

**WURZWEILER SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK  
YESHIVA UNIVERSITY**

**People with Disabilities and their Families: A Guide**

**SWK 6221: TWO CREDIT COURSE  
SUMMER 2015**

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

The focus of this course is to provide students with a knowledge base for working effectively with individuals with disabilities and their families across the lifespan. The course will address a broad range of disabilities, including learning, developmental, neurological, and physical challenges, as well as practice concerns and issues of ethics. Students will explore the developmental trajectories, specifically noting the markers/milestones that may signal specific developmental delays and pervasive developmental disabilities, including those on the autism spectrum. Students will be informed of the challenges that exist, and the treatment for those who have a dual diagnosis - both a developmental disability and a mental illness. Diagnostic terminology associated with disabilities will be defined along with the broad spectrum of interventions, including early diagnosis and intervention, the use of CBT and other short-term treatment modalities, the usefulness and efficacy of medication, and new diagnostic tools. Issues that confront the disabled population, such as housing, entering the workforce and becoming productive members of society in combination with the accompanying moral and ethical considerations and controversies will be confronted through readings and class discussions.

The field of disabilities will be analyzed briefly from a historical perspective with a focus on a systems approach. Social policies, such as the Individuals with Disabilities Act of 1974 (IDEA), the 1994 Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and new FHAA practices, the continuing debate between inclusion vs. isolation, and benefits, such as Medicare and Medicaid, SSI, and SSD, will be addressed. Students will become familiar with macro issues, such as the continuing need for raising public awareness, providing additional forums for advocacy, improving individuals' self-advocacy skills, the need for social work to provide a voice for social consciousness, and the imperative to ensure funding for the programs that already exist.

**LEARNING OBJECTIVES**

The objective for students who complete this course will be:

- To become knowledgeable and aware of the broad range of disabilities and the implications for all practice modalities. (2.1.9).
- To develop an appreciation of the historical context of the field of disabilities and the impact of disability rights legislation in North America (2.1.3)
- To able to demonstrate familiarity with the wide array of diagnoses and interventions in the field of disabilities and the psychosocial implications for individuals and their families (2.1.3, 2.1.10 a,b,c).
- To gain an understanding of the potential value conflicts and ethical dilemmas confronting this population and treating professionals (2.1.2).
- To increase our ability as professionals to enter into meaningful dialogue about policy and advocacy initiatives (2.1.8).
- To become aware of the influence of culture and diversity when working with individuals and families with disabilities (2.14, 2.1.5).

**PLAGIARISM**

Students should remember that the School will not condone plagiarism in any form and will sanction acts of plagiarism. A student who presents someone else's work as his or her own work is stealing from the authors

or persons who did the original thinking and writing. Plagiarism occurs when a student directly copies another's work without citation; when a student paraphrases major aspects of another's work without citation; and when a student combines the work of different authors into a new statement without reference to those authors. It is also plagiarism to use the ideas and/or work of another student and present them as your own. It is not plagiarism to formulate your own presentation of an idea or concept as a reaction to someone else's work; however, the work to which you are reacting should be discussed and appropriately cited. Any student who can be shown to have plagiarized any part of any assignment in this course will automatically **FAIL** the course and will be referred to the Associate Dean for disciplinary action that may include expulsion.

### **HIPAA ALERT**

In line with the new HIPAA regulations concerning protected health information, it is important that you understand that any case information you present from your work, will need to be de-identified. What this means is that any information that would allow another to identify the person needs to be changed or eliminated. This includes obvious things like names and birth dates but may also contain other information that is so unique to the person that it will allow for identification, including diagnosis, race/ethnicity, or gender. If diagnosis, race/ethnicity, or gender is directly related to the case presentation it can be included if it will not allow for identification.

### **CONFIDENTIALITY**

Given the nature of classroom discussion and the presentation of case materials and at times personal revelation in class, students are reminded that the same commitment to confidentiality with clients extends to classmates. What is shared in class stays in class.

### **Students with Disabilities**

Students with disabilities who are enrolled in this course and who will be requesting documented disability-related accommodations are asked to make an appointment with the Office of Disability Services, Rochelle Kohn, Beren Campus, 917-326-4828, [rkohn1@yu.edu](mailto:rkohn1@yu.edu), Abby Kelsen, Wilf Campus, 646-685-0118, [akelsen@yu.edu](mailto:akelsen@yu.edu), during the first week of class. After approval for accommodations is granted, please submit your accommodations letter to Disability Services Office immediately.

### **E-RES (Electronic Reserve)**

Many of the articles mentioned in the curriculum are available on electronic reserve [E-RES]. You can access the full text articles from your home or from a university computer at no charge.

### **How do I Use E-RES?**

1. Go to the library's online resources page: [http://www.yu.edu/libraries/online\\_resources.asp](http://www.yu.edu/libraries/online_resources.asp)
2. Click on E-RES. If you are off-campus, at this point you will be prompted for your Off Campus Access Service login and password.
3. Click on "Search E-RES" or on "Course Index," and search by instructor's name, department, course name, course number, document title, or document author.
4. Click on the link to your course.
5. Enter the password given to you by your instructor.
6. Locate and click on the item you wish to view. Titles beginning with "A", "An", or "The" are alphabetized under "A" and "T" respectively.

7. When the article text or book record appears on the screen, you can print, email, or save it.

To view documents that are in pdf format, the computer you are using must have Adobe Acrobat Reader software. You can download it FREE at [www.adobe.com/products/acrobat/readstep2.html](http://www.adobe.com/products/acrobat/readstep2.html)

## **COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

There are 2 written assignments. See following page.

### **Required Texts (On Reserve in the Pollack Library)**

\*Berry, J. (2008). Lifespan perspectives on the family and disabilities (2<sup>nd</sup> edition). Austin, TX: Pro-Ed, 232pp. ISBN-10: 1416403795, ISBN-13: 978-1416403791, \$68.00

\*Drew, C.J. & Hardman, M.L.,(2007). Intellectual disabilities across the lifespan. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson, 412pp. ISBN: 0-13-170734-5 \$132.00

Excerpts from the following book will be available on E-Res:

Rothman, D.J. & Rothman, S.M., (2005). The Willowbrook Wars: Bringing the mentally disabled into the community. New Brunswick, NJ: Aldine Transaction, 417pp. ISBN: 0-202-30757-3 \$29.95

## **INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS**

Combination of lecture and discussion as well as small group activities to apply the material

### **Course Assignments**

There are 2 written assignments.

**First Assignment:** Due on the 7<sup>th</sup> Session.

This assignment is a book review.

1. Provide a 2-3 page synopsis of the book, including the author's point of view, whether fiction or non-fiction.
2. What was the nature of the disability of the individual/protagonist?
3. Did this individual overcome many of his/her disabilities? If so, how? What supports were available to the individual? What supports were lacking in the environment?
4. If the individual understood the nature of their disability, how did their awareness influence their sense of self?
5. How did the disability of this individual challenge the family system? What roles did the family play in supporting the individual?
6. What social policies were, or are, in place to provide support and continued development for this individual?
7. What is the role of social work in advancing awareness and environmental supports for individuals with similar disabilities
8. What did you learn as a result of reading this book? How does it influence your thinking about individuals and families with members who are disabled?

Non-fiction

Galli, R. (2000) Rescuing Jeffrey, Chapel Hill: Algonquin Books.

Greenfield, J. (1989) A child called Noah. New York: Pocket Books

Kupfer, F. (1998) Before and After Zachariah: A family story about a different kind of courage. Chicago: Academy Chicago.  
Kuusisto, S. (1998) Planet of the blind: A memoir. New York: Delta  
Mason, M (2000) Incurably human. London: Working Press.

## Fiction

Greenberg, J. (1984) In this sign. New York: Henry Holt  
Haddon, M. (2003). The curious incident of the dog in the nighttime. New York: Doubleday  
Picoult, J. (2004). My sister's keeper. New York: Atria Books.

## **Final Paper:** Due 13<sup>th</sup> Session

This paper will be 8-10 pages, with a minimum of 5 outside sources, and a bibliography APA style. Relevant newspaper or magazine articles on the topic will be accepted.

Each student will choose a controversial topic or issue that contains a moral or ethical component within the area of disabilities. A research of the literature on this topic/issue will be presented with information from both sides of the issue. Students may talk with or interview individuals who have personal or professional experience dealing with either side of the controversy to learn more about the issue. Policy and/or legal components to the issue should be included or new policies or laws that ensued as a result of this issue coming to the forefront. Students will write about their own views and perspectives on this topic based on the research that they've done.

## **EVALUATION CRITERIA**

Students are expected to participate in class discussions and use their field placement and other social work experiences when appropriate, to show evidence of reading the required materials, and to submit the written assignments on time as scheduled.

Grades for this course are based on the University grading system as described in the catalog. Students will be evaluated by:

Assignment 1: 30%.  
Assignment 2: 50%  
Class Participation and Attendance: 20%  
**Total: 100%**

## **SESSION OUTLINE**

Session I and II: Introduction and Historical Perspective

- Introduction and Relevance to Social Work practice
- A short history highlighting neglect, shame, stigma, and societal abuse
- Implications for Social Work Practice
- Ethical considerations
- Cultural Competence

Reading: Drew and Hardman (2007) Chapters 1 and 2

Sessions III & IV: Disabilities across the Lifespan

- Biological/Developmental Perspective (including Autism)
- Psychosocial Aspects across the Lifespan
- Impact on, and Implications for the Family: A systems approach
- Application of social work skills, interventions, and theories to working with families with disabilities
- Environmental influences
- Ethical Considerations

Reading:

Emerson, E., Robertson, J. & Wood, J. (2007). The association between area-level indicators of social deprivation and the emotional and behavioural needs of Black and south Asian children with intellectual disabilities in a deprived urban environment. *Journal of Applied Research in intellectual disabilities*. 20, 420-429.

Grant, G., Ramcharan, P., & Flynn, M. (2007). Resilience in Families with children and adult members with intellectual disabilities: Tracing elements of a psycho-social model. *Journal of Applied Research in Intellectual Disabilities*, 20, 563-575.

Marks, N. (1996). Caregiving across the lifespan: National prevalence and predictors, *Family relations*, 45 (1), 27-36.

Kemp, B. (1999) Aging with a disability: Medical, functional and psychological changes over the lifespan, *The gerontologist, supplemental Special Issue*, 39 (1), 289-290.

Drew and Hardman (2007) Chapters 5 through 11

Session V & VI: Understanding non- Developmental Disabilities

- Individuals with Physical disabilities: including, amputees, traumatic brain injury, returning war veterans
- Returning War Veterans with PTSD
- Individuals with Perceptual Disabilities: including, loss of sight, loss of hearing
- Individuals with Disabilities associated with aging
- Some practice considerations, including implications for family members
- Ethical considerations

Reading:

Beder (2009) Social work in the Department of Defense Hospital: Impact, role, and interventions. *Military Medicine*, 174(5), p. 486.

Fraim, M. Bishop, M. & Bethel, M. (2010). A roadmap for rehabilitation counseling to serve military veterans with disabilities. *Journal of rehabilitation*, 76(1), 13-21.

Levack, W., (2009). *Ethics in goal planning for rehabilitation: A utilitarian perspective*. *Clinical rehabilitation*, 23, 345-351.

Turkewitz, J. & Linderman, J. ( 2012). The disability trap, New York Times magazine.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2012/10/21/sunday-review/the-trap-of-supplemental-security-income.html>

## Session VII: Discovery and Diagnosis: Learning Disabilities, Developmental and PDD

- Early detection
- Genetic factors
- Multiple disabilities
- Diagnosis and stigma
- Importance of Medication and its Management
- Making the right referrals
- Ethical Considerations

### Reading:

Drew and Hardman (2007) Chapter 3

Peckham, N.G., Howlett, S., & Corbett, A. (2007). Evaluating a survivors group pilot for women with significant intellectual disabilities who have been sexually abused, *Journal of applied research in intellectual disabilities*, 20, 308-322.

Grant, G., Ramcharan, P., & Flynn, M. (2007). Resilience in Families with children and adult members with intellectual disabilities: Tracing elements of a psycho-social model. *Journal of applied research in intellectual disabilities*, 20, 563-575.

Diallo, A., Saladin, S., Grooms, D. Fischer, J., Hansmann, S. (2013) Conceptualizing the use of cognitive interventions among persons with intellectual disabilities who experience depression. *Journal of applied rehabilitation counseling*, 44 (4), 3-9.

Mishna, R., Muskat, B. (2004). "I'm not the only one!" Group therapy with older children and adolescents who have learning disabilities. *International journal of group psychotherapy*. 54(4). 455-76.

Wallis, C. (2009). A powerful identity, a vanishing diagnosis. The New York Times magazine.  
<http://www.nytimes.com/2009/11/03/health/03asperger.html>

Woon Chu Lim, Winston (2007). Use of psychoactive medications in Hong Kong institutions for adults with severe to profound learning disabilities: A retrospective study (1988-2003) and economic analysis. *Journal of applied research in intellectual disabilities*, 20, 529-538.

## Session VIII: Understanding the Autism Spectrum

- What is the Autism Spectrum?
- Understanding diagnosis of individuals on the spectrum: including Asperger's Syndrome, cognitive treatment interventions, benefits of educational inclusion, lifelong implications, myths vs. realities, opportunities
- Working with the whole family

### Reading:

Drew and Hardman (2007) Chapters 8 and 9

White, S., McMorris, C., Weiss, J., Lunskey, Y. (2012) The experience of crisis in families of individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder across the lifespan, *Journal of Child and Family Studies*, 21, 457-465.

Film:

Temple Grandin

## Sessions IX & X: Clinical Interventions with Individuals and Families

- Working with Individuals with Disabilities
  - Clinical Interventions: CBT, ABA, Group Work
  - Community Involvement
  - Caregiver Respite
  - Exploring sexual identity
- Working with Families
  - Parental Involvement
  - Sibling Issues
  - Education, Residential
  - Sexuality
- Diagnosis
  - Dual Diagnosis
  - Medication Management
  - Treatment Concerns
- Autonomy Versus Paternalism
  - Implications for Future (including sexuality, housing, informed consent)
  - Understanding value conflicts and ethical dilemmas for the social worker

Reading:

Attwood, T. (2004). Cognitive behavior therapy for children and adults with Asperger's Syndrome. *Behaviour change*. 21:3, 147-161.

Cooper, S. Smiley, E, Finlayson, J. Jackson, A., Allan, L., Williamson, A., Mantry, D., & Morrison, J. (2007). The prevalence, incidence, and factors predictive of mental ill-health in adults with profound intellectual disabilities. *Journal of applied research in intellectual disabilities*, 20, 493-501.

Hill-Weld, J. (2011). Psychotherapy with families impacted by intellectual disability, throughout the lifespan, *Advances in mental health and intellectual disabilities*, 5(5), 26-33

Dillenburger, K., McKerr, L. (2009). "40 years is an awful long time": Parents caring for adult sons and daughters with disabilities, *Behavior and social issues*. 18, 1-20.

Marshall, Z., Nixon, S., Nepveux, D., Vo, T., Wilson, C., Flicker, S., McClelland, A., Roudfoot, D., (2012). Navigating risks and professional roles: Research with lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, and queer young people with intellectual disabilities, *Journal of empirical research on human research ethics*. 7(4), 20-33.

## Session XI & XII: Policy Perspective

- Institutionalization vs. Deinstitutionalization
- ADA – who is served?
- Costs and Benefits of Policy
  - Medicaid, Medicare, ACA
  - Government Provisions: SSI/SSD, Section 8 Housing
  - VA
- Delivery of Service
  - Housing Options
  - Treatment Modalities
  - Work
  - Family Life

Readings:

Dawson, A., (2010) Some useful sources on harm, abuse agency and resilience across the lifespan. *Social policy and society*, 9 (2), 3005-309

Parmenter, T., (2014). Inclusion and quality of life: Are we there yet?. *International public health journal, supplemental special issue: quality of life in a social context*. 6 (4), 413-428.

Film:

Willowbrook: The Last Great Disgrace (1972)

Session XIII & XIV: Advocacy and Moving Forward

- Advocacy on local and national levels, including a brief look at ADA
- New Policy Initiatives: the role of social work
- Understanding benefits (including Medicaid, ACA, and Medicare) and choices
- Ethical considerations
- Research: What do we still need to know?
- The role of social workers as clinicians and gatekeepers

Reading:

Drew and Hardman (2007) Chapter 13

Rothman and Rothman (2005) Chapters 1 and 3 to be found on ERES