

## Women and Disability Fall 2012

SW 360K (62770)

**S W 387R (62945)**

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**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 online in .pdf format. If you need accommodations to read .pdf files, please let me know. You may need to purchase a book for one of the projects in the class, or you can find a book that you need in the library.

### **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 deeply explore the unique issues, concerns and experience of being a woman with a disability. To that end:

\* The student will understand both disability and gender as socially conferred statuses, not a fixed attributes of the individual.

\*The student will identify how attitudes and beliefs about disability and gender may impact the personal and social view of disability.

\*The student will identify and discuss some of the specific issues that influence women with disabilities.

\*The student will examine the complex interplay of social, political, and economic forces as they relate to women and disability.

\*The student will examine the complex interplay of culture, gender, and disability in the concerns, issues, and experience of women with disabilities.

\*The student will understand the longstanding social oppression of the disability community, and of women, and consider ways to initiate social change.

## **Requirements:**

This course is designed in a web-based environment that allows a certain kind of flexibility in creating learning opportunities for you. The course will give you some flexibility in choosing how you best learn, and what topics are of primary interest to you, within a structure. There are about 5 lessons in this course. Most of the lessons will last 10-14 days. We will also have “projects” that may be shorter. All of the due dates for lessons are on the calendar, which can be found under the **TOOLS** button on Blackboard. At the beginning of each lesson, there is a **map**, a kind of lesson plan, which 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 doubts 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 have 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 until mid term and cram and catch up! The content will be measured out and paced, and we all complete each lesson together, within the posted time frame. 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 in front of the computer; even though you get to choose the time, you still have to put in the time. If the answer is no, you can't make yourself do it, save us both the grief, and drop now.

## **Learning Activities**

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, 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 **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. This allows you the opportunity to construct some of your learning based on your interests or preferred learning styles. Some activities will be required, and the optional activities will 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, and much better looking than I actually am!). 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 (your “think” journal) that you produce with each lesson. You will see a sample in just a minute so that you know what I’m talking about.

### **Activities**

These will be things I’ll ask you to do to support your learning in the class. Most will be required, some may be optional, but you will know each time by looking at the map. These tasks will involve you “doing” something, like filling out a questionnaire or interviewing someone. The purpose behind most activities is to give you a cultural context for what we are studying; they also help you understand multiple perspectives about any given issue.

### **Readings**

You will have a reading packet for this class, consisting of articles, book chapters, etc. This will be on the website usually under a link called “Readings”. They will all be in .pdf format. Usually, you will write a reaction paper for the items you read; sometimes you will simply answer questions. There will be specific instructions for each reading. If there aren't instructions, assume you need to give me a reaction paper, consisting of a summary, and your personal reaction.

### **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. If there aren’t specific instructions, your reaction paper again will be a summary, and your personal reaction to the information.

### **Listen on the Web**

Sometimes you’ll have an option to listen to something on the web. Usually these are NPR radio programs, and some of them are great. To listen, you need Real Player installed on your computer. If you don’t know how to do that, the [help desk \(512\) 475-9400](#) will be a great resource to you, and this and any other technical problem. Sometimes students can't seem to make this work, therefore this is always an optional activity.

### **Web Hunt**

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

write a review, or a reaction paper, or answer specific questions for these assignments.

### **Discussion Questions**

Each week we'll have some questions to discuss on the bulletin board. Your participation there will be required, just like class participation. For some of the lessons we will have a variation of this activity called: **Ask the Expert!** For these weeks, a woman with a disability and a particular interest in whatever we are discussing that week, will log on to answer your questions. Your assignment will be to pose questions, then write a reaction paper for the discussion.

### **Quiz**

We'll end each lesson with a quiz. The point of the quiz is to integrate the information you've gathered from the whole of the lesson. The quiz will be short answer questions and they will be posted on the site in advance. You will simply send your quiz in to me with all of the rest of the documents you produce for that lesson. I ask that you do the quiz last, so that it reflects what you've learned throughout the lesson.

### **Portfolios**

At the **end** of each lesson you will submit all your work for that lesson. The best way to do this is to upload your lesson in the grade book. There will be a spot under the lessons button that will say something like "Upload your Lesson Here". You should also include a **cover page** that lists the work you are submitting and the maximum amount of points allowed for that task. **So when I open your document, I should see your name, a list of everything in the document, and the point total and grade** you are shooting for in that lesson. I will review your work and give you feedback and comments, along with your grade for the lesson, as soon as possible. You may get your work returned if you don't include a cover page with your name on it! I really, really like to see that when I open the document...your name, list of what you sent, point total, grade you anticipate. I want you to deliberately aim for a certain grade with each lesson you submit.

### **Share Your Work**

It is also an option to post one of your reaction papers for each lesson, for points. Because you may all pick different tasks, or activities within the lesson, this is an opportunity for other class members to

learn about something they didn't read or explore. To do this, go to the GROUPS 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.

### **Project Weeks**

There will be some weeks (or just one week!) 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. 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 and everyone has to do those required tasks within the time specified for that lesson. In addition, you will need to choose from the optional activities to add points 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 total point requirements for the graduate and undergraduate students. There are no mid terms or finals in this class; as a result all work is due **NO LATER THAN** the last day of class. In general you get points for both quality and quantity of work. In most reaction papers I only want one page; if a reading or task is more complex, logically there should be more. Big fonts and large spacing do not a full page make: a page of work is usually 3-5 paragraphs, and there is no such thing as a one sentence paragraph.

Note: **THERE WILL BE GRADE PENALTIES FOR LATE WORK, and I will NOT grant incompletes. If you are having trouble keeping up with the class due to unforeseen circumstances, let me know ASAP. If you are behind at midterm, assume you need to drop the 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.