Developmental Disabilities:
A Self-Advocates View of Disability
Summer 2013

Denise De La Garza, Ph.D.	denisede@mail.u
Office Hours: Are virtual. You can contact me by email or phone if you me, I am on the Pickle Campus and will be happy to arrange a convenie	
Texas Center for Disability Studies The University of Texas at Austin J.J. Pickle Campus 10100 Burnet Rd. Bldg. CMS, #137, Rm. 1.154	
512-232-0743	Course No: *SW 387R*
Teaching Assistants	

Text: You will have readings for the course that will be made available to you by the Texas Center for Disability Studies. They will be uploaded on the Blackboard Website. A paper copy will be available to borrow and make copies, if you have difficulty downloading the readings.

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 the instructor as soon as possible. As is University policy, if you need any accommodations to successfully complete this course, you must notify the instructor in advance of your needs.

Course Objectives:

The purpose of this course is to explore the meaning of Developmental Disabilities from an empowerment model. To that end:

*The student will consider definitions and aspects of a variety of developmental disabilities, in order to understand the socially conferred status of the label.

*The student will identify how attitudes and beliefs about individuals with developmental disabilities have evolved throughout history, as well as consider the current society attitudes toward developmental disabilities.

* The student will identify and consider issues that occur throughout the life span of individuals with developmental disabilities.

*The student will identify and discuss ethical issues that influence individuals with developmental disabilities throughout the life span.

*The student will examine the tenets of self determination and self advocacy and the impact on the lives of individuals with developmental disabilities and their families.

Requirements: Since this course is sometimes offered for both graduate (SW 387K) and undergraduate (SW 360K) credit, there are different requirements for you, depending on what class you signed up to take. Everyone in this course is a graduate student, so on the maps, if there are directions for undergrad students, simply ignore them.

This 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 designed to give you some flexibility in choosing how you best learn, and what topics are of primary interest to you, within a structure. There are 4 lessons in this course (not counting the syllabus lesson that you will do this first week). Each lesson will last about two weeks. There is also a "project" that will give you a chance to apply some of the concepts you are learning in the lessons. At the beginning of each lesson or project, there is a map 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 that lesson, but if you have any doubt or questions, be sure and ask the instructor.

One of the biggest hazards in a distance learning environment is getting behind, and although I do create some flexibility within 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 til mid term and cram and catch up. The content will 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; even though you get to choose the time, you still have to put in the time. If you are self disciplined, and learn best by reading, writing, thinking, and discussing, you will probably love this class. If you don't, you won't, and it's better to know that now than at mid term. I will not grant any incompletes in this course; you must keep up with the work. If at mid term you are

behind in the course, I will recommend that you drop it. Remember that since this as a summer course, it goes by even faster!

This next section explains the structure of each lesson. Read this through carefully to understand how the class will work.

Each lesson is broken down into learning activities. These are the parts:

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, give you estimated times to complete the task, and give you the number of points you can earn for doing it. You should review the map of every lesson at the beginning, with your day planner, so you can decide 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 (obviously) be your choice.

The Lesson

This would be the lecture I would deliver if I were standing in front of you in a class. Read it, and imagine me talking to you (it's better if you imagine that I am younger, thinner, not as grey, and much better looking than I actually am! NO wrinkles, no sagging, none of the middle aged blobbiness that my children love to tease me about!). 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, along with the "think" document that you produce with

each lesson.

Activities

These will be things I'll 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 "doing" something in some form or fashion.

Readings

You will have readings for this class of articles, book chapters, etc. I will supply this to you online; you don't have to buy it somewhere. You will write a reaction/reflection paper for the items you read. There will be specific instructions for each reading. Readings will be posted up under the READINGS button, usually located under the Lessons button.

Readings on the Web

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

Web Hunt

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

Discussion Questions

Each lesson we'll have some questions to discuss on the bulletin board. Your participation there will be required, just like class participation. BlackBoard counts the number of times you read and post messages, so I have a numeric gauge of your class participation. As the class progresses, you also may be asked to develop your own discussion

questions. This is an important part of our learning. I expect full participation on the discussion board.

Ask the Expert
Sometimes we ask individuals who have disabilities to log on and tell you a little about their story. This gives you the opportunity to ask them questions. It's a little bit like having a guest lecturer in the class, but in this case EVERYONE asks a question. You get credit for this when you ask a question, and in your work that you send in, you comment about what you learned from the expert. It might be that someone else asked a question that meant more to you, or that you posted too late for the expert to get to your question, however to get credit, you need to talk to me about your experience with this task.

Share Your Work
As you develop your thinking in response to work done in this course, you will want to share your thoughts and insights with class members as well as learn and respond to theirs. Within each lesson, you will be given several articles and chapters to read and write a reaction papers. 'Share Your Work' is the place to post one of your reaction papers for others to read and respond to. You will do the same. Because you may all pick different articles/chapters, you will have the opportunity to learn from each other. You will get points toward your grade if you do this.

Here's how: Go to the SHARE YOUR WORK button and click on the file sharing for that lesson. To get the points, you should post one of your own documents, as well as briefly review a document written by one of your fellow students.

Quiz
We'll usually end each lesson with a quiz. The questions will be short answer ones, and you'll have them in advance. This

will be a brief way to wrap up a particular lesson. You will send in the quiz questions with the whole document you submit.

Project Weeks
There may be weeks when we forgo new information in order to apply the information you already have learned. During those weeks, you will have an assignment to help you apply your learning. These will vary, but at least one will require you to watch a movie, and apply some of the concepts we have discussed to it. You will write a paper or answer questions about the assignment in that week.

GRADES
You will acquire points by doing the tasks associated with each lesson. Each lesson has basic requirements equivalent to the time you would spend in a classroom, plus the time you would normally spend outside the class doing readings or working on papers. 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 will be points for doing the project, during the project week. 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 a bunch of stuff in this class; you will read, write, and think. We will be done with ALL of the work for the course by the last day of class. Everything must be turned in to me by the last class day to get credit for it.

COURSE DROP DATES
June 15, 2013 is the last day to drop without academic penalty, according to the course catalogue. If you start this course and realize that learning on line is not for you, don't hesitate to drop it. It's not fun for either of us of us if you don't. Learning like this is not for everyone; if it's not a good

match for you, don't force it.

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.