

**Disability Studies**

**Aging and Disability**

SW 360K and SW 387R

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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's 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.

**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 the instructor 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. But it still means that you must participate in the discussions weekly and work is to be completed sequentially. 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 seven lessons in this course (not counting what you will do this first week). Lessons generally last for one to two weeks. At the beginning of each lesson, 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 the lesson, but if you have any doubt or questions, be sure and ask me.

One of the biggest hazards in a distance learning environment is getting behind, and although you 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. You have to make yourself sit down; even though you get to choose the time, you still have to put in the time.

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

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### 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 to select those activities that best suit your learning styles. Some activities will be required and the optional activities will be your choice.

## **The Lesson**

The Lesson is The Lecture - the lecture that I would deliver if I were standing in front of you in class. As you read it, 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, along with the document that you produce with each lesson. You will see a sample in just a minute.

## **Activities**

These will be things I will ask you to do that 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 ACTIVITY - actually doing something.

## **Readings**

You will have a reading packet consisting of articles, book chapters, etc. I will supply them to you so you will not have to buy them. 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 have a list from which to choose those most interesting to you.

## **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!**

I will ask you to listen to something available on the web and react to what you've heard.

## **Web Hunt**

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

## **In the News!**

I will 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 current...don't fall behind! The discussions on the course discussion 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. Your class participation grade will be determined by how participatory you were in answering these weekly discussion questions (posting in a timely manner, responding to your peers and

instructors as well as posting your own questions/reflections on the reading in the discussion forums) as well as your participation in the Ask the Expert section of the course. NOTE: You do not need to include this section in the written document that you will submit at the end of each lesson because I will have your written account in the discussion board.

### Ask the Expert

Each semester we invite an expert or two to join our class. Each person volunteers to share her/his expertise personally and professionally as they communicate with you via Discussion Board. You are invited to pose questions to our experts throughout the course using the discussion board. Your class participation grade will be tabulated from this section as well. NOTE: You do not need to include this section in the written document that you will submit at the end of each lesson because I will have your written account in the discussion board.

### Quiz

We'll end each lesson with a quiz. The questions will require short answers. You will be given them in advance. This will be a brief way to wrap up a particular lesson.

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**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 midterms or finals, only quizzes at the end of each lesson, and activities to do that support your learning. You won't memorize a bunch of stuff for this class; you will read, write, and think.

You will submit a lesson document summarizing all your activities for that particular lesson. Please title the document filename with your name and lesson number; for example -

JaneDoe Syllabus  
JaneDoe Lesson1

Your lesson documents will constitute 60% of your grade and you must submit all of the lesson documents if your goal is to get an A in the course.

Your class participation grade is comprised of your Discussion Question and Ask the Expert Participation and constitutes 40% of your grade. You will only receive 1 class participation grade at the end of the course. Grades for **class participation** are determined as follows:

“A quality”: 2-3 original posts each week as well as 2 or more responses to peers in the class regarding information that they have shared and Ask the Expert. Responses are required for each discussion question posted.

“B quality”: 1-2 original posts each week and at least 1 post to peers and Ask the Expert.

“C” quality: 1 -2 original posts and inconsistent posts to peers and Ask the Expert.

“D quality”: inconsistent original posts and inconsistent posts to peers and Ask the Expert quality is lacking substantive contribution to discussion.

“F” level: Posts are inconsistent lack original thought and ideas and do not demonstrate significant understanding of the material presented.

In order to receive an A in this course you must consistently prepare lesson documents that reflect A quality work and you must receive at least a B in class participation.

**Grading Schema:** Most lessons list a point value for a specific grade. You must copy the MAP TABLE into your lesson document indicating the number of points that you are attempting for the specific grade you want to achieve on that lesson. A grade is assigned based on quality as well as quantity. SO, if you are attempting the points for an A grade but if your work does not demonstrate sufficient knowledge, understanding and reflection of the material then your grade will be reduced. Your Final grade in the class is based on your grades on each of your lessons (not points) as well as your class participation. (See the sections on Discussion Board and Ask the Expert for more about your class participation grade)

ALL students will be REQUIRED to complete THESE SECTIONS: LESSON, ACTIVITIES, DISCUSSION BOARD, READING (at least one), QUIZ that total specific point value. Students must select ADDITIONAL ACTIVITES to reach the point value they choose. There will be some point variations between lessons, but the information will always be clearly stated in the lesson map. This will become clear as you work on the lessons.

**Course Feedback:** Feedback is an important part of any kind of learning. Without feedback on how well you understand the material, it is more difficult for you to make significant progress. During this course, I want you to let me know when something in the material is not clear. This will enable me to provide additional information when needed or to explain a concept in different ways.

In addition to feedback on your learning, I will ask for feedback from you about how my teaching strategies are helping or hindering your learning. This kind of feedback is very important to me as I continually strive to be the best teacher I can be. Some of this feedback will be gathered from online anonymous surveys. I encourage you to respond to these surveys so that together we can create an effective teaching and learning environment.

**Course Drop Dates:** According to the University calendar, **Friday, January 21** is the last official day for adds/drops. After this date, approvals are needed from department

chairs and deans for changes in registration. **Wednesday, February 2** is the last day to drop a class for a possible refund. **Monday, February 14** is the last day to drop a class without academic penalty.

**Documented Disability Statement:** Students with disabilities who require special accommodations need to get a letter that documents the disability from the Services for Students with Disabilities area of the Office of the Dean of Students (471-6259 voice or 471-4641 TTY for users who are deaf or hard of hearing). This letter should be presented to the instructor in each course at the beginning of the semester and accommodations needed should be discussed at that time. Five business days before an exam the student should remind the instructor of any testing accommodations that will be needed.

See website below for more information:

<http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/ssd/providing.php>

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## **AGING AND DISABILITY COURSE SYLLABUS - SPRING 2011**

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### **Syllabus Lesson**

**January 18- January 28, 2011**

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.

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### **Lesson 1 Aging in America**

**January 28 – February 14, 2011**

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.

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### **Lesson 2 Federal and State Legislation**

**February 14 – February 28, 2011**

**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.

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**Lesson Movie 1****February 28 – March 7, 2011**

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 movies, or you can pick something else.

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**Lesson 3 Medicaid, Medicare, and other Programs****March 7 – March 28, 2011**

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.

**SPRING BREAK MARCH 14 – 18, 2011****Lesson 4 Services and Supports****March 28 – April 7, 2011**

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 for this lesson is on caregiver issues.

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**Lesson Movie 2****April 11 – April 18, 2011**

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 movies, or you can pick something else.

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**Lesson 5 Ethical Issues****April 18 – May 6, 2011**

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, sexuality, and others.