# COURSE SYLLABUS

**DIVISION:** Theoretical and Behavioral Foundations  
**PROGRAM AREA:** Rehabilitation Counseling and Community Inclusion  
**COURSE NUMBER:** RCI 7480  
**CALL NUMBER:** 22780  
**COURSE TITLE:** Psychosocial Aspects of Disability  
**TERM/YEAR:** Winter 2017  
**DAY:** Tuesday  
**TIME:** 6:00PM – 8:30PM  
**COURSE LOCATION:** 1114 MAIN  
**INSTRUCTOR:** Sonja Grbevski, Ph.D.  
Adjunct Faculty & Advisor  
(519) 973-4411 Ext. 3544  
E-Mail: ag1674@wayne.edu  
Office Hours: 5:00 – 6:00 PM or  
By Appointment, Room 311  
**GUEST LECTURER:** George Parris, Ph.D.  
Program Coordinator  
**PROGRAM SECRETARY:** Lei Juan Stewart-Walker (313) 577-1613

**CATALOG DESCRIPTION:**

This course examines the psychological, social, gender and cultural aspects of adjustment and adaptation to a variety of disabling conditions. Theoretical and practical issues relating to various types of physical, neurological, sensory, psychiatric, and pain-related disabilities will be explored from its impact on the individual, and society. Students will be exposed to the process by which individuals with disabilities adapt to their limitations and changes in lifestyle will be explored, as well as the influence society has in promoting both independence and dependence among individuals with disabilities.

**COURSE OBJECTIVES:**

Clinicians and educators working with adolescents and adults with disabilities are challenged by the complexity of psychological, social, developmental, educational, vocational and contextual factors implicated in the process of adapting to and coping with a disability. The ultimate outcome of the
rehabilitation and counseling process depends on the clinician’s understanding of these factors, their ability to identify them in the individual context and to apply their knowledge in the planning of rehabilitation intervention at all stages of disability.

**Learning Outcomes:**

*Students fulfilling all course requirements will be able to demonstrate knowledge and/or skills in:*

1. Addressing psychological, sociological, and cultural perspectives on adjustment to disability.
2. Understanding models of adjustment to disability, stress and coping with life transitions and value changes associated with adjustment for individuals with a wide range of disabilities.
3. Understanding barriers faced by people with disabilities and how such barriers may impact upon community integration and participation, as well as personal adaptation to the disabling condition.
4. Understanding societal attitudes towards persons with disabilities, including stereotyping, biases, and discrimination, and their impact on self-perception as well as psychological, social, educational and vocational performance of persons with disabilities.
5. Process of psychosocial adaptation to disability for the individual, family, and significant others.
6. How the process of adaptation may differ per age of onset of the disability, personality, gender, and cultural considerations.
7. Understanding chronic illness and disability throughout the life cycle.
8. How factors such as body image and self-concept may impact adaptation to disability, and how the media may positively or negatively influence such factors.
9. Understand how disability affects human growth and development and how this may impede the life stages of development.
10. The potential impact of Assistive technology on the individual and society.
11. The psychological and social aspects of sexuality and intimacy in the rehabilitative/adaptation process for persons with disabilities and how different disabilities may impact human sexuality.

**CORE Learning Outcomes:**

C.2 **Psychosocial Aspects of Disability and Cultural Diversity - Outcomes as demonstrated by the ability to:**

C.2.1 Sociological dynamics related to self-advocacy, environmental influences, and attitude formation.
   C.2.1.a. Identify and articulate an understanding of the social, economic, and environmental forces that may present barriers to a consumer’s rehabilitation.
   C.2.1.b. Identify strategies to reduce attitudinal barriers affecting people with disabilities.
C.2.2.a. Identify strategies for self-awareness and self-development that will promote coping and adjustment to disability.
C.2.2.b. Identify and demonstrate an understanding of stereotypic views toward individuals with a disability and the negative effects of these views on successful completion of the rehabilitation outcomes.

C.3 Human Growth and Development – Outcomes as demonstrated by the ability to:
C.3.1.a. Articulate a working knowledge of human development and the needs of individuals with disabilities across the life span.
C.3.2.b. Recognize the influence of family as individuals with disabilities grow and learn.
C.3.2.c. Demonstrate counselor sensitivity to stressors and the role of positive attitudes in responding to coping barriers and challenges.

C.3.2 Individual and family response to disability:
C.3.2.a. Assist the development of transition strategies to successfully complete the rehabilitation process.
C.3.2.b. Recognize the influence of family as individuals with disabilities grow and learn.
C.3.2.c. Demonstrate counselor sensitivity to stressors and the role of positive attitudes in responding to coping barriers and challenges.

C.3.3 Theories of personality development:
C.3.3.a. Describe and explain established theories of personality development.
C.3.3.b. Identify developmental concepts and processes related to personality development and apply them to rehabilitation counseling practice.

C.3.4 Human sexuality and disability:
C.3.4.a. Identify impact that different disabilities can have on human sexuality.
C.3.4.b. Discuss sexuality issues with individuals with a disability as part of the rehabilitation process.

REQUIRED TEXTS:

CLASS REQUIREMENTS:

1. This course format will involve class lectures and discussions, as well as on line, through Blackboard with a format known as ProfCast, as such, it is learner centered. This means that a) all assigned readings must be completed prior to each class session, b) all class sessions must be attended in its entirety, and c) complete all assigned activities on time. To have access to ProfCast, you will need to access Blackboard to download the audio portion of the lectures. You will need to download Quick Time Media Player to your computer to have access to the ProfCast lectures. In terms of assignments, papers can be submitted earlier than the deadline date; however, no assignments will be accepted late unless proper arrangement is made with the instructor in a timely fashion. Please note that Incomplete Grades are only given under extreme circumstances.
2. **QUALITATIVE CASE STUDY**: You will be required to interview a person with a disability and complete a case study regarding their psychological, social, familial, cultural, and educational as well as employment issues related to adjustment to disability. An in-depth interview or interviews with the individual and possibly significant others will be required as well as participant-observation of the person in his/her natural environment. A detailed copy of the interview questions as well as other requirements is posted on Blackboard. Students are expected to contact a person with a disability who is not a family member to conduct the case study. Your write up should integrate your interview data with your observation as well as information gained from class lectures and discussions.

**NOTE:** The consent form must be signed by the interviewee prior to conducting the interview.

**Contribution to grade: 40%**
**Due Date: February 28th, 2017**

3. **GROUP RESEARCH PAPER & PRESENTATION**: Each group will develop a research paper on the psychological, social, and environmental impact of living with a disability. You will be required to critically examine the impact of a disability on an individuals’ life as well as the impact this may have on significant others. The paper should draw on both the theoretical and the empirical literature. Your paper must include an abstract, introduction, (which must include a thesis statement), implications for rehabilitation counseling and a conclusion. The paper must be typed, double-spaced and 10 to 12 pages in length, excluding title page, abstract and reference pages and must conform to the manual of style as specified in the American Psychological Association (APA) Publication Manual, 6th edition. Papers that do not conform to these guidelines and are grammatically incorrect will receive a failing grade.

Presentations must be presented by all members of the group. Presentations must be completed in a PowerPoint format and should be approximately 20 minutes in length. Each group must handout an outline of the presentation along with a list of references.

**Contribution to grade: 30%**
**Research Paper: 20% ; Presentation: 10%**
**Paper Due Date: March 28th, 2017**
**Presentation: April 11th & 18th, 2017**

4. **FINAL EXAMINATION**
**Contribution to Grade: 30%**
**Date: May 2nd, 2017**

**EVALUATION & GRADING:**

Final grade will be derived from a composite of the major requirements above.
CLASS SCHEDULE:

The readings with an asterisk are suggested to enhance your knowledge of the area. Please utilize them for your clinical research project.

1/10/2017  Introduction to Course Syllabus
Psychosocial and Functional Aspects of Chronic Illness and Disability
Defining Disability and Adjustment as Social Constructs
Wellness and Coping with Life
Psychosocial Aspects of Disability (Chapter 1)
  • Handouts

GROUPS AND PRESENTATION TOPICS SELECTED

1/17/2017  Psychosocial and Functional Aspects of Chronic Illness and Disability Cont’d
Adjustment to Disability:
Psychosocial Aspects of Acquired Disabilities
Handouts

1/24/2017  Perspectives on Disability and Rehabilitation
Understanding Disability Paradigms
Models of Disability

Psychosocial Aspects of Disability (Chapter 5)
ON LINE/PROFCAST

1/31/2017  Perspectives on Disability and Rehabilitation
Understanding Disability Paradigms Cont’d
  ○ Handouts
ON LINE/PROFCAST

2/07/2017  Personal/ Individual Impact of Illness and Disability
  - Psychological Adaptation
  - Self-Awareness and Stigma
  - Self-Concept and Self-Esteem

Psychosocial Aspects of Disability (Chapters 9 & 10)
*Personal Perspective: Recovery and the Rehabilitation Process;
Dealing with Spina Bifida
- Handouts
ON LINE/PROFCAST

2/14/2017  Family and Developmental Issues in Disability
- Family Adjustment and Coping
- Caring for Loved one with Illness and Disability
- Loss, Grief, Mourning, and Resilience

Psychosocial Aspects of Disability (Chapters 6)
*Personal Perspectives: Is the Person with a Disability More Important Than the Family?
- Handouts
ON LINE/PROFCAST

2/21/2017  Family and Developmental Issues in Disability Cont’d
ON LINE/PROFCAST

2/28/2017  Sexuality and Disability

Psychosocial Aspects of Disability (Chapter 7)
*Personal Perspectives: Experiencing Sexuality as an Adolescent with Rheumatoid Arthritis
*Personal Perspectives: I Am in Love with a Stranger
- Handouts
IN CLASS

QUALITATIVE CASE STUDY ASSIGNMENT DUE

3/07/2017  Gender Issues in Adjusting to Disability
Cultural Issues in Adjusting to Disability

Psychosocial Aspects of Disability (Chapters 3, & 14)
- Handouts
ON LINE/PROFCAST

3/14/2017  SPRING BREAK

3/21/2017  Developmental Perspectives on Coping with Disabilities. Young Adulthood,
Middle Adulthood and Aging.
Stigma and Disability
Psychosocial Aspects of Selected Disabilities

Psychosocial Aspects of Disability (Chapter 2)
*Personal Statement: One More Burden, A Mother’s Perspective
- Handouts
ON LINE/PROFCAST

3/28/2017  Psychosocial Aspects of Coping with Mental Illness  
Counseling Individuals and Families of Persons with Disabilities  
  o Using Hope and Positive Psychology in the Rehabilitation Process  
  o Understanding what is meant by Recovery and the Recovery Model

_Psychosexual Aspects of Disability (Chapters 12, 13 & 11)_  
  *Personal Perspective: Using Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy Techniques to Cope with Disability; Coping with a Journey Toward Recovery: From the Inside Out*

  o Handouts

IN CLASS

GROUP RESEARCH PAPER DUE

4/04/2017  Psychosocial Aspects of Coping with Physical Disabilities  
_Psychosexual Aspects of Disability (Chapter 8)_  
  *Personal Perspective: Recovery and the Rehabilitation*

_Psychosexual Aspects of Coping with Cognitive Disabilities_  
_Psychosexual Aspects of Disability (Chapter 4)_  
  o Handouts

ON LINE/PROFCAST

4/11/2017  PRESENTATIONS

IN CLASS

4/18/2017  PRESENTATIONS CONT’D IF NEEDED

IN CLASS

COURSE EVALUATION/ WRAP UP

EXAM REVIEW

5/02/2017  FINAL EXAM

IN CLASS
ATTENTION STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES:

If you have a documented disability that requires accommodations, you will need to register with Student Disability Services (SDS) for coordination of your academic accommodations. The Student Disability Services (SDS) office is located at 1600 David Adamany Undergraduate Library in the Student Academic Success Services department. SDS telephone number is 313-577-1851 or 313-577-3365 (TDD only). Once you have your accommodations in place, I will be glad to meet with you privately during my office hours to discuss your special needs. Student Disability Services’ mission is to assist the university in creating an accessible community where students with disabilities have an equal opportunity to fully participate in their educational experience at Wayne State University.

Please be aware that a delay in getting SDS accommodation letters for the current semester may hinder the availability or facilitation of those accommodations in a timely manner. Therefore, it is in your best interest to get your accommodation letters as early in the semester as possible.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

All students are expected to attend class, be punctual, and remain in class until the day’s work is completed. It is also expected as a part of attendance that students will appear attentive to the instructor and respectful of other students, and will not talk, read material other than the textbook, or engage in other activities that interfere with the course while the class is meeting. If the instructor begins to note problems with attendance or behaviour that interferes with the teaching process, this will be noted and the student will be made aware of the problem. At that point the instructor will begin to document the student’s attendance and disruptive behaviour and if further problems are noted the student’s grade will be lowered by one letter.
NOTE:

As an undergraduate or graduate student enrolled in classes this semester, we want to alert you to a new University policy on the verification of course participation. This is mandatory for all students and it is required that all instructors assist in this process within the first two weeks of the semester.

Verification of course participation is a federal requirement that the University must enact in order for Wayne State to continue to distribute federal financial aid. The faculty must confirm your participation within two weeks or an automatic administrative withdrawal (forced drop) will occur for the courses in which you are registered but for which the instructor has no indication of your participation in the first two weeks.

The positive aspect of this new policy is that it provides us with an opportunity to respond early to any student problems that we can assist in resolving. We will make every effort to initiate contact by the faculty member, or other advisor, to see if some assistance is needed or to see if there is anything we can do to keep you in the courses/programs.

STATEMENT OF PROFESSIONALISM

“The College of Education requires students to be effective counselors, to behave in an ethical manner at all times (see the statement on Ethical Dimensions of Counseling in the Rehabilitation Counseling Handbook as well as the Practicum and Internship Handbook). Your behavior must be appropriate always.

Active participation in all class activities and discussion is expected. Come to class with ideas, agreements or disagreements on the reading assignments. We expect you to question our ideas and those of your peers.
Professional dress, behavior, and language are required always.

Please put all electronic devices on vibrate or turn off during class.

The Student Code of Conduct can be viewed at:

http://www.doso.wayne.edu/codeofconduct.pdf

ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT/ETHICAL VIOLATIONS

All acts of dishonesty (plagiarism, copying, etc.) in any work for any course will constitute academic misconduct. In this regard, the Academic Regulations Policy noted in the College of Education Graduate Programs and University Graduate Programs Catalogue will be followed in the event of any acts of academic misconduct. In addition, students need to be aware that the professor has at his or her discretion the right to reduce a students’ grade for that class, assign a failing grade, or report the student to the Dean of the College of Education, which could result in removal from the program.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is using others’ ideas and words without clearly acknowledging the source of that information. Whenever you incorporate other people ideas or writings into your own writing, it is extremely important to give credit to those individuals by referencing their names. Plagiarism is a serious violation of academic integrity. To prevent plagiarizing someone else’s work, credit for words and ideas must always be given both in text and in the reference pages. Quotation marks are used to indicate another person’s exact words. Paraphrasing is summarizing a passage or taking the ideas of the sentences and constructing a new sentence in your own words. The original sentence must be substantially altered for it to be your work and citing the source is still necessary because you took the idea from another source. Plagiarism is academic misconduct and may result, at
minimum, in a failing grade on the assignment or in the course. Further disciplinary action may result per university policy.

Although I do not expect that this will be a problem, any student caught cheating can expect, at minimum, serious penalties. Such penalties may include failure of the course. Further disciplinary action may result per university policy.

How can students avoid plagiarism?

To avoid plagiarism, you must give credit whenever you use
- another person’s idea, opinion, or theory;
- any facts, statistics, graphs, drawings—any pieces of information—that are not common knowledge;
- quotation of another person’s actual spoken or written words;
- or paraphrase of another person’s spoken or written words.

Strategies for Avoiding Plagiarism

1. Put in quotations everything that comes directly from the text especially when taking notes.

2. Paraphrase, but be sure you are not just rearranging or replacing a few words.

3. Check your paraphrase against the original text to be sure you have not accidentally used the same phrases or words, and that the information is accurate.

(The section on plagiarism is produced by the Writing Tutorial Services, Indiana University, Bloomington, IN)

The College of Education’s grade appeal policy is available at:

http://coe.wayne.edu/current/grade-appeal.php

RELIGIOUS OBSERVANCES POLICY

Because of the extraordinary variety of religious affiliations represented in the University student body and staff, the Wayne State University calendar makes no provision for religious holidays. It is University policy, however, to respect the faith and religious obligations of the individual. Students
who find that their classes or examinations involve conflicts with their religious observances are expected to notify their instructors well in advance so that alternative arrangements as suitable as possible may be worked out.

**ELECTRONIC MAIL AND BLACKBOARD**
Throughout the semester, course documents will be posted on the Blackboard system. Students will be able to access this information 24/7 from locations outside of the regular classroom. You are responsible to check the Blackboard system and your email routinely to obtain class updates, schedule changes, and assignments changes. These are your vital links to the course. In-class announcements will be made to alert students to Blackboard postings.
NOTE: The National Rehabilitation Association provides guidelines to use when writing or speaking about persons with disabilities. Please try to incorporate these suggestions into your written and spoken communication.

1) Avoid using adjectives as nouns, such as in: "the disabled", "the deaf", "the blind", the "handicapped", etc. It is more acceptable to say, "People who are deaf", or "persons with disabilities".

2) Where possible emphasize the importance of the individual rather than the disability by saying "person" or "individual" before describing the disability. For example, say, "Persons with disabilities" or "people with learning disabilities", rather than "learning disabled people".

3) Avoid using descriptors such as "unfortunate", "pitiful", "poor", and other such value laden words. When possible, use descriptors, which emphasize person ability, such as: "uses a wheelchair or braces" rather than "confined to a wheelchair", since wheelchair enables mobility; without it, the person is confined to bed.

4) Do not sensationalize the onset or effects of a disability with phrases such as: "afflicted with" or "suffering from". It is more acceptable, and accurate to say, "the person has or had____________", "the person has experienced____________", or a person with____________".

5) Avoid implying sickness when discussing disabling conditions. To the public, "disease" has connotations of being unsightly and contagious. A disability itself is not a disease, nor is the person with the disability necessarily chronically ill.
ASSIGNMENTS

PSYCHOSOCIAL CLINICAL INTERVIEW

Professor: Dr. Sonja Grbevski

1. Objective of the Project

The purpose of the project is threefold:

1) To familiarize the student with the specialized theoretical and empirical rehabilitation literature regarding selected physical, neurological, neuromuscular, cognitive, sensory or pain-related disability from a psychosocial perspective.

2) To expose a student to an individual person with disability through an interview conducted by a student on issues related to adaptation and coping with disability.

3) To help the student learn how to apply theoretical and empirical rehabilitation literature to the understanding of a specific case of a person with a disability from a psychosocial perspective and to the planning of the rehabilitation, educational, social, psychological and vocational interventions for persons with disabilities.

2. Project Outline

a) Select a clinical condition/disability of interest to you.

b) Ensure access to a person with a disability selected by you who will grant you an interview on adaptation to and coping with a disability; obtain informed consent for an interview.

c) Conduct a comprehensive literature search on psychosocial and rehabilitative aspects of your selected condition; read this literature critically prior to scheduling the interview.

d) Complete an interview with a person with a disability who has consented to the process; take detailed notes and/or audiotape the session (with your interviewee’s permission).

e) Complete a literature search on those new aspects of disability or rehabilitation which emerged during the interview (e.g. vocational planning, family adjustment, work accommodations, social skills interventions, etc.).

f) Prepare an integrative research-based case report on the person with a disability whom you have interviewed (5-8 pages)
3. Interview Content

You must maintain complete confidentiality of the person with disability who agrees to be interviewed. Remove all identifying information from your report.

During the interview, obtain comprehensive answers to the following general questions.

1) Understanding of the medical and psychological aspects of disability (e.g. “What is your understanding of the condition?”).
2) Acquired versus congenital nature of the disability.
3) Individual’s perception of his/her:
   a) social functioning with family and peers
   b) psychological adjustment and adaptation
   c) work or work-like functioning
   d) recreational functioning
   e) activities and daily needs
   f) educational performance/learning
   g) stress management
   h) disability-related barriers/limitations in all those areas of functioning
   i) individual’s skills and strategies for coping with limitations by disability
   j) reactions of others to individual’s disability (family, friends, co-workers, strangers) and individual’s coping with those reactions
   k) individual’s plans/goals for the future and current/future needs in educational, career, work and family areas

4. Report Outline

4.1 Introduction and review of the literature regarding the disability and its adaptation, coping and rehabilitative aspects.
4.2 Interview information prescribed in a structured format as listed in number 3. You can combine areas to avoid duplication of information.
4.3 Summary and interpretation of the interview findings in the following areas:
   a. adaptation to and coping with disability
   b. rehabilitative intervention to enhance functioning of a person with disability (e.g. career planning for a person with muscular dystrophy) in a selected area relevant to the individual’s current needs and life plans using both theoretical and empirical literature in the field.
5. **Evaluation of the Project**

A. Literature review; criteria; comprehensiveness; accuracy; relevance; logic; critical analysis; and integration. **30 points**

B. Interview criteria: comprehensiveness, attention to detail, logic, relevance, investigative skill, sensitivity to the needs of the person with a disability. **35 points**

C. Case formulation criteria: insight, inventiveness, problem identification and solving, intervention planning, breadth and depth of references and appropriateness of their applications. **30 points**
   
a) coping with and adaptation to disability- 15 points
b) plan and strategy for rehabilitation oriented intervention- 15 points

D. References: comprehensiveness, APA format, and current up to date quality of references. **5 points**

6. **Consultation with the instructor**

A. The specific topic/disability students’ wish to approach needs to be pre-approved by the instructor
GROUP TOPICS

1. Self-Awareness and Stigma towards People with Disabilities
2. Diversity and Cultural Issues with Individuals with Disabilities
3. The Impact of Aging on Individuals with Disabilities
4. Eugenics, Euthanasia, and Physician-Assisted Suicide: It’s Impact on Individuals with Disabilities
5. Self-Concept and Self-Esteem Issues with Persons with Disabilities
6. Quality of Life Issues with Adaptation and Recovery for Individual with Psychiatric Disabilities
7. Quality of Life Issues with Adaptation and Recovery for Individuals with Physical Disabilities
8. Quality of Life Issues with Adaptation and Recovery for Individuals with Cognitive/Intellectual Disabilities.