

***DISABILITY STUDIES: SOCIAL PERSPECTIVES,  
SCHOOL PRACTICE, AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT***

Fall, 2021 15.293.540 (Section 01)

Course Meets Weekly: WEDNESDAYS 5:00-8:00pm (also MON 11/29)

LIVE ONLINE SYNCHRONOUS CLASS via ZOOM; Course site on CANVAS

**Zoom Link:** <https://rutgers.zoom.us/j/99950944246?pwd=eVhhdFVJQlFkTWWhERU1WalBLNk9PQT09>

(8/23/21 revision; minor changes may follow)

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N/A	10 Seminar Pl Rm XXX
Office Hours: (ONLINE by appt.)	Prerequisites or other limitations: N/A
Mode of Instruction: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Lecture <input type="checkbox"/> Seminar <input type="checkbox"/> Hybrid <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Online <input type="checkbox"/> Other	Permission required: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes  Directions about where to get permission numbers: N/A

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course provides an in-depth examination of historical, political, economic, social, and cultural aspects of disability. Topic coverage ranges from a 2000-year historical view of disability, to social construction of disability, civil rights and equity issues, race/ethnicity/gender related issues, social barriers and supports, family-community experiences and perspectives, mental health, and involvement with juvenile/criminal justice systems.

The course includes readings from multiple scholarly disciplines and perspectives, including, but not limited to policy, legal, advocacy, and human rights literatures. Students are assigned several projects, including a community engagement project with volunteer work with a local disability support group, or work with a disability rights/advocacy organization.

## **COURSE LEARNING OBJECTIVES**

**Upon completion of this course, students can expect:**

- To be familiar with the basic tenets of disability studies, including alternatives to deficit-based models, the medical model, and the social model
- To understand concepts surrounding normality and disability in society and a range of related impacts
- To understand the history of disability from ancient times to the modern era
- To understand various issues, approaches, and outcomes linked to social construction of disabilities
- To understand the history, legal issues, and outcomes surrounding civil rights issues for persons with disabilities
- To understand multicultural approaches to special education and issues surrounding the intersection of Race, Culture, Language, and Disability
- To understand international perspectives on disability
- To understand the history and practices of the special education system in the U.S., and criticisms of and debates over that system
- To understand key issues with family experiences and perspectives on disability, and life course issues for persons with disabilities
- To apply the Disability Studies perspectives to re-visit specific disability types, such as LD, hearing Impairments, blindness etc.
- To understand core issues surrounding racial/ethnic/gender bias and related equity issues
- To understand linkages among juvenile justice, adult criminal justice, and disability
- To understand connections between mental health needs and services, and conceptualization of disability
- To understand social/other barriers and supports for persons with disabilities
- To develop grounded understanding through a field experience project to key issues and solution pathways for community engagement surrounding the needs of individuals with disabilities

## **COURSE CATALOG DESCRIPTION**

15:293: 590 Disability Studies: Social Perspectives, School Practice, And Community Engagement (3)

This course examines a wide variety of contexts for understanding disability issues nationally and internationally, and considers how culture and diversity influence societal views and responses to disability. Through student engagement in a field project, student research on select focus topics, analysis of current readings, and grounded discussions, students develop foundational knowledge, ability to frame issues, and expertise understanding disability issues. At the completion of this course students will have a deeper understanding of current issues in the field, including factors inhibiting or promoting life course success of individuals with disabilities.

## **OVERVIEW OF COURSE ACTIVITIES**

The course includes substantial weekly readings, structured review and discussions of readings and associated topics, various in-class activities, 6 quizzes on the readings, 3 homework projects, and a community engagement field project that involves volunteer work with a local disability support group, or work with a disability rights/advocacy organization. PowerPoint slides that highlight select content from each week's assigned readings, reinforcing key concepts and providing a partial review, will be posted on the course

CANVAS site by the instructor. PPT and related course materials will be posted for one week in advance of the current week for students wishing to work ahead.

## COURSE MATERIALS

**NO TEXT TO BUY.** All assigned readings are on the course CANVAS site.

## ATTENDANCE POLICY

**Students are required to attend every class.** More than one unexcused absence will result in lowering the student's final grade by the equivalent of one full letter grade (e.g., from B+ to C+) for each additional unexcused absence beyond one (except for documented emergencies, illness, religious observance, family emergency, a major family event such as a brother/sister getting married, or other serious needs). More than three absences total (regardless of absences being excused) will necessitate repeating the course to earn credit. Bona fide emergencies and highly unusual situations should be discussed in private with the instructor to explore the possibility of special accommodations and/or arrangements. **Class starts at 5pm sharp.**

## PROFESSIONAL DISCOURSE

As current and future professionals, students are expected to present themselves and act in class discussions as they would in a professional meeting in the school district or other organization where they work. This applies to several dimensions of professional conduct:

- Some of the course content and class discussions may involve highly contentious issues. Students are expected to be respectful of divergent beliefs and opinions that may be voiced in class discussions, offering constructive questioning and feedback as appropriate.
- Except where otherwise customary (e.g., deaf community terminology), students are expected to use **person-first** language when speaking of students with disabilities (e.g., **student with a learning disability, NOT, LD student**), and never use outdated and inappropriate terms such as **retarded**. Students should avoid language that objectifies human beings as "things" of pity, such as, **wheelchair-bound, confined to a wheelchair, or suffers a disability.**

## LATE ASSIGNMENTS POLICY

**All assignments are expected on time.** Late assignments will receive a reduced grade, generally, a flat reduction in grade equivalent to 10% of the total possible assignment points per day late (or part thereof). Students with bona fide emergencies or unusual circumstances should contact the instructor as soon as possible **IN ADVANCE** to discuss special arrangements in order to avoid grade penalties. The instructor will work constructively and collaboratively with students who **communicate early** regarding special problems completing assignments on time, with no grade penalties in special situations where advance communication takes place and the circumstances are deemed reasonable, but barring emergencies beyond the control of the student, **will not be supportive of last-minute requests for extensions on assignment due dates.**

## STUDENT CONDUCT and ACADEMIC HONESTY

The Office of Student Conduct supervises issues related to violations of academic integrity

(see <http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu>). Please familiarize yourself with the university policy on academic integrity. The Rutgers University Code of Student Conduct can be accessed at:

<http://studentconduct.rutgers.edu/university-code-of-student-conduct>

For any and all assignments and class activities, **no copying of any kind is allowed**, unless copied text is placed within quotations and author/source is appropriately cited. Excessive use of quoted material in essay assignments, quizzes, and tests is strongly discouraged and this will tend to result in lower grades (students need to express themselves using their own language).

**Clear evidence of extensive plagiarism will likely result in a grade of F for the assignment AND course.**

## ACCOMODATIONS FOR DISABILITIES

Rutgers University welcomes students with disabilities into all of the University's educational programs. In order to receive consideration for reasonable accommodations, a student with a disability must contact the appropriate disability services office at the campus where you are officially enrolled, participate in an intake interview, and provide documentation: <https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/documentation-guidelines>. If the documentation supports your request for reasonable accommodations, your campus's disability services office will provide you with a Letter of Accommodations. Please share this letter with your instructors and discuss the accommodations with them as early in your courses as possible. To begin this process, please complete the Registration form on the ODS web site at: <https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/registration-form>.

Students requiring accommodations related to disabilities will be provided all necessary supports and accommodations and confidentiality of related information will be strictly observed to protect student interests. In such circumstances, students should make sure that they communicate their needs in advance to the instructor in coordination with the Rutgers Office of Disability Services (<https://ods.rutgers.edu/>) to ensure that they receive appropriate supports commensurate with their needs.

## COURSE GRADING PLAN

1. Class discussion/activity participation (@ 4 points per class x 15 sessions = 60 points).
2. Quizzes (6 quizzes at 15 points each = 90 points)
3. Student-led 25-minute presentation/discussion (30 points)
4. Homework assignments (3 @ 30 points each = 90 points)
5. Community Engagement Field Project (100 points)

**Course Grades: (out of 370 possible points)**

GRADE	PERCENT	POINTS
A	93.00 – 100.0 %	<b>Point totals will be converted to percentages.</b>
B+	87.00 – 92.99 %	

B	81.00 – 86.99 %	<b>N.B. A grade of 86.99 earns a B, not a B+ Any mid-course modification of course assignments that result in changes to possible point totals will be reflected accurately as percentage of total possible points earned.</b>
C+	76.00 – 80.99 %	
C	70.00 – 75.99 %	
F	Under 70 %	

## ASSIGNMENT/GRADING REQUIREMENTS: ADDITIONAL DETAILS

- 1. Participation:** Students are expected to come to class having completed all assigned readings for that week **in advance** and to participate in class discussions, offering **informed** ideas and opinions.

**Breakdown:** 1 point for attendance AND active attention throughout class session; 3 points for active discussion/participation (no points earned when absent, except in excused absence cases of serious, documented emergencies/religious observance/illness/etc.—then 2 points are awarded. An extra credit opportunity is offered in such cases at the end of the semester if that loss of points results in a borderline lower course grade)

- 2. Quizzes:** The course includes 6 **UNANNOUNCED** quizzes based on the required readings. Quizzes will be ***open notes, open book***. **Students are strongly encouraged to highlight, underline, and take notes on readings—available for use on quizzes.** There will be make-ups for quizzes **ONLY** in cases of excused absences (usually requiring documentation on the reason for absence, or in an obvious emergency or other serious situation).

**Students are strongly encouraged to form study groups and email the instructor about parts of the readings for which they have questions (at least one full day prior to class).**

- 3. Student-led presentation/discussion.** Beginning at session #2, students will individually present on a selected reading during each class. Following a brief introduction in which the presenter states the topic and previews the main presentation content (1 minute, with accompanying presentation overview slide), the main content part of the presentation will last about 8 minutes, to be followed by about 15 minutes of facilitated (by the presenter) discussion (or, the approximately 15 minutes of discussion can be embedded throughout the presentation), and a 1-minute summary/closure with accompanying slide with key take-away points (not just a summary of what was covered). **Under no circumstances can the total time exceed 25 minutes per presenter** (due to other content coverage and activities during class). Students should rehearse to make sure their presentation timing is appropriate and they are responsible to manage their presentation time. Students will sign up for topics during session #1. The oral presentation should **cover just the main concepts and major informational points** from the selected reading—not all of the content. **The presentation is mainly about critical thinking on the issues and rich discussion.** A guidance sheet will be distributed at class session #1. The student must prepare three things to accompany the presentation:

- a.** A brief PowerPoint slide show for the presentation. **Email the PPT to the instructor no later than 5pm the day before the presentation.** **See the exemplar PPT with content, design, and presentation TIPS for student presenters on CANVAS**
- b.** Electronic **study guide notes** WORD document--a 4- to 6-page (single spaced) detailed handout (with much more detail than in the PPT show) for class members containing

summary information. **Email to the instructor no later than 5pm the day before the presentation**

- c. A list of 8 - 10 challenging discussion questions (higher order thinking) for the class with prepared follow-up probes in case of limited audience response on certain questions.

N.B. Students wishing to embed a brief video segment into their presentation (generally 15-45 seconds max.) should arrange to have the videos pre-saved as a mpg file and already embedded in the PPT. The instructor can assist in capturing/converting YouTube video files if students provide at least 2 days advance notice. **Make sure to contact the instructor in advance if you plan to embed any video in your PPT—Do NOT plan on just accessing video via the Internet during the presentation.**

4. **Homework Assignments:** Students will have three (3) team-based HW assignments, which are meant to help translate research-to-practice. These assignments can be done by a team of two, or individually. Students may change team membership during the course as they see fit, but not during a HW assignment after a team has been formed. The HW assignments guide sheets will be posted on CANVAS.
5. **Community Engagement Field Project:** This project can involve volunteer work with a local disability support group, or producing a product (e.g., client guide booklet) on behalf of a disability rights/advocacy organization; or a similar project arrangement (must be approved by the course instructor). A field project assignment sheet will be posted on CANVAS at the start of the course with detailed guidelines and grading procedures. Students will individually consult with the instructor during the first two weeks of the course to start to arrange their field project and will have those arrangements finalized by the end of the 3rd class session (9/22/2021). The field project involves 6 weeks of ongoing activity, at least 2 hours per week for ongoing in-person/online involvement (not applicable for projects that do not involve regular engagement), as described in the community engagement field project guidance sheet. Each field project option involves writing a report as specified in the guidance sheet and a brief project presentation at the last class session.

## SCHEDULE OF WEEKLY READINGS AND CONTENT COVERAGE

(All ASSIGNED READINGS ARE ON CANVAS)

**NOTE: Some weeks of the course also include required videos for you to watch (located on our CANVAS course site). These videos are specified in the weekly content coverage on our course CANVAS page and the weekly PPTs.**

Week #	Content Coverage	Assigned Readings
1  (9/1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Course introduction</li> <li>• Key ideas in Disability Studies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Disability Studies: What Is It and What Difference Does It Make?</li> <li>• Introduction: Disability, Normality, and Power</li> <li>• Disability and the Justification of Inequality in American History</li> </ul>
<b>No class on WED 9/8 due to Rutgers scheduling—MON 9/6 classes happen on WED 9/8</b>		
2  (9/15)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• History of disability in the world: ancient civilizations, post-Renaissance, and 20<sup>th</sup>-21<sup>st</sup> century</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An Institutional history of Disability</li> <li>• Disability History Timeline</li> </ul>
3  (9/22)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social Construction of Disabilities</li> <li>• Ableism</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Disability in Society</li> <li>• How is disability understood? An examination of sociological approaches</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Outside Privileges Can Lead to Insider Disadvantages --Some Psychosocial Aspects of Ableism</li> <li>• Toward Intersectional Identity Perspectives on Disability and LGBTQ Identities in Higher Education</li> </ul>
<p><b>4</b> <b>(9/29)</b> <b>HW#1</b> <b>Assigned-Due</b> <b>10/13/21</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Civil rights issues surrounding disabilities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Disability Civil Rights and a New Paradigm for the 21st Century</li> <li>• Deviancy, Dependency, and Disability: The Forgotten History of Eugenics and Mass Incarceration</li> <li>• Capacity, best interests, will and preferences and the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities</li> </ul>
<p><b>5</b> <b>(10/6)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Multi-cultural perspectives of disability and special education</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Intersection of Race, Culture, Language, and Disability-Implications for Urban Education</li> <li>• Multicultural Special Education: Effective Intervention for Today's Schools</li> <li>• Disability in Multicultural Theory-Conceptual and Social Justice Issues</li> <li>• Beyond Convictions-Interrogating Culture, History, and Power in Inclusive Education</li> <li>• Islam and the Cultural Conceptualisation of Disability</li> </ul>
<p><b>6</b> <b>(10/13)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• International perspectives on disability</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cross-Cultural Perspectives on the Classification of Children with Disabilities</li> <li>• Models and measurement in disability-An International Review</li> <li>• The impending globalization of ADHD- Notes on the expansion and growth of a medicalized disorder</li> <li>• Disability stigma in developing countries</li> </ul>
<p><b>7</b> <b>(10/20)</b> <b>HW#2</b> <b>Assigned-Due</b> <b>11/3/21</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Special Education in the U.S.: Theory to practice (mid-20<sup>th</sup> century-present)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implicit Assumptions in Special Education Policy: Promoting Full Inclusion for Students with Learning Disabilities</li> <li>• A History of Early Childhood Special Education</li> <li>• Special Education at the Crossroad- An Identity Crisis and the Need for a Scientific Reconstruction</li> <li>• 21st Century Change Drivers: Considerations for Constructing Transformative Models of SPED Teacher Development</li> </ul>
<p><b>8</b> <b>(10/27)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Critiques of traditional special education in the U.S. and related perspectives</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stimulating tensions in special education teachers' figured world-an approach towards inclusive education</li> <li>• Why is Special Education So Afraid of Disability Studies?</li> <li>• Inclusive education's promises and trajectories- Critical Notes about Future Research on a Venerable Idea</li> <li>• Normalizing Difference in Inclusive Teaching</li> <li>• Disability Discourse- Overview and Critiques of the Medical and Social Models</li> </ul>

<p>9 (11/3) <b>HW #3 Assigned- Due 11/17/21</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Family Experiences and Perspectives on Disability</li> <li>• Life course issues for persons with disabilities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Characterizing the systems of support for families of children with disabilities- A review of the literature</li> <li>• Systemic Barriers to Family Involvement in Transition Planning for Youth with Disabilities-A Qualitative Metasynthesis</li> <li>• The Power of Parent Engagement-Sociocultural Considerations in the Quest for Equity</li> <li>• Life course health development of individuals with neurodevelopmental conditions</li> <li>• Academic achievement in adults with a history of childhood ADHD: A population based perspective (pp. 1-10)</li> </ul>
<p>10 (11/10)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Drilling down-focus topics: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deaf culture and Deaf community: New lens to define people with hearing impairments</li> <li>• Learning Disabilities: The privilege of the privileged?</li> <li>• Blindness from the DS perspective</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Universal Design for Learning: meeting the challenge of individual learning differences through a neurocognitive perspective</li> <li>• Schooling in American Sign Language: A paradigm shift from a deficit model to a bilingual model in deaf education</li> <li>• Deaf Epistemology: Deafhood and Deafness</li> <li>• Inclusive Deaf Studies: Barriers and Pathways</li> <li>• "Telling It Like It Is: The Role of Race, Class, &amp; Culture in the Perpetuation of Learning Disability as a Privileged Category for the White Middle Class"Access at: <a href="https://dsq-sds.org/article/view/1233/1280">https://dsq-sds.org/article/view/1233/1280</a></li> <li>• Blindness/sightedness: Disability studies and the defiance of di-vision</li> </ul>
<p>11 (11/17)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Racial/ethnic/gender bias and related equity issues</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How Does It Feel to Be a Problem-Black Male Students, Schools, and Learning</li> <li>• Theorizing Racial Inequity in Special Education-Applying Structural Inequity Theory to Disproportionality</li> <li>• Disability Justifies Exclusion of Minority Students-A Critical History Grounded in Disability Studies</li> <li>• Is ADHD Diagnosed in Accord With Diagnostic Criteria? Overdiagnosis and Influence of Client Gender on Diagnosis</li> </ul>
<p>12 <b>MON (11/29)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Juvenile justice, adult criminal justice, and disability</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The School-to-Prison Pipeline-Disproportionate Impact on Vulnerable Children and Adolescents</li> <li>• Meeting the Needs of At-Risk and Adjudicated Youth with Behavioral Challenges- The Promise of Juvenile Justice</li> <li>• Schooling the Police- Race, Disability, and the Conduct of School Resource Officers</li> <li>• Disproportionate Prevalence Rate of Prisoners With Disabilities: Evidence From a Nationally Representative Sample</li> </ul>



<p><b>13</b></p> <p><b>WED</b> <b>(12/1)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mental health and conceptualization of disability</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cultural competence and evidence-based practice in mental health: Epistemic communities and the politics of pluralism</li> <li>• How the relationship of attitudes toward mental health treatment and service use differs by age, gender, ethnicity/race and education</li> <li>• Toward the Integration of Education and Mental Health in Schools</li> <li>• Wading Through Quicksand: Making Sense of Minority Disproportionality in Identification of Emotional Disturbance</li> <li>• Violence and mental illness: what is the true story?</li> </ul>
<p><b>14</b></p> <p><b>(12/8)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social/other barriers and supports for persons with disabilities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Benefits and barriers to physical activity for individuals with disabilities-A social-relational model of disability perspective</li> <li>• Technology for people, not disabilities- ensuring access and inclusion</li> <li>• Can Restorative Practices Help to Reduce Disparities in School Discipline Data? A Review of the Literature</li> <li>• Effectiveness of Restorative Justice in US K-12 Schools: a Review of Quantitative Research</li> <li>• School memories of young people with disabilities: an analysis of barriers and aids to inclusion</li> </ul>
<p><b>15</b></p> <p><b>(12/15)</b></p>	<p>Brief Presentations of Community Engagement Field Projects</p> <p><b>COURSE SYNTHESIS DISCUSSION:</b> Integrating perspectives from the course topics</p>	<p>Class discussion on four focus questions, synthesizing learning from the course:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What can be learned from decades of conflictual models and perspectives involving the field of disabilities studies and more traditional special education and other disability service providers?</li> <li>2. What are some key types of larger social change that may be gradually realized in the coming decades that will help improve the overall life experiences of persons with disabilities?</li> <li>3. How can the system of special education in the U.S. be changed to better meet the needs of students and their families?</li> <li>4. How can IHEs evolve and change their approaches to pedagogy and more specifically, teacher and/other professional preparation to ultimately help improve the overall life experiences of persons with disabilities?</li> </ol>