



EDUC/PSYC 355 - Critical Disabilities Studies: Seminar and Practicum

**Course Syllabus
Fall Semester 2023**

Instructor: Dr. Melanie McCallum

Credits: 3

Contact Hours: 45

Prerequisites: none

Class Meeting Days & Time: Mon-Wed 9:00am-10:30am

Office Hours: by appointment via Zoom

Course Type: Course with Practicum component

Course Fee: USD\$65

Course Description

The course intends to give a multicultural view on differently-abled persons and how societies respond and handle the issue of critical disability. Focus is posed on the different forms of disability (acquired vs. inborn), how to empower a differently-abled person in order to reinforce resilience and how to assist people to reach as much independence as possible. Students will gain insight on how different countries respond to disabilities and which policies of integration are adopted.

All students enrolled in this course will complete three contact hours per week with VIVA Sports Association, which is an athletic program for children and young adults with motor and/or intellectual disabilities in Perugia. Students will assist the professional staff in managing the athletic activities, helping children and adults with a variety of disabilities play sports, including fencing, ping-pong, volleyball, and basketball in order to develop social and motor skills. In addition, students will also collaborate with VIVA staff in designing new activities for participants.

The goal of this course is to foster greater awareness of the experiences of differently-abled people and to reflect on inclusion of individuals with disabilities into society by assuming a critical perspective. It also introduces students to cultural engagement based on mutual benefit and growth through dialogue and hands-on experience. The course is designed for students willing to broaden their cultural perspectives, develop a heightened sense of intercultural awareness and sensitivity, and see different communities from a comparative, global standpoint. Students who commit to this course should keep an open mind, be motivated to actively learn, and be flexible.

For more information on VIVA: VIVA's website (www.asd-viva.blogspot.it/)

Introductory video (www.youtube.com/watch?v=xmdrpGNE_LU&feature=youtu.be) Facebook page (www.facebook.com/groups/376396449052026/)

Learning Outcomes and Assessment Measures

Below are the learning outcomes, followed by the methods that will be used to assess students' achievement for each learning outcome. By the end of this course, students will be able to:

By the end of the course students will be able to:	Assessment Measures used to assess achievement for each outcome
<i>Summarise</i> and <i>List</i> the main forms of disability	Course Journal, Final Exam
<i>Understand</i> and <i>Describe</i> cultural variations in the approach to improve societal integration for differently -abled people	Class Discussion and Practicum Participation Reflective Paper
<i>Summarise</i> and <i>List</i> the aims of a programme to encourage participation and build resilience for differently -abled people	Journal, Final Exam
<i>Evaluate</i> and <i>Analyse</i> a programme to encourage participation and build resilience for differently -abled people	Practicum Participation Class Activity

Course Materials

Readings

A course reader, including all the indicated readings, will be available. The course's Moodle site is the primary location for readings and assignments.

Assessment

Attendance	10 %
Weekly Moodle Quizzes	15 %
Course Journal	10 %
Reflective Paper	20 %
Office Hours	5 %
End of term Exam	25%
Final Presentation	15%

Grading

Students are reminded that it is their responsibility to note the dates of exams and other assignments. No alternative exam dates will be offered and professors are not required to give partial credit for any late work (they do so at their discretion: the Institute's default policy is no extensions and a zero for any work turned in late). Students who book travel when they have an exam or other assessment will have to change their plans or accept a zero. Letter grades for student work are based on the following percentage scale:

Letter Grade Range	Numerical Score Equivalent	Student Performance
A	93% - 100%	Exceptional Excellent
A-	90% - 92%	
B+	87% - 89%	Superior
B	83% - 86%	
B-	80% - 82%	
C+	77% - 79%	Satisfactory
C	73% - 76%	
C-	70% - 72%	
D+	67% - 69%	Low Pass
D	63% - 66%	
D-	60% - 62%	

F	59% or less	Fail (no credit)
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Please note: decimal numerals between 1-4 are rounded down while 5-9 are rounded up: e.g., expect 89.4 to be 89.0 while 89.5 to round up to 90.

Course Requirements

Grades are based on the following criteria.

Attendance (10%)

Attendance is an essential part of this course. If you attend all the meetings, you will receive 10% for this part of your grade. There are no make-ups offered for attendance.

Quizzes (15 %)

Students will be assigned short quizzes throughout the semester, which will be due before class time and will not be reopened. The quiz will be on Moodle and it is not timed. Students can take the quiz as many times as they like, with the recorded grade being the highest grade they receive. There will be a combination of *technical*, *methodological*, and *content questions*. The content questions will help students zoom in on the most important ideas of the week's teachings and readings. The technical questions will help students learn the class's policies and administrative procedures. The methodological questions will test on skills that will pop up every week, like finding an author's argument and assessing sources.

Course Journal (20%)

Students will keep a notebook at the start of the semester, which they will use as a personal space through which to reflect on course material and ideas. In-class assignments (e.g., summaries of assigned readings, analyses of primary sources, mental maps, reflections, predictive exercises) will be regularly scheduled and graded twice throughout the semester, i.e., before the mid-semester break (Week 7) and at the end of the course (Week 12). Each of these checks is worth 10% of your grade, for a total of 20%. See the full prompt on Moodle for more information.

Reflective Paper (20%)

The final reflective paper will amount to 20% of the final grade. Full rubrics will be available on Moodle, and 3% of the final grade will be available for completed first draft outlines.

Office Hours (5%)

Getting to know your professor makes you more comfortable with that person and therefore more likely to ask for help. It also might help for you to ask questions about the various assignments or discuss a paper idea. In this course, you get 5% of your grade for coming one time before Week 9 to office hours.

Final Exam (25%)

Students will sit an end of term written exam, consisting of a mixture of short answer, multiple-choice and True /False questions covering all of the course materials. See the full prompt on Moodle for more information.

End of Semester Community Engagement Presentations (5%)

During Special Academic Events Week, the class will present a 15-minute summary of the project experience to the Umbra community during the **Community Engagement Presentations**. Students will receive the guidelines and presentation order after the mid-semester break. Participation in this event is MANDATORY and an integral part of the community engagement grade.

Extension & Submitting Late Work

Work submitted after the deadline will receive a grade of zero, not partial credit. Each student is allowed one extension of 24 hours over the entire semester. This can be used for any assignment except the final project. Students need to email the instructor before the deadline and inform the instructor of their use of the extension. Any work submitted after the 24-hour extension will be marked zero. As for all policies, exceptions can be made by the Director for students with special accommodations or in case of medical emergencies, etc.

Attendance & Lateness Policy

Attendance is expected and mandatory for classroom times and co-curricular activities. Regular attendance is a critical component of academic success and students are expected to attend all scheduled classes unless there is a

legitimate reason for absence. Students are also expected to be on time for all classes and co-curricular activities. Each unexcused absence will affect the final grade by 1.5% up to a maximum of 10%. Each incident of tardiness (late arrivals to or early departures from class) is 0.5% off the final grade. Excessive unexcused absences (8 or more) may result in a failing grade or disciplinary action. It is the student's responsibility to be aware of the number of absences or late arrivals for each course, and to ask the instructor when in doubt.

If students miss class, they are responsible for obtaining class notes from other students and/or for meeting the professor during office hours. Any work missed in class because of an excused absence may be made up within one week of the return to the class. Any work missed that was a quiz or other test must be made up outside of class time and will, in the interest of intellectual honesty, be a slightly different test than the one given in class. Presence during mandatory field trips is especially important. Missing a mandatory field trip for a course, unless for a very serious reason that is communicated to Umbra staff in a timely manner, will be considered the equivalent of two unexcused absences. As such, absence from the co-curricular field trip will lower students' final grade in that course by 3% (the equivalent of two unexcused absences).

Legitimate reasons for an excused absence or tardiness includes: death in immediate family, religious observances, illness or injury, local inclement weather, medical appointments that cannot be rescheduled. Absences relating to illness may be excused by the Director but only if a medical certification is provided.

Students who request an approved absence to observe a religious holiday must submit a formal request to the Institute's Director within one week after the add/drop period when course schedules, including any field trips, are finalized. No exceptions will be made after this deadline.

Except in the case of medical emergencies, absences are not accepted when tests are scheduled; tests cannot be made up. Furthermore, scheduled times and dates indicated for exams, quizzes, oral presentations, and any other graded assignments cannot be changed for any reason. Even if more sections of the same class are activated, students may only take exams during the scheduled times and dates for the section they are enrolled in.

Academic Integrity

All forms of cheating (i.e., copying during exam either from a fellow student or making unauthorized use of notes) and plagiarism (i.e., presenting the ideas or words of another person for academic evaluation without acknowledging the source) will be handled according to the Institute Academic Policy, which can be found in the Umbra Institute Academic Policies and Conduct Guidelines.

Utilizing ChatGPT or other artificial intelligence (AI) tools for the generation of content submitted by a student as their own as part of any assignment for academic credit at the Institute constitutes a form of plagiarism.

Should the Institute become aware of a student's use of such platforms and services, the student will be subject to the same consequences and judicial proceedings as are in place for plagiarism (defined above).

Classroom Policy

Students are expected to follow the policy of the Institute and demonstrate the appropriate respect for the historical premises that the school occupies. Please note that cell phones must be set on silent mode before the beginning of each class. Computers and other electronic devices cannot be used during class lectures and discussions for anything other than note-taking, unless there has been a specific academic accommodation.

Laptop Policy

Students are expected to follow the policy of the Institute and demonstrate the appropriate respect for the historical premises that the school occupies. Please note that cell phones must be set on silent mode before the beginning of each class. Computers and other electronic devices cannot be used during class lectures and discussions, unless there has been a specific academic accommodation, or if working on a group project and literature searches are an integral part of the lesson.

An ever-increasing body of research shows that open laptops and telephones in the classroom create distraction (both visual and auditory) for those using them and those around them. You can type faster than you can write, and as a result you end up processing less when you're simply typing notes. For this reason, I have a physical notebook policy: I ask you to leave your computers in your bags and phones in your pockets and use a regular notebook. There are four exceptions: 1) if you have a vision or other accommodation; 2) if you are using a tablet to take notes, one which is not connected to the internet; 3) if we have an in-class tutorial about online research tools; or 4) if you make an office hours appointment with me to discuss a need.

Schedule of Topics, Readings, and Assignments

WEEK 1

Introduction to Critical Disabilities

Introduction to the course and definition of critical disabilities

Goals and expectations: What is critical disability?

Introduction to Viva Sport

Readings for the week:

- 1.WHO Report on Disabilities (2011) p.3-p.10, 261-263;
- 2.UN Convention of Rights of persons with Disabilities (2006) p. 1-37;

Assignments:

Weekly Quiz

WEEK 2

Defining Disability Practically

Assessments and the Need for Definitions

Readings for the week:

- 3.Research & Practice for Persons with Severe Disabilities
2012, Vol. 37, No.2, 70-80 Disability Studies, What is it and What Difference does it make? Ferguson Nusbaum et al
- 4.World Health Organisation. The ICF and Overview. (September 2001) Geneva WHO
icfoverview_finalforwho10sept.pdf

Assignments:

Weekly Quiz

WEEK 3

How to make Efficient Observations

Undertaking and the Utility of Observational Research

Readings for the week:

5. *Journal of School Health* (September 2017) Lorenz K.A. et al. Developing the System for Observing Behavioural Ecology for Youth in Schools
6. *The British Journal of Psychiatry* (January 2018) 174, 254-258 Pauk Swamidhas Sudhakar Russell et al. Family interventions for intellectually disabled children: A Randomised Controlled Trial.

Assignments:

Weekly Quiz

WEEK 4

Communication Skills, Empathy and Disability

Cultural Barriers, effective participation and empathetic engagement. Class will review the experiences of the group participation , and explore strategies to improve communication.

Readings for the week:

- 7.Bernard Moss. *Communication Skills for Health and Social Care*. 5th Edition Sage Publications.
p.11 Active Listening p.114.Empathy. p.208 Non verbal Communication

Assignments:

Weekly Quiz

WEEK 5

The Utility of Physical Activity in Disabilities Organising Activities for Differently Abled People, a Realist Approach

Readings for the week:

8.Sancassiani F., Machado S., Preti A. (2018) Physical Activity, Exercise and Sport Programs as effective therapeutic tools in Psychosocial Rehabilitation. *Clinical Practice and Epidemiology in Mental Health*

9.Nicholas L. Holt & Kacey C. Neely Positive Youth Development Through Sport: A Review. *Revista de Iberoamericana de Psicologia* Vol. 6, no 2, pp. 299-316

Assignments:

Weekly Quiz

Rough Draft of Reflective Paper.

WEEK 6

Evaluating Programmes for Youths with Disabilities

Readings for the week:

10.Willis et al. (2018) *British Journal of Paediatrics*. A Realist Evaluation of a Physical Activity Programme for Children and Youths with Disabilities.

Assignments:

Weekly Quiz

Turn in the first reading of Course Journal

Semester Break

WEEK 7

Challenges and implications in development: inborn and acquired disabilities Preventable Disabilities and Improving Future Outcomes

Readings for the week:

11.Payne-Sturges D.C., Swanson M., Balmes J., Hertz-Picciotto I. (April 2019, Vol109, No.4) *American Journal of Public Health*. Healthy Air, Healthy Brains: Advancing Air Pollution Policy to Protect Children's Health

12.The World Health Organisation. (28 February 2022) Factsheet on Congenital Abnormalities

Assignments:

Weekly Quiz

WEEK 8

Review of Course Materials to Date Reflection and Discussion on Group Participation

Assignments:
Weekly Quiz

WEEK 9

Being differently able: Resilience

Readings for the week:

13.Mannino J.A. (2015) Resilience and Transition to Adulthood among emerging Adults with Disabilities *Journal of Paediatric Nursing*. (Sept 2015)

14.Hart, Heaven et al. Resilience Building With Disabled Children And Young People : A Review and Critique of the Academic Evidence Base. *International Journal of Child, Youth and Family Studies* (2014).

Assignments:
Weekly Quiz
Essay Due

WEEK 10

Changes in responses and treatments of physical and mental disabilities, new developments and offering hope

Prevention

Readings for the week:

15.Persson L.O., Ryden A. *Scandinavian Journal of Caring Sciences* (2006) Themes of effective coping in physical disability (20): 355-363

Assignments:
Weekly Quiz

WEEK 11

Disability and Integration into society

In class Videos and Discussion

Readings for the week

16.Filary R., Pernice R. (2005) Workplace culture analysis where people with intellectual disabilities work: A case study approach. *Journal of Intellectual & Developmental Disability*. Volume 30, 2005 - Issue 3.

17.Katharina Vornholt, Sjir Uitdewilligen, Gemma van Ruitenbeek and Fred Zijlstra. The Development and Validation of the Workplace Acceptance Scale: Evidence From a Sample of Workers with Disabilities *Journal of Vocational Rehabilitation* 54 (2021) 135–149.

Assignments:
Weekly Quiz

WEEK 12

Conclusion of the Group Project Participation

Taking Stock of the Experience Rehearsal for the final presentation Week

End of Semester Community Engagement Presentation overview with Umbra staff and preparation for the event.

Exam Revision

Assignments:

Final Review of Class Journals

WEEK 13

Final Exams and Special Academic Events Week

End of the Semester Community Engagement Presentations