

## **Aging and Disability Syllabus**

**SW 360K and 387R**

**Fall 2015**

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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 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 Canvas. 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 Canvas 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.

## 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.

**So, let's get started!** Your first task is to learn about the Syllabus, Canvas 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!

**And here is everything you ever wanted to know about university policy and the SSW policies:**

**UT-SSW**

**Fall 2015**

**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 [www.utexas.edu/student/cmhc/](http://www.utexas.edu/student/cmhc/).

**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 social work 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.

Social work 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. Social work students are expected to make every effort to minimize material which could be considered inappropriate for a professional social worker in training. Because of this, social work 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.

Social work 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://www.utexas.edu/diversity/ddce/ssd/>.

**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. Students who report incidents of sex discrimination, sexual harassment, sexual violence, or sexual misconduct to faculty, instructors, and/or staff who supervise students, will be provided a list of University resources. If the incident is impacting the academic environment, a report will be provided to the University's Title IX Coordinator. Further information, including student resources related to Title IX, may be found at <https://www.utexas.edu/student-affairs/policies/title-ix>.

**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.

