SWG 582 Dismantling Ableism:
A Critique of Disability Perspectives and Practice

Master of Social Work Program
Department of Graduate Social Work
West Chester University of Pennsylvania

Instructor Information

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Office Hours via Zoom:

- Monday noon-1pm
- Thursday 3-4pm
- Friday 10am-noon; 1-2pm
- I prefer scheduling appointments with students so they can have dedicated time. Please email me so we can block time within or outside of my office hours. I am happy to schedule evening appointments as well.

Course Information

Course runs from January 24th to March 13th. SWG 582 is a fully online asynchronous three credit course with no required in person or synchronous meetings.

SWG 582 utilizes a 100% online course delivery method. Instructional methods include pre-recorded lectures, pre-recorded interviews with in the field experts, and web-based instructional tools (e.g., YouTube video clips, required website, library resources, etc). This course format is designed to provide accessible instruction and meaningful interaction and participation opportunities. To prepare and successfully complete this course, students should consider:

> i. Appropriate online communication and etiquette
> http://www.education.com/reference/article/netiquette-rules-behavior-internet/

> ii. Technology expectations and requirements

Required Materials

There is no required textbook to be purchased for this course. All readings can be found within the D2L course under "Resources" then "Course Reserves."

You are expected to have a computer system that meets the minimum expectations as outlined by West Chester University Information Services on the Recommend Computer Specs for Windows Computer webpage and the Distance Education Technical Requirements and Considerations webpage.

You do not need a working web-camera and microphone.

Course Description

This course reviews theoretical and biopsychosocial elements of culturally responsive social work practice across the lifespan with individuals with disabilities and chronic illness, their caregivers, and

families. The course examines the status and position of individuals with disabilities of all ages in society, the community, and the interdisciplinary support service delivery system. Students will discuss and consider disability and chronic illness through a social justice and human rights perspective.

Course Objectives

The WCU Graduate Social Work Department has adopted a competency-based, outcome performance approach to its curriculum consistent with the Educational and Policy Accreditation Standards (EPAS) of the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE, 2015). Competencies are measurable practice behaviors comprised of knowledge, values, skills, and cognitive/affective processes. Each course is designed to provide students the opportunity to develop and demonstrate certain core competencies. This course focuses on:

1. Competency 1: Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior
2. Competency 2: Engage Diversity and Difference in Practice
3. Competency 3: Advance Human Rights and Social, Economic, and Environmental Justice

WCU MSW Program

Mission Statement

The Graduate Social Work Department provides a quality, affordable, and accessible Master of Social Work Degree in preparation for a career in an evolving, complex, technological, and global society. It prepares graduates who can think critically, communicate effectively, embrace diversity, practice ethically, respond to the needs of vulnerable and oppressed populations, are committed to human rights and social and economic justice, and are competent to practice with individuals, families, and communities.

Program Objectives

A. Provide a quality Master of Social Work Program in accord with the standards of the Council on Social Work Education and the PA State System of Higher Education.
B. Prepare graduates to practice competently and ethically with individuals, families, and communities.
C. Prepare graduates to think critically, communicate effectively, and engage research in the practice of social work.
D. Prepare graduates to practice social work with a commitment to human rights and social and economic justice.

Definition of the Specialization

Advanced Practice with Individuals, Families, and Communities is an approach to social work grounded in human rights and social justice.

Graduates of the West Chester University MSW Program are trained to work with individuals, families, and communities using strengths-based, research-informed and community-oriented assessment, intervention and evaluation skills to enhance resiliency, support recovery, and build capacity.

Theoretical Framework

The West Chester University MSW Program strives to be on the cutting edge of theory-driven and research-informed practice. To this end, the program takes an integrative approach to social work practice with individuals, families, and communities. This approach incorporates a number of theories, perspectives, and models for practice with the various levels of social systems, depending on mutually

identified strengths, needs, and goals. What is central to this approach is the importance of a collaborative relationship between the social worker and those served, building on strengths and working together to affect meaningful and socially just change. The theories and models incorporated include, but are not limited to: ecological perspective, developmental perspective, empowerment perspective, strengths perspective, social justice perspective, attachment theory, conflict theory, feminist theory, crisis theory, social constructivist theory, social exchange theory, social learning theory, social systems theory, theories of social change, risk/resiliency model, and social action model.

Assessments and Grading

Method of Evaluation

Assessment	% of Final Grade	Course Objectives Assessed	Program Objectives Assessed
Mid-Semester Project	30	2	B, C, D
Discussion Board Posts	30	1, 3	B, C, D
Final Project	40	2, 3	B, C, D

Grade Scale

Grade	Quality Points	Percentage Equivalents	Interpretation
A	4.00	93-100	Excellent
A-	3.67	90-92	
B+	3.33	87-89	Superior
B	3.00	83-86	
B-	2.67	80-82	
C+	2.33	77-79	Average
C	2.00	73-76	
C-	1.67	70-72	
F	0	$< 70\%$	Failure

D grades are not used. Refer to the Graduate Catalog for description of NG (No Grade), W, Z, and other grades.

Assessments

Students enrolled in SWG 589 are assessed on individual assignments and contributions to the discussion boards. Discussion board contributions will be assessed on the number and quality of primary and secondary posts (e.g., critical thinking and analysis, comments relative to assignment objectives, tone and delivery, etc.). Grades will be posted to the D2L gradebook and accessible throughout the semester.

Additionally, there are two major assignments in this course.

Mid-Term Project
The goal of this assignment is to explore and critique materials focused on people with disabilities. Materials can include memoirs, blogs, social media posts, podcasts, TV series, movies, etc. They can be created by people with disabilities or people without disabilities, but please do your research to identify their disability status and experiences. Students will then write a reflection/critique paper assessing the media and relating learning to social work practice at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels. Full details and grading rubric are available in the D2L course.

Final Project

Students will develop a final project to complete for the course. Students are expected to propose and complete a project that in the spirit of DisCrit theory focusing on both critical thinking and action. The proposal and ultimately the project need to include: (1) specific actions that will be completed by you (2) how you will document your work and (3) a rationale for how this project will demonstrate your learning. The proposal will be submitted via D2L for approval first. Once it has been approved, the student can begin to complete their project and is expected to submit documentation of their work via D2L. Full details and grading rubric are available in the D2L course.

Extensions for coursework

Ideally, students submit all graded coursework by the stated deadlines. Please know, I block time in my schedule to grade assignments right away. This means you typically know your grade within 24-48 hours of a deadline. Research shows this is the most effective way to enhance student learning and the student experience. However, I try to have some flexibility with deadlines. We are a community, and we all need to work together.

If you need an extension on a due date, please email me to request an extension (you do not need to state the details for extension request, I trust your judgment) and suggest a reasonable alternative deadline. I do not typically grant requests to complete work beyond a week after the due date simply because students may fall too far behind in the course. However, there are always exceptions to exceptions, so please reach out if you are having an issue interfering with your successful completion of the coursework and let's see if we can make a realistic plan that works for everyone.

I am able to have this flexibility because students understand and respect that we all have different life circumstances. If you meet the course deadlines, feel good knowing you are helping to create the option for someone else who needs it.

Also, extensions are very rarely granted for the final assignment and if they are granted you may earn an "NG" initially due university deadlines for final grades. This may negatively impact your financial aid, and I cannot guarantee when I will be available to review an assignment past the semester and submit a grade change.

University Policies

Academic & Personal Integrity

It is the responsibility of each student to adhere to the university's standards for academic integrity. Violations of academic integrity include any act that violates the rights of another student in academic work, that involves misrepresentation of your own work, or that disrupts the instruction of the course. Other violations include (but are not limited to): cheating on assignments or examinations; plagiarizing, which means copying any part of another's work and/or using ideas of another and presenting them as one's own without giving proper credit to the source; selling, purchasing, or exchanging of term papers; falsifying of information; and using your own work from one class to fulfill the assignment for another class without significant modification. Proof of academic misconduct can result in the automatic failure and removal from this course.

For questions regarding Academic Dishonesty, the No-Grade Policy, Sexual Harassment, or the Student Code of Conduct, you are encouraged to refer to the department's handbook, the Undergraduate Course

Catalog, the Ram's Eye View, or the University Website. Please understand that improper conduct in any of these areas will not be tolerated and may result in immediate ejection from the class.

Inclusive Learning Environment and Anti-Racist Statement

Diversity, equity, and inclusion are central to West Chester University's mission as reflected in our Mission Statement, Values Statement, Vision Statement and Strategic Plan: Pathways to Student Success. We disavow racism and all actions that silence, threaten, or degrade historically marginalized groups in the U.S. We acknowledge that all members of this learning community may experience harm stemming from forms of oppression including but not limited to classism, ableism, heterosexism, sexism, Islamophobia, anti-Semitism, and xenophobia, and recognize that these forms of oppression are compounded by racism.

Our core commitment as an institution of higher education shapes our expectation for behavior within this learning community, which represents diverse individual beliefs, backgrounds, and experiences. Courteous and respectful behavior, interactions, and responses are expected from all members of the University. We must work together to make this a safe and productive learning environment for everyone. Part of this work is recognizing how race and other aspects of who we are shape our beliefs and our experiences as individuals. It is not enough to condemn acts of racism. For real, sustainable change, we must stand together as a diverse coalition against racism and oppression of any form, anywhere, at any time.

Resources for education and action are available through WCU's Office for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (ODEI), DEI committees within departments or colleges, the student ombudsperson, and centers on campus committed to doing this work (e.g., Dowdy Multicultural Center, Center for Women and Gender Equity, and the Center for Trans and Queer Advocacy).

Guidance on how to report incidents of discrimination and harassment is available at the University's Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion.

Students with Disabilities

If you have a disability that requires accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), please present your letter of accommodations and meet with me as soon as possible so that I can support your success in an informed manner. Accommodations cannot be granted retroactively. If you would like to know more about West Chester University's Services for Students with Disabilities (OSSD), please contact the OSSD which is located at 223 Lawrence Center. The OSSD hours of operation are Monday to Friday 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Their phone number is 610-436-2564, their fax number is 610-436-2600, their email address is ossd@wcupa.edu, and their website is at www.wcupa.edu/ussss/ossd.

If you encounter an area of this course that is not accessible to you, please contact me.

Excused Absences Policy

Students are advised to carefully read and comply with the excused absences policy, including absences for university-sanctioned events, contained in the WCU Undergraduate Catalog. In particular, please note that the "responsibility for meeting academic requirements rests with the student," that this policy does not excuse students from completing required academic work, and that professors can require a "fair alternative" to attendance on those days that students must be absent from class in order to participate in a University-Sanctioned Event.

Reporting Incidents of Sexual Violence

West Chester University and its faculty are committed to assuring a safe and productive educational environment for all students. In order to meet this commitment and to comply with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 and guidance from the Office for Civil Rights, the University requires faculty members to report incidents of sexual violence shared by students to the University's Title IX Coordinator, Ms. Lynn Klingensmith. The only exceptions to the faculty member's reporting obligation are when incidents of sexual violence are communicated by a student during a classroom discussion, in a writing assignment for a class, or as part of a University-approved research project. Faculty members are obligated to report sexual violence or any other abuse of a student who was, or is, a child (a person under 18 years of age) when the abuse allegedly occurred to the person designated in the University protection of minors policy. Information regarding the reporting of sexual violence and the resources that are available to victims of sexual violence is set forth at the underline webpage for the Office of Social Equity.

Emergency Preparedness

All students are encouraged to sign up for the University's free WCU ALERT service, which delivers official WCU emergency text messages directly to your cell phone. For more information, visit www.wcupa.edu/wcualert. To report an emergency, call the Department of Public Safety at 610-436-3311.

Electronic Mail Policy

It is expected that faculty, staff, and students activate and maintain regular access to University provided e-mail accounts. Official university communications, including those from your instructor, will be sent through your university e-mail account. You are responsible for accessing that mail to be sure to obtain official University communications. Failure to access will not exempt individuals from the responsibilities associated with this course.

Resources for Student Success

Expectations for Student Success in Distance Education

An online course uses technology to provide you, the student, with greater flexibility regarding when and where you learn. To be a successful online learner you must capitalize on this increased flexibility by doing the following:

Self-Motivation and Self-Discipline

Active participation in online activities is expected. This means that you login to the course frequently, engage with the provided materials, and read and respond to communications in a timely and thoughtful manner. Online courses require you to take *more* responsibility for your learning.

Planning and Organization

You will need disciplined work habits, effective time management skills, and the ability to work both alone and collaboratively if you wish to be successful in an online course. You should expect to devote 9 to 12 hours per week to this course. You may find that you need to work harder than you would in a traditional lecture class.

Communication Skills

In an online course communication takes place primarily through the written word. You need strong English reading and writing skills to express your thoughts. Online courses also expect you to proactively reach out to your instructor for assistance when you need it. Finally, pay attention to communication guidelines and be respectful of your fellow students when you communicate.

Students who need academic support are expected to take advantage of the University's Writing Center services, including on-line and in-person tutorials:

West Chester campus: http://www.wcupa.edu/_academics/writingcenter/.

Philadelphia campus: https://wcupa.mywconline.com/

Course instructors are also available during office hours for additional help with course assignments or content.

Minimum Student Technical Skills

You are expected to be competent in the use of computers, the World Wide Web, and commonly used software programs such as the Microsoft Office Suite of applications and Adobe PDF readers. In addition, you should be able to utilize a web-camera and microphone. You should have a basic understanding of how to use the common elements of the university learning management system.

Students without experience using the university's learning management system (Desire2Learn) can contact the Student Help Desk to arrange instruction, can contact Distance Education Support, or can complete the Orientation for Distance Education Students.

Hours for support services may vary. Check their websites for times of operation.

General Technical Support

Contact the WCU IT Helpdesk
call 610-436-3350
email helpdesk@wcupa.edu

Distance Education Support

Contact the Office of Distance Education
call 610-436-3373
email distanceed@wcupa.edu

Additional technical support information will be provided for tools as needed throughout the course.

Required hardware and software

Students are expected to have a computer system that meets the minimum expectations as outlined by West Chester University Information Services on the Recommend Computer Specs for Windows Computer webpage and the Distance Education Technical Requirements and Considerations webpage. Hardware requirements include a PC or Mac, and internal or external webcam, microphone and speakers. Software requirements include the most current version of Internet Explorer/Safari/Firefox/Chrome. It is expected that all students will be able to open MS Office 2010 documents. Students are encouraged to contact the Student Help Desk to ensure that their computer equipment is sufficient for the D2L operating system. Students must be able to readily access the Internet via cable or broadband. The use of external headsets with microphones and headphones are encouraged during individual progress meetings.

Library Resources for Distance Education Students

The West Chester University Library makes resources available to distance education students. Please review their Library Services for Distance Students website for specific information.

Simple Schedule

Week	Topics Covered	Assignment Due
1	Introduction to Course and Dis/ability Language/Etiquette Defining, Determining, & Conceptualizing Abilities	Discussion Board Initial post due 10am 1-30; Response post due 10am 2-1
2	Dis/ability Models & Theories Dis/ability Oppression, Resistance, Advocacy, & Justice	Final Project Proposal due 10am 2-8
3	Dis/ability Policy Environmental Justice, Sustainability & Dis/ability	Work on Final Project Discussion Board Initial post due 10am 2-13; Response 10am 2-15
4	Sensual-ability; Sexuality & Dis/ability Abuse & Dis/abilities	Work on Final Project Mid-Semester Project due 10am on 2-22
5	Neurodiversity Disenfranchised Grief, Ambiguous Loss, & Disabled Joy	Work on Final Project Discussion Board Initial 10am 2-27; Response 10am 3-1
6	Parenting while Disabled & the Criminalization of Variance Caregivers, Support Partners & Families	Complete Final Project
7	Dis/ability, Aging & Communities for All Integration of Concepts	Final Project Paper Due 10am 3-8

*A detailed schedule including unit readings and videos can be found within D2L

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