

**THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN
STEVE HICKS SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK**

Course Number:	SW 387R	Instructor: Z. J. Ahonle ahonlezac@utexas.edu
Unique Number:	61460	Office: Pickle Campus, Bldg. 137, 1.151C
Semester:	Spring 2018	Office Phone: 512-232-0772
Meeting Time/Place:	By appointment	Office Hours: By appointment

Social Construction of Disabilities (WB)

I. STANDARDIZED COURSE DESCRIPTION

The course explores the concept of disability as a “social construction.” by presenting some of the models and theoretical frameworks and past histories for understanding disability. This introductory course to the interdisciplinary field of disability studies provides an understanding of disability and people with disabilities from an empowerment model. Through directed reading and scholastic research, this course explores how attitudes, perception and portrayal of people with disabilities have contributed to discrimination, marginalization, or inclusion of individuals with disabilities. The course is designed for students who have an interest in disability studies including those students in social work, nursing, psychology, public health, kinesiology, neuro science, special education, communication science and disorder, human ecology, and pharmacy. Course assignments will allow students to investigate their own areas of interest in disability.

II. STANDARDIZED COURSE OBJECTIVES

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Analyze how the media shapes attitude towards people with disabilities
- Discuss the concept of paternalism and power as they relate to the oppression of people with disabilities.
- Examine the impact of cultural values in conceptualizing individual difference.
- Examine the complex interplay of social, political, and economic forces as they relate to disability.
- Explore various definitions/models from which we can draw ways to conceptualize disability.
- Explore some of the past events that impacts the concept of disability today

- Identify how attitudes and beliefs about individuals with disabilities may impact the personal and social view of disability.
- Identify their individual comfort level and perceptions toward individuals with disabilities.
- Understand the various categories of language and the effect of language that society uses to describe people with disabilities.

III. TEACHING METHODS

Each session of this course will incorporate a variety of instructional techniques including some lecture, readings, online discussions, video and video clips, and out of class activities to promote student learning.

IV. REQUIRED TEXTS AND MATERIALS

All readings and materials for this class will be provided as PDFs on Canvas or online via links available on the Canvas page.

V. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

This class uses a form of blended learning where students learn content online through reading online content, analyzing readings and articles, watching videos and completing exercises on the discussion board. Students may be required to work in small groups for some activities. Students will need to have access to a computer with reliable internet connection to complete this course.

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 aims 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 six lessons in this course (not counting what you will during the first week of class). Each lesson will last about two weeks. 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 period only, and you must complete the activities within that time limit to get credit.

Each lesson is broken down into learning activities in such a way that forces students to interact with the course material. This include the following:

Map - at the beginning of each lesson, there is a map of the tasks and assignments. The map will list the tasks and give you the number of points you can earn for doing each task. That way everyone knows what to expect for any given lesson. 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 module, 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.

Lesson - the lesson would be the lecture I would deliver if I were standing in front of you in class. Read it, and imagine me 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 "think" document that you produce with each lesson. The six lesson assignments will make up 60% of your final grade.

Activities - these will be things I'll ask you to do to support your learning in the class. Most are required, some will be optional, but you will know each time by looking at the map. These tasks will involve you "doing" something.

Reading Reviews - you will have a reading packet 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 be required to do a reading reflection on at least **two** articles for each lesson assignment. Students will have three reading response questions for each reading. In sessions 2, instead of turning in a lesson assignment document, students will turn in a position paper for the cluster of readings provided for this lesson. See Canvas for additional instruction for this assignment.

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 Canvas to get there.

Listen on the Web - these are audio documents, usually from National Public Radio. You need Real Player to listen to them, so you'll want to make sure it's loaded on your computer. You'll have a link to get there, and will summarize and comment on what you hear.

Web Hunt - this activity allows you to review websites. Sometimes you'll review ones I've found, at times you'll look for your own.

Discussion Questions (10 points)– In each lesson we'll have some issues to discuss on the bulletin board. Whole and small group discussion will be graded. Your participation on the discussion will be required, just like class participation. Canvas 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 discussion questions. This is an important part of our learning. I expect full participation on the discussion board. And yes, you can lose points for not participating. Your entries should demonstrate evidence of a thorough understanding of course readings, the ability to critically interpret difficult concepts, to synthesize ideas, draw parallels and seek applications.

Quiz (5 points)– At the end of each lesson, there will be a quiz. The questions will be short answer ones. You'll have 30 mins to take each quiz. The quiz will be a concise way to wrap up a particular lesson.

Projects (25 points) – There will be two projects for this course. Language Diary Analysis Paper (5 points) and Theoretical Perspectives of Disability Research Paper (20 POINTS). Please go to Canvas for additional instruction.

Grades - **There are no mid-terms or finals, only lesson assignments, quizzes, and project papers.** You won't memorize a bunch of stuff in this class; you will read, write, and think. Graded assignments are both learning activities for you and provide the means to determine

your final grade. The graded assignments will require you to *analyze, synthesize and evaluate* course materials and demonstrate application of critical thinking.

Course Evaluation - the course will be evaluated according to university guidelines.

VI. GRADES

94.0 and Above	A
90.0 to 93.999	A-
87.0 to 89.999	B+
84.0 to 86.999	B
80.0 to 83.999	B-
77.0 to 79.999	C+
74.0 to 76.999	C
70.0 to 73.999	C-
67.0 to 69.999	D+
64.0 to 66.999	D
60.0 to 63.999	D-
Below 60.0	F

VII. CLASS POLICIES

Submitting your Work - Submit your work to me no later than midnight on the due date. Except for the quiz and discussion, all other task must be submitted in a single Microsoft Word via Canvas by the due date. **Late work** will not be accepted unless in extreme cases (e.g. sickness, family emergency). Contact the professor for any questions concerning exceptions to the rule.

The professor reserves the right to make changes to course readings, assignments, and due dates. Students will be informed as and when changes occur in the syllabus.

VIII. UNIVERSITY POLICIES

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS HONOR CODE. The core values of The University of Texas at Austin are learning, discovery, freedom, leadership, individual opportunity, and responsibility. Each member of the university is expected to uphold these values through integrity, honesty, trust, fairness, and respect toward peers and community.

PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT AND CIVILITY IN THE CLASSROOM. The professor expects students to act as professionals in class. This means students should arrive on time for class, be prepared to participate in the class discussion, and show respect for one another's opinions. A course brings together a group of diverse individuals with various backgrounds. Students are influenced and shaped by such factors as ethnicity, gender, sex, physical abilities, religious and political beliefs, national origins, and sexual orientations, among others. We expect to learn from each other in an atmosphere of positive engagement and mutual respect. Social Work also deals with complex and controversial issues. These issues may be challenging and uncomfortable, and it would be impossible to offer a substantive classroom experience that did not include potentially difficult conversations relating to challenging issues. In this environment we will be exposed to diverse ideas and opinions, and sometimes we will not agree with the ideas

expressed by others. Nevertheless, the professor requires that students engage one another with civility, respect, and professionalism.

UNANTICIPATED DISTRESS. Students may experience unexpected and/or distressing reactions to course readings, videos, conversations, and assignments. If so, students are encouraged to inform the professor. The professor can be responsive and supportive regarding students' participation in course assignments and activities, but students are responsible for communicating clearly what kind of support is desired. If counseling is needed, students may contact a service provider of their choosing, including the UT Counseling Center at 512-471-3515 or online at <https://cmhc.utexas.edu/>.

POLICY ON SOCIAL MEDIA AND PROFESSIONAL COMMUNICATION. Public social networks are not private. Even when open only to approved or invited members, users cannot be certain that privacy will exist among the general membership of sites. If students choose to participate in such forums, please assume that anything posted can be seen, read, and critiqued. What is said, posted, linked to, commented on, uploaded, subscribed to, etc., can be accessed and archived, posing potential harm to professional reputations and prospective careers.

Students who use social media (i.e. Facebook, Twitter, etc.) and other forms of electronic communication (i.e. blogs, etc.) must be mindful of how their communication may be perceived by clients, colleagues, faculty, and others. Students are expected to make every effort to minimize material which could be considered inappropriate for a professional social worker and other students in training. Because of this, students are advised to manage security settings at their most private levels and avoid posting information/photos or using any language that could jeopardize their professional image.

Students are asked to consider the amount of personal information posted on these sites and are obliged to block any client access to involvement in the students' social networks. Client material should not be referred to in any form of electronic media, including *any* information that might lead to the identification of a client or compromise client confidentiality in *any* way. Additionally, students must critically evaluate any material that is posted regarding community agencies and professional relationships, as certain material could violate the standards set by the School of Social Work, the Texas Code of Conduct for Social Workers, and/or the NASW Code of Ethics.

Students should consider that they will be representing professional social work practice as well as The University of Texas at Austin School of Social Work program while in the classroom, the university community, and the broader area communities.

POLICY ON SCHOLASTIC DISHONESTY. Students who violate University rules on scholastic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary penalties, including the possibility of failure in the course and/or dismissal from the University. Since such dishonesty harms the individual, all students, and the integrity of the University, policies on scholastic dishonesty will be strictly enforced. For further information, the student may refer to the Web Site of the Student Judicial Services, Office of the Dean of Students: <http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/sjs/>.

USE OF COURSE MATERIALS. The materials used in this course, including, but not limited to exams, quizzes, and homework assignments, are copyright protected works. Any unauthorized duplication of the course materials is a violation of federal law and may result in disciplinary action being taken against the student. Additionally, the sharing of course materials without the

specific, express approval of the professor may be a violation of the University's Student Honor Code and an act of academic dishonesty, which could result in further disciplinary action. This sharing includes, among other things, uploading class materials to websites for the purpose of distributing those materials to other current or future students.

DOCUMENTED DISABILITY STATEMENT. Any student who requires special accommodations must obtain a letter that documents the disability from the Services for Students with Disabilities area of the Division of Diversity and Community Engagement (471- 6259 voice or 471-4641 TTY for users who are deaf or hard of hearing). A student should present the letter to the professor at the beginning of the semester so that needed accommodations can be discussed and followed. The student should remind the professor of any testing accommodations no later than five business days before an exam. For more information, visit: <http://diversity.utexas.edu/disability/>.

RELIGIOUS HOLIDAYS. By UT Austin policy, students must notify the professor of a pending absence at least fourteen days prior to the date of observance of a religious holy day. If the student must miss a class, examination, work assignment, or project in order to observe a religious holy day, the professor will give the student an opportunity to complete the missed work within a reasonable time after the absence.

TITLE IX REPORTING. In accordance with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, the University of Texas at Austin is committed to maintaining a learning environment that is free from discriminatory conduct based on gender. Faculty, instructors, agency-based field instructors, staff, and/or teaching assistants in their supervisory roles are mandated reporters of incidents of sex discrimination, sexual harassment, sexual violence, or sexual misconduct. Students who report such incidents will be informed of University resources. Incidents will be reported to the University's Title IX Coordinator and/or the Title IX Deputy for the SSW, Professor Tanya Voss. Students, faculty and staff may contact Professor Voss to report incidents or to obtain information. Further information, including student resources related to Title IX, may also be found at <http://socialwork.utexas.edu/dl/files/academic-programs/other/qrg-sexualharassment.pdf>.

CAMPUS CARRY POLICY. The University's policy on concealed fire arms may be found here: <https://campuscarry.utexas.edu>. You also may find this information by accessing the Quick Links menu on the School's website.

CLASSROOM CONFIDENTIALITY. Information shared in class about agencies, clients, and personal matters is considered confidential per the NASW Code of Ethics on educational supervision and is protected by regulations of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) as well. As such, sharing this information with individuals outside of the educational context is not permitted. Violations of confidentiality could result in actions taken according to the policies and procedure for review of academic performance located in sections 3.0, 3.1, and 3.2 of the Standards for Social Work Education.

USE OF E-MAIL FOR OFFICIAL CORRESPONDENCE TO STUDENTS. Email is recognized as an official mode of university correspondence; therefore, students are responsible for reading their email for university and course-related information and announcements. Students are responsible for keeping the university informed about a change of e-mail address. Students should check their e-mail regularly and frequently—daily, but at minimum twice a

week—to stay current with university-related communications, some of which may be time-sensitive. Students can find UT Austin’s policies and instructions for updating their e-mail address at <http://www.utexas.edu/its/policies/emailnotify.php>.

SAFETY. As part of professional social work education, students may have assignments that involve working in agency settings and/or the community. As such, these assignments may present some risks. Sound choices and caution may lower risks inherent to the profession. It is the student's responsibility to be aware of and adhere to policies and practices related to agency and/or community safety. Students should notify the professor regarding any safety concerns.

BEHAVIOR CONCERNS ADVICE LINE (BCAL). If students are worried about someone who is acting differently, they may use the Behavior Concerns Advice Line to discuss by phone their concerns about another individual’s behavior. This service is provided through a partnership between the Office of the Dean of Students, the Counseling and Mental Health Center (CMHC), the Employee Assistance Program (EAP), and The University of Texas Police Department (UTPD). Call 512-232-5050 or visit <http://www.utexas.edu/safety/bcal>.

EMERGENCY EVACUATION POLICY. Occupants of buildings on the UT Austin campus are required to evacuate and assemble outside when a fire alarm is activated or an announcement is made. Please be aware of the following policies regarding evacuation:

- Familiarize yourself with all exit doors in the classroom and the building. Remember that the nearest exit door may not be the one you used when entering the building.
- If you require assistance to evacuate, inform the professor in writing during the first week of class.
- In the event of an evacuation, follow the professor’s instructions.
- Do not re-enter a building unless you are given instructions by the Austin Fire Department, the UT Austin Police Department, or the Fire Prevention Services office.

GRADING SCALE

94.0 and Above	A
90.0 to 93.999	A-
87.0 to 89.999	B+
84.0 to 86.999	B
80.0 to 83.999	B-
77.0 to 79.999	C+
74.0 to 76.999	C
70.0 to 73.999	C-
67.0 to 69.999	D+
64.0 to 66.999	D
60.0 to 63.999	D-
Below 60.0	F

IX. COURSE SCHEDULE

Date	Topic	Assignment Due	Readings
Syllabus Session 01/16 – 01/22	Welcome Course Overview Semantics	<i>Syllabus quiz is due on 01/22</i>	None
Session 1 01/22– 02/05	What is Disability?	<i>Language Diary Assignment Project is due on 01/27</i> <i>Session 1 lesson document is due on 02/05</i>	<p>Barnes, C. “The Social Model of Disability: A Sociological Phenomenon ignored by Sociologists?”</p> <p>Friedman, C. and Owen. A.L. “Defining Disability: Understandings of and Attitudes Towards” Ableism and Disability.”</p> <p>Cologon, K. "What is Disability? It depends whose shoes you are wearing": Parent understandings of the Concept of Disability.”</p> <p>Degener, T. “The Definition of Disability in (German and) International Discrimination Law.”</p> <p>Tom Shakespeare, “The Social Model of Disability”</p> <p>Anastasiou, D and Kauffman, J “The Social Model of Disability: Dichotomy between Impairment and Disability”</p>
Session 2 02/05 – 02/19	Historical Perspective for Understanding Disability	<i>Position Paper is due on 02/19</i>	<p>Baynton, D. C. “Disability and the justification of Inequality in American History.”</p> <p>Longmore, P. K. “Heaven’s Special Child: The Making of Poster Children”</p> <p>Dolmage, J. “The Rhetorical Construction of Disability and Race at Ellis Island”</p>

<p>Session 3 02/19– 03/05</p>	<p>Language and Disability</p>	<p><i>Session 3 Lesson document is due on 03/05</i></p>	<p>Grue, J. “The social meaning of disability: a reflection on categorization, stigma and identity”.</p> <p>Back et al. “How we label Students with Disabilities: A Framework of Language use in an Urban School District in the United States.”</p> <p>Melrose, S., Dusome, D., Simpson, J., Crocker, C., and Athens, E. What’s in a Name? The Language of Intellectual Disability</p> <p>Peers, Spencer-Cavaliere, & Eales. “Say What You Mean: Rethinking Disability Language in Adapted Physical Activity Quarterly”</p> <p>Finlay, W. M. L., and Lyons, E “Rejecting the label: A social constructionist analysis.”</p>
<p>Session 4 03/05-03/11</p>	<p>Movie Representation of Disability</p>	<p><i>Brief Summary of Movie and Movie Analysis Paper are due on 03/11</i></p>	<p>Haller, B., Dorries, B., & Rahn, J. “Media labeling versus the US disability community identity: A study of shifting cultural language.”</p> <p>Film TBD. Please see Canvas for further instruction.</p>
<p>03/12 – 03/17</p>	<p>SPRING</p>	<p>BREAK</p>	
<p>Session 5 03/19– 04/02</p>	<p>Attitudes Toward Disability</p>	<p><i>Session 5 Lesson Document is due on 04/02</i></p>	<p>Bourke, L. and Waite, C. "It's not like I have a Disability or anything!" Perceptions of Disability and Impairment among Young, Rural People.”</p> <p>Roets, G. and Goodley, D. “Disability, Citizenship and Uncivilized Society:</p>

			<p>The smooth and nomadic qualities of Self-Advocacy”</p> <p>Barr, J. J. and Bracchitta, K.”Attitudes Toward Individuals with Disabilities: The Effects of Contact with Different Disability Types”</p> <p>Fleischer and Zames. “The Disability Rights Movement: From charity to confrontation ”</p> <p>Shakespeare, T. and Watson, N “Identity politics, disability and culture”</p>
<p>Session 6 04/16-05/04</p>	<p>More on Attitudes About Disability & Stigma and Illness</p>	<p><i>Session 6 Lesson Document is due on 04/30</i></p> <p><i>Final Project is due on 05/02</i></p>	<p>Eckert, R. C. and Rowley, A. J. “Audism: A Theory and Practice of Audio Centric Privilege”</p> <p>Goffman, E. “Selections from stigma.”</p> <p>Coleman-Brown, L.M. “Stigma: An enigma demystified.”</p> <p>Susan Wendell. “Unhealthy Disabled: Treating chronic illnesses as disabilities.”</p> <p>Simpson, D. “From staring back: The disability experience from the inside out.”</p> <p>Kuppers, P. “The sound of the bones.”</p> <p>Simpson, D. “Line breaks the way I see them.”</p>

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