



# TEXAS CENTER *for* DISABILITY STUDIES

## **Aging and Disability Syllabus**

**SW 360K and 387R**

**Spring 2013**

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*Please read through the entire syllabus. The course schedule is provided as well as other important information.*

This course discusses individuals with disabilities who are either chronologically older or who may be experiencing functional changes typical of older persons. Because some individuals, i.e. those with Down Syndrome or Cerebral Palsy, may experience changes typical of the aging process as early as 25 years of age, it is essential this information be covered in core courses on Disability Studies. This course identifies strategies for supports for families, friends, service providers, organizations, and members of the community to improve the lives of older persons. Topics include the aging process, a paradigm for dementia care, specific medical concerns, community membership, community building, decision making, and family supports.

**Text:** You will have readings for the course that will be made available to you through the course web pages. There is no text to purchase.

**Format:** This course will be conducted entirely on the web, using software called Blackboard. This software is fully accessible, but if you have difficulty in using a screen reader to access any information on the website, please contact me as soon as possible. As is University policy, if you need any accommodations to successfully complete this course, you must notify me in advance of your needs.

**Course Objectives:** The purpose of this course is to introduce the student to the issues of aging and disability in our society. We will discuss the view of aging in our society; federal and state legislation related to aging and disabilities; legal and ethical decisions faced by individuals and their families; and policies, agencies,

services for people with disabilities, including those delivered through waiver programs. To that end:

- The student will identify how attitudes and beliefs about disability and aging may affect the development of legislation, policy, legal issues, and service delivery.
- The student will examine federal and state agencies providing services to people with disabilities and who are elderly and their families.
- The student will examine ethical issues and decisions faced by people with disabilities who are older and their families.
- The student will examine the complex process of obtaining needed services through Medicaid, Medicare, and other federal and state waiver programs.

**Requirements:** Since this course is offered for both graduate (SW 387R) and undergraduate (SW 360K) credit, there are different requirements for you, depending on what class you signed up to take. If you are not sure what class you are in, please ask me. Essentially, the graduate students have more reading and writing to do, although the same content will be covered.

The course is designed in a web based environment that gives us a certain kind of flexibility in creating learning opportunities for you. The course is primarily designed to give you some flexibility in choosing how you best learn, and what topics are of primary interest to you, within a certain structure. There are six lessons in this course (not counting what you will do this first week). Each lesson lasts for approximately two weeks. At the beginning of each lesson, there is a **Map of the Lesson** that will tell you all of the learning activities for that lesson. Some of the activities will be required, and some will be optional. The **Map** will clearly state what you need to do to complete the lesson, but if you have any doubts or questions, be sure to ask me.

One of the biggest hazards in a distance learning environment is getting behind, and although I do have some flexibility in this course, you must complete your lessons on time! The lessons will be open for a certain time period only, and you must complete the activities within that time period to get credit. If you find yourself getting behind, due to unexpected circumstance or poor planning, let me know as soon as possible. This is not a course where you can ignore everything until mid term and cram and catch up. The content will be measured out and paced, not crammed. Before you start, ask yourself whether you are willing to devote time each week to this course, just like you would if you were going to a classroom and sitting down there. You have to make yourself sit down - focus; even though you get to choose the time, you still have to put in the time.

**LEARNING ACTIVITIES** Each lesson is divided into specific learning activities as follows: READ THOROUGHLY!

## The Map

To make sure everyone knows what to expect for any given lesson, there is a map of the tasks and assignments. The map will list the tasks, identify which are required and which are optional, and give you the number of points you can earn for doing them. You should review the map of every lesson at the beginning, with your day planner, so you can **plan** when you will work on the class that week. The map will also specify which assignments are **REQUIRED** and which are optional. Within each lesson you will have options about the activities you engage in to get information. Some activities will be required and the optional activities will be your choice. As you work on the lesson, remember that all of your responses to the activities must be submitted together in one document on or before the date that the lesson will close. Your document should also tell me how many points you are attempting and what items you are including. Again, submit everything in one document, with your name and the lesson name by uploading it into the grade book.

## The Lesson

This would be the lecture I would deliver if I were standing in front of you in a class. Read it, and I hope it will feel like I am talking to you. You will notice that I pose a lot of questions when I teach; that's just how I teach, and I do that because I want you to think, to stay engaged in the material. The lessons are always **REQUIRED**. You will see a sample in just a minute so that you know what I am talking about.

## Activities

These will be things I will ask you to do to support your learning in the class. Most will be **REQUIRED**, some will be optional, but you will know each time by looking at the map. These tasks will involve you in "doing" something.

## Readings

You will have a reading packet for this class of articles, book chapters, etc. I will supply this to you so that you don't have to buy it somewhere. You will write a reaction paper for the items you read. There will be specific instructions for each reading. Although there will be some readings **REQUIRED** for each lesson, you will usually be able to choose which ones you will do. Your written essays should be a well-constructed syntheses of the information presented including your interpretation and ideas. Please use the basic structure of a five paragraph essay. Each paragraph should have a strong topic sentence with 3-4 supporting sentences. While this is not specifically a writing course, good form, grammar and strong writing skills are important.

## Readings on the Web

I'll also ask you to read documents that are on-line and react to them. Again, you will have specific instructions for each of those readings, and a link within Blackboard to get there.

## Listen to This!

Sometimes I will ask you to listen to something available on the web, and react to what you've heard. These activities are generally optional because some students

have difficulty in downloading a media player to their computers that will allow them to listen to these files.

### **Web Hunt**

This activity allows you to review websites. Sometimes you will review ones I've found; sometimes you'll look for your own [Find your own].

### **In the News!**

I will sometimes ask you to find a recent article from an on-line newspaper or news magazine source. You'll send me the URL for the article and write a brief review discussing the relevance of the article to the topic we are discussing in class.

### **Discussion Questions**

Each week we'll have some questions to discuss on the discussion board. Your participation there will be **REQUIRED**, just like class participation. This is one area I really encourage you to keep up with and be involved in! The discussions on the course bulletin board are always interesting and it's a great way to get to know the other students in the class, just as you would in a traditional class. It is important that you post early and often. Don't just agree with what someone is saying but say why. This is a really dynamic part of the course and if everyone devotes their time and attention to it; it can be very similar to sitting in class exchanging dialog with peers. Do not wait until the last few days to post. This is a disservice to your classmates and to your ability to really think about the material presented.

### **Ask the Expert**

Sometimes we ask individuals who have disabilities to logon and tell you a little about themselves and their stories. This gives you the opportunity to ask them questions. This is similar to having a 'guest speaker' in class. Everyone in class is **REQUIRED** to ask at least one question of the expert. As you listen to the answer and those of classmates, you write a summary of what you learned from the expert and your classmates. This will be included in your document under the section heading 'Ask the Expert.' Again, don't wait to jump right in and ask questions.

### **Quiz**

We'll end each lesson with a **REQUIRED** quiz. The questions will be short answer, and you'll have them in advance. This will be a brief way to wrap up a particular lesson.

### **GRADES**

You will acquire points by doing the tasks associated with each lesson. Each lesson has basic requirements equivalent to about five hours of work each week, and everybody has to do those things within that week. Then you have the option to add tasks to increase your grade. Each lesson clearly states how many points you can earn, and what grade you get for that number of points. There are different point requirements for the graduate and undergraduate students. There are no mid-terms or finals, only quizzes at the end of each lesson, and activities to do to support your learning. You won't memorize facts for this class; you will read, explore, write, and think.

**INCOMPLETES in this class ARE NOT AN OPTION.** Be sure that you keep up with the work so you won't have problems at the end of the course.

### **COURSE DROP DATES**

Check the official academic calendar for the last date to add/drop a class.

### **COURSE EVALUATION**

The course will be evaluated according to University guidelines. I'll also ask for feedback that you will be able to provide anonymously on the website.

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**So, let's get started!** Your first task is to learn about the Syllabus, Blackboard and become familiar with its organization and features. We are making sure all works before we get into the content of the course. Click on the **Syllabus Lesson** and begin!

## **AGING AND DISABILITY COURSE SYLLABUS SPRING 2013**

### **➤ Syllabus Lesson**

**January 14- 23, 2013**

Goals: We will go over the information you need to be successful with on-line learning, how to use the Blackboard software, and helpful on line resources.

### **➤ Lesson 1 Aging in America**

**January 23 – February 6, 2013**

Goals: We'll go over major conditions of aging and begin talking about having a disability and aging as well as acquiring disabilities as we age. We will also talk some about attitudes about people with disabilities and people who are elderly, as well as some of the disability models and how they apply to this population.

➤ **Lesson 2 Federal & State Legislation February 6 –20, 2013**

**Goals** There are both federal and state laws that are specific to people who are aging. We will look at some of these laws and their impact on people with disabilities who are aging. Specific Texas legislation will also be examined.

➤ **Lesson Movie 1 February 20 – March 8, 2013**

**Goals:** Change of pace! For this assignment, you are to select a movie related to aging and disability, watch it, and write a short review using a format that I will supply. I will have a list of movie options.

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**SPRING BREAK MARCH 11 – 15, 2012**

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➤ **Lesson 3 Medicaid, Medicare, other Programs March 18 – April 1, 2013**

**Goals:** Medicaid and Medicare are critically important programs for accessing health and supportive services for persons with disabilities, chronic illness, and special needs. Because of its size and scope, Medicaid is the leading payer and policy-making entity for this population. We will talk about Medicaid, Medicare, and other programs that provide services for people who are older.

➤ **Lesson 4 Services and Supports April 1 –15, 2013**

**Goals:** In this section, we will talk about the services available to people with disabilities who are older, including the various options for living arrangements and technology that can assist people. The process of finding and obtaining services is very difficult, and people and their families can have a hard time finding what they need. We will also talk about some innovative programs designed to serve people with dementia, but that would apply to many other folks. A final topic focuses on caregiver issues.

➤ **Lesson 5 Ethical Issues April 15 – May 3, 2013**

**Goals:** We will discuss some of the ethical issues faced by older people with disabilities and their families including assisted suicide, advance directives, end of life decisions, medical issues, and sexuality.