up within one week of the return to the class. Any work missed that was a quiz or other test must be made up outside of class time and will, in the interest of intellectual honesty, be a slightly different test than the one given in class.

Presence during mandatory field trips is especially important. Missing a mandatory field trip for a course, unless for a very serious reason that is communicated to Umbra staff in a timely manner, will be considered the equivalent of two unexcused absences. As such, absence from the co-curricular field trip will lower students’ final grade in that course by 4% (the equivalent of two unexcused absences).

Additional absences relating to illness may be approved by the Director but only if a medical certification is provided. Except in the case of medical emergencies, absences are not accepted when tests are scheduled; tests cannot be made up. Furthermore, scheduled times and dates indicated for exams, quizzes, oral presentations, and any other graded assignments cannot be changed for any reason. Even if more sections of the same class are activated, students may only take exams during the scheduled times and dates for the section they are enrolled in.

### Academic Integrity

All forms of **cheating** (i.e., copying during exam either from a fellow student or making unauthorized use of notes) and **plagiarism** (i.e., presenting the ideas or words of another person for academic evaluation without acknowledging the source) will be handled according to the Institute Academic Policy, which can be found in the Umbra Institute Academic Policies and Conduct Guidelines.

### Classroom Policy

Students are expected to follow the policy of the Institute and demonstrate the appropriate **respect** for the historical premises that the school occupies. Please note that **cell phones** and **electronic devices** must be turned off before the beginning of each class.

## Schedule of Topics, Readings, and Assignments

### WEEK 1

Meeting 1 *Introduction to the course and definition of critical disabilities*  
Goals and expectations: What is critical disability?

#### Readings

WHO Report on Disabilities (2011) pp.3-10, 261-263;

2.UN Convention of Rights of persons with Disabilities (2006) p. 1-37; UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) [Children's Version]

Meeting 2 *Observation of interactions*

How to make efficient observations: exercise in Perugia

(please dress according to the weather as we will have class in the city center)

Thu., May 25: Site-visit of Fondazione Città del Sole's daily facility for individual with mental disabilities

#### Readings

1.Lorenz K.A. et al. (2017) Developing the System for Observing Behavioral Ecology for Youth in Schools

2. World Health Organisation. How to use the ICF: A practical manual for using the International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health. (October 2013) Geneva: WHO World Health Organisation.

3. The ICF and Overview. (September 2001) Geneva WHO icfoverview\_finalforwho10sept.pdf

4. Ferguson & Nusbaum (2012) Disability: What Is It and What Difference Does It Make?

### WEEK 2

Meeting 1 *Viva Sports Association - Guest lecture by Gabriele Bartolucci, president and founder of the association (TBC)*

#### **Definition and Importance of context and coping with disabilities**

Willis C.E., et al. (2018) A realist evaluation of a physical activity participation intervention for children and youth with disabilities: what works, for whom, in what circumstances, and how?

Meeting 2 *Cultural Response to Disability: treatment and welfare*

Comparison of response and treatment to physical and mental disabilities

Readings

1. APA (2013) DSM-5 p. 749-759;

2. Persson L.O., Ryden A. (2006) Themes of effective coping in physical disability: an interview study of 26 persons who have learnt to live with their disability

3. The British Journal of Psychiatry (January 2018) 174, 254-258 Pauk Swamidhas Sudhakar Russell et al. Family interventions for intellectually disabled children: A Randomised Controlled Trial.

Case studies: Crip Camp Activists, Alison Lapper

**WEEK 3**

Meeting 1 *Being differently able: Resilience*

Challenges and implications in development: inborn and acquired disabilities

Readings

Mannino J.A. (2015) Resilience and Transition to Adulthood among emerging Adults with Disabilities

Hart, Heaven et al. Resilience Building With Disabled Children And Young People : A Review and Critique of the Academic Evidence Base. International Journal of Child, Youth and Family Studies (2014).

Case Study: Stephen Hawkings. Oscar Pistorius

Meeting 2 **Midterm Exam**

Site-visit to the Fontenuovo residence for the elderly. The visit will center on Fontenuovo's approach to Alzheimer's disease treatment.

**FIELD TRIP**

Fri., June 9: Field trip to Florence to visit the Made in Sipario workshop and have lunch at I Ragazzi di Sipario restaurant (a detailed itinerary will be sent earlier in the same week).

#### WEEK 4

Meeting 1 *Feedback on the midterm exam.*

*Disability and Integration into society*

Watching the movies “Intouchables” and discussion of the movie

##### Readings

Filary R., Pernice R. (2005) Workplace culture analysis where people with intellectual disabilities work: A case study approach

Katharina Vornholt, Sjr Uitdewilligen, Gemma van Ruitenbeek and Fred Zijlstra. The Development and Validation of the Workplace Acceptance Scale : Evidence From a Sample of Workers with Disabilities Journal of Vocational Rehabilitation, 54 (2021) 135–149.

Olivier L., Sterkenburg P., Van Rensburg E. (2016) The effect of serious game on empathy and prejudice of psychology students towards a person with disabilities

Meeting 2 *Sport and Disabilities*

Utility of physical activity in disabilities

##### Readings

Sancassiani F, Machado S., Preti A. (2018) Physical Activity, Exercise and Sport Programs as effective therapeutic tools in Psychosocial Rehabilitation

Sit C., Li R., McKenzie T.L., Cerin E., Wong S., Sum R., Leung E.(2019) Physical Activity of Children with Physical Disabilities: Associations with Environmental and Behavioral Variables at Home and School

Case study: Bebe Viò, Simona Atzori

#### WEEK 5

Meeting 1 *A Future Outlook: Changes in responses and treatments of physical and mental disabilities, new developments and offering hope*

##### Readings

Persson L.O., Ryden A. Scandinavian Journal of Caring Sciences (2006) Themes of effective coping in physical disability(20):355-363

The World Health Organisation.(28 February 2022) Factsheet on Congenital Abnormalities

Payne-Sturges D.C., Swanson M., Balmes J., Hertz-Picciotto I. (2019) Healthy Air, Healthy Brains: Advancing Air Pollution Policy to Protect Children’s Health

Meeting 2     *Taking stock of the experience*

In class discussion

Hand in your reflective paper (See paper assignment)

## FINAL EXAM

The time of the final exam will be communicated during the course.

## Bibliography

Bérubé, Michael. "Disability and Narrative." *PMLA*, vol. 120, no. 2, Mar. 2005, pp. 568-76.

Davis, Lennard. "Constructing Normalcy: The Bell Curve, the Novel, and the Invention of the Disabled Body in the Nineteenth Century." *The Disability Studies Reader*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., edited by Lennard Davis, Routledge, 2006, pp. 3-16.

Garland-Thomson, Rosemarie. "Integrating Disability, Transforming Feminist Theory." *The Disability Studies Reader*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., edited by Lennard Davis, Routledge, 2006, pp. 257-73.

Mitchell, David and Sharon Snyder. *Narrative Prosthesis: Disability and the Dependencies of Discourse*. U of Michigan P, 2000.

Shakespeare, Tom. "The Social Model of Disability." *The Disability Studies Reader*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., edited by Lennard Davis, Routledge, 2006, pp. 197-204.

*Global burden of disease: 2004 update*. Geneva, World Health Organization, 2008.

Filmer D. Disability, poverty, and schooling in developing countries: results from 14 household surveys. *The World Bank Economic Review*, 2008,22:141-163. doi:10.1093/wber/lhm021.

Loeb ME, Eide AH, eds. *Living conditions among people with activity limitations in Malawi: a national representative study*. Oslo, SINTEF, 2004.

Eide AH, van Rooy G, Loeb ME. *Living conditions among people with disabilities in Namibia: a national, representative study*. Oslo, SINTEF, 2003.