The purpose of this course is to examine the applicability of basic sociological concepts to the experience of disability; and to examine the experience of disability as a means to a better understanding of the nature of social life.

As we move toward broader definitions of community designed to encourage and celebrate the diversity of human experience, it is useful to employ the "sociological imagination" to peer behind the "official" conceptions of disability and examine the disability experience as another aspect of human diversity. The study of disability from a sociological standpoint heightens our understanding of the adaptability of human beings and the commonalities of social life that exist, and persist, despite the presence of biological differences. Such study also encourages critical evaluation of the impact of social systems, institutions, and professional understandings of disability, and our own assumptions about the disability experience, on the well being of people with biological differences and members of their families.

Course Objectives:
The objectives of the course are for students to develop the skills and experiences necessary to:
1. critically examine personal assumptions about the meaning and experience of disability

2. compare and contrast understandings of disability held by individuals with biological differences, family
members of such individuals, and others in the community

3. differentiate among three aspects of the disability experience: the existence of biological differences (impairments), the need for human and/or technical assistance with everyday activities (functional limitations) and the existence of structural, attitudinal and physical barriers to full participation in the life of one's community (handicap).

4. apply basic sociological theories and concepts to the experience of disability and to one's own life experiences

5. identify similarities and differences in one's own social experiences and those of individuals living with biological differences

6. critically evaluate the usefulness of sociological theories and concepts in understanding one's own experiences and those of individuals living with biological differences

7. think creatively about the ways in which understanding the disability experience sheds light on social structures and processes and can help to refine social-scientific theories and concepts 8. appreciate disability as an aspect of human diversity (such as gender, race, ethnicity, etc.) and to critically evaluate the impact of cultural values, norms and ways of knowing on the experience of disability

9. observe and critically evaluate interactions between individuals with and without visible biological differences in public places

10. critically evaluate depictions of the disability experience in the media and the arts

11. increase one's level of skill and comfort in social encounters involving individuals with and without biological differences

12. convey ideas about the social experience of disability in writing

13. convey ideas about the social experience of disability in oral form

14. work cooperatively and productively in a small group of peers

Student Learning Outcomes:

1. Students will demonstrate their ability to examine their own understandings of disability by taking part in an in-class survey, discussing the results of the survey in small groups, and keeping a log of their ideas, feelings, reflections and observations about the disability experience in an informal journal.

2. Students will discover the relationship between having a biological difference (or being a close family member of someone who has such a difference) on one's understandings of the disability experience by comparing the answers given on the in-class survey by students with and without personal or familial experience with disability. They will demonstrate their understanding of these differences in writing (on in-class exams, take-home written assignments and in a journal) and orally in small group discussions.

3. Students will demonstrate their understanding of the differences among impairments, functional limitations and handicaps by correctly defining these terms and applying them to the experiences depicted in personal narratives and films and to their own observations in public places. They will do so in writing (on in-class exams, take-home written assignments and in a journal) and orally in small group discussions.

4. Students will demonstrate their understanding of the sociological theories and concepts discussed in class by: 1. providing correct descriptions and definitions of these abstract theoretical ideas; 2. creatively applying them to the disability experiences depicted in personal narratives and films and to their own observations in public places; and 3. creatively applying them to their own life experiences. They will demonstrate their ability in this areas in writing (on in-class exams, take-home written assignments and in a journal) and orally in small group discussions.

5. Students will demonstrate their ability to identify similarities their own experiences and those of individuals with biological differences by comparing and contrasting their own experiences with those depicted in personal narratives and films. They will do so in writing (on in-class exams, take-home written assignments and in a journal) and orally in small group discussions.

6. Students will discuss the relevance of the abstract theoretical concepts discussed in class to their own experiences
and those depicted in narratives and films in small group discussions and will demonstrate an understanding of the usefulness (or lack thereof) of specific concepts in writing on exams and take-home assignments and orally in group discussions.

7. students will discuss (in small groups) the ways in which the study of disability and exposure to the experience of disability through personal narrative accounts has helped them to better understand the way the social world operates in their own lives. They will demonstrate an understanding of the usefulness of examining the disability experience to specific concepts (of their own choosing) in writing on exams and take-home assignments.

8. students will demonstrate an appreciation of disability as a form of human diversity by comparing and contrasting the disability experience to that of members of other sub-cultural groups. They will do so orally in small group discussions and in writing on exams and take-home assignments. Students will demonstrate a basic understanding of the values and norms of the dominant culture of the US, their agreement or disagreement with these values and norms and how their ability to conform to societal expectations might be affected by the acquisition of a disability. They will do so in writing on a take-home assignment and on in-class exams and orally in a small group discussion.

9. students will demonstrate their ability to observe and critically evaluate interactions between individuals with and without visible biological differences in public places by writing about these observations in a journal

10. students will demonstrate their ability critically evaluate depictions of the disability experience in the media and the arts by keeping a log of their observations such depictions in a journal

11. students will demonstrate their ability to interact appropriately and constructively with individuals with biological differences by asking questions during a class discussion with a panel of students with disability experience

12. students will demonstrate the ability to convey ideas about the social experience of disability in writing: on two in-class exams (which are 30% essay), five take-home assignments and in a journal of their observations, ideas, thoughts and feelings about the disability experience. In each of these written assignments, students will be evaluated on the following criteria: 1. content - has the student properly defined the terms used, given appropriate examples from the required source(s) and offered sufficiently detailed evidence from the source(s) to support his/her analysis?; 2. organization - has the student presented a smooth, logical argument in essay form that clearly supports the claims made in the analysis?; 3. creativity - has the student shown evidence of original thought in her/his selection of examples and in the application of concepts?

13. students will demonstrate the ability to convey ideas about the experience of disability in oral form in small group discussions and in a group oral presentation to the class. The group presentation will be evaluated on the same three criteria used for written work. The quality of the student's participation in the small group discussions will be evaluated in two ways: 1. showing evidence of being prepared to contribute to the discussion by having a written draft of the assignment prepared on the day of the discussion; 2. averaging the grades given to the student by group members for the quality of his/her contribution to the group discussions during the semester (peer grades).

14. students will demonstrate the ability to work productively in small groups in two ways: 1. by participating in discussions of written-assignments throughout the semester; and 2. by participating in a group oral presentation of the critical analysis of a reading to the class. Students will be evaluated on this participation by the means outlined in #13.

**Required Readings:**


*One of the following Supplementary Readings: Available through electronic reserve on Blackboard.*


Number 2B: Berger, Leigh. (Forthcoming) “Silent Movies: Scenes from a Life.” In Fact/Fiction. A. Banks and S. Banks (Eds.). Alta Mira Press.


**NOTE: THESE READINGS CAN ONLY BE ACCESSED BY FOLLOWING THESE INSTRUCTIONS:**

1. LOG ON TO BLACKBOARD
2. CLICK ON CONTENT COLLECTION (AT THE TOP OF YOUR SCREEN)
3. CLICK ON USF COLLECTION (AT THE LEFT OF YOUR SCREEN)
4. CLICK ON SY04430
5. CLICK ON LIBRARY
6. CLICK ON E RESERVES

CLICKING ON THE E RESERVE ICON THAT APPEARS IN THE CENTER OF YOUR SCREEN WILL NOT LEAD YOU TO THE READINGS....

**Exams:**
There will be two in class exams. Each of these exams will be composed of a mix of multiple choice and essay questions. Each exam will be worth thirty points toward the final course grade.
There is no final exam in this course. The final versions of your five take-home assignments (described below) serve as the final exam.

**Journal:**
Each student will be required to keep a journal (worth ten points (ten percent) of the final grade). In this journal you will make entries at least twice each week (a minimum of 30 entries). These entries should include the following types of information:

1. Descriptions of and reactions to personal encounters with individuals with disabilities/impairments/biological differences that occur during the semester or have occurred in the past.
2. Observations of and reactions to interactions between individuals with and without disabilities/impairments/biological differences.
3. Descriptions of and your reactions to information about and/or images of individuals with disabilities/impairments/biological differences that you find in the public media (newspapers, magazines, catalogues, movies, books, art, television, etc.).
4. Descriptions of and your reactions to any other observations relevant to the experience of disability that you make during the semester.
5. Your reactions to your own current or past experiences with disability.
Note: Journal Entries should NOT address the books and films assigned for this course. These will be discussed in the Written Take-home Assignments described below.

Written Take-home Assignments:

During the semester, you will be given five take-home writing assignments on which you will be asked to answer a series of questions. These questions will involve the application of the theories and theoretical concepts we have discussed in class to the experience of disability as depicted in readings, films and other sources. You will also be asked to apply the concepts and theories to your own experiences and to the observations on which you have reported in your journals.

Each Take-home Assignment will be worth a total of 3 points toward your final grade (1 point for a draft and 2 points for the final version). As a whole, your grades on these assignments will, therefore, be worth 15 points or 15 percent of your final grade for the semester. They are also designed to prepare you for the exams.

You will be required to bring a written draft of each assignment to class on the day of its Group Discussion (see dates noted in the schedule below). Up to one point toward your final course grade will be based on the written draft of each assignment. These points will be awarded in class on the day of the Class Discussion. The purpose of awarding points for having a draft available on the day of the discussion is to reward you for being prepared to contribute to the discussion. You, therefore, can not receive credit for handing a draft in at any other time.

The final versions of the five Take-home Assignments will be graded when they are turned in on the date noted in the schedule below. Each final version is worth a maximum of 2 points toward your final grade for the semester.

Group Oral Presentation of Supplementary Reading:
Ten points of your final grade will be based on a group presentation of one of the supplementary readings. Your Oral Presentation will be worth 10 points toward your final grade.

Peer Evaluations:
The remaining five percent (5 pts) of your final grade will be based on peer evaluations of your contribution and cooperation to your group’s efforts during the semester (including all group discussions as well as the oral presentation of a supplementary reading). The ratings given to you by members of your group will be averaged to form your individual peer grade.

Lectures:
Lectures are supplemental to, not a repetition of, the materials in the assigned readings. Lecture materials will be covered on the exams and Take-home Assignments. If you must miss class, you will need to make arrangements with a class mate to obtain copies of notes. Since much of what happens in the class is the result of small group and class discussion (which most students do not record in the form of formal notes), missing class will definitely be detrimental to your performance on exams and the take home assignments.

Evaluation Criteria for Written and Oral Tasks:
The essay portion of each Exam, the final versions of your five Take-home Assignments and your Group Oral Presentation will all be graded according to the following criteria:

Content:
1. Appropriate defines sociological concepts used in analysis
2. Selects examples that are pertinent/relevant to the argument made and come from appropriate sources
3. Appropriately applies sociological concepts to illuminate and analyze the issues/examples explored
4. Analysis avoids bias (argument does not appeal to prejudice, prevailing opinions, personal feelings, etc.)

Creativity:
1. Demonstrates sociological imagination by looking beyond "official" or "common sense" explanations
2. Indicates awareness of the social-structural (class, gender, age, race, religion, sexual orientation, etc.), historical and/or cross-cultural contexts of the examples utilized
3. Mentions two sides of an issue or argument
4. Demonstrates critical thinking (shows evidence of original thought in applying sociological concepts to examples and evaluating the usefulness of these concepts to our understanding of social situations)

Organization:
1. Essay (or oral presentation) is smoothly organized and well constructed
2. Reasoning is clear

NOTE: Your Journal (described above) is designed to give you a "safe space" in which to explore your own ideas about the disability experience. I am the only one who will read it. You are encouraged to express your candid opinions here. As a much more subjective task than the exams and assignments, the journal will be graded based on the degree to which you have given serious thought and consideration to your observations and have reflected on the meaning of your own ideas and opinions.

Grading Scale: The points earned on Exam #1 (max = 30), Exam #2 (max = 30), your Journal (max = 10), your group’s presentation (max = 10), drafts of your five Take-home Assignments (max = 5), final version of your five Take-home Assignments (max = 10) and your peer grade (max = 5) will be added together and evaluated as follows:

90 through 100 points = A       60 through 69.9 points = D
80 through 89.9 points = B     below 60 points = F
70 through 79.9 points = C

PLEASE NOTE: FINAL GRADES THAT ARE LESS THAN OR EQUAL TO ½ A POINT (.5) AWAY FROM THE NEXT HIGHEST LETTER GRADE MAY, UNDER SOME CIRCUMSTANCES, BE ROUNDED UP. GRADES THAT ARE MORE THAN ½ A POINT AWAY FROM THE NEXT HIGHEST GRADE WILL NOT BE ROUNDED UP.

NOTICE OF ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES:

Any student with a disability is encouraged to meet with me privately during the first two weeks of class to discuss accommodations. Each student must bring to this meeting, a current Memorandum of Accommodations from the Office of Academic Support and Accommodations for Students with Disabilities (ASASD). This letter is prerequisite for receiving accommodations. Accommodated exams through ASASD require two weeks notice. Please give me a reminder notice two weeks before each exam so that arrangements can be made for an accommodated exam. All course documents can be made available through the Office of Student Disability Services in alternate format if requested in the student’s Memorandum of Accommodations.
TENTATIVE SCHEDULE OF TOPICS

Week #1: (1/10)
Introduction to the Course and Completion of the Disability Survey.
Selection of Groups and Supplementary Readings.

Week #2: (1/17) NO CLASS Martin Luther King Holiday

Week #3 (1/24)
Using the "sociological imagination" to examine popular, professional and academic understandings of the disability experience. Current international controversies over the definitions of the terms: impairment, disability and handicap. Perceptions of disability and stigma among individuals with and those without biological differences (analyzing the results of the survey). **Group Discussion of Assignment #1 - Bring Drafts to Class (1 pt)**

Week #4: (1/31)

Week #5: (2/7)
Socialization and the importance of social interaction in the lives of children with disabilities.
Roles and statuses and the use of impression management, covering and passing

Week #6: (2/14)
Film – *Temple Grandin*

Week #7: (2/21)
*Group Oral Presentations: Supplementary Readings #1A, 1B, 2A and 2B*
*Riding the Bus with My Sister (Simon) must be read by this date*

Week #8: (2/28)
*Group and Class Discussion of Take-home Assignment #2 (Bring Drafts to Class)*
EXAM #1

Week #9: (3/7)
The impact of cultural "ways of knowing" and values and norms on the experience of disability. Merton’s Typology and the Acquisition of a Disability
*Group and Class Discussion of Take-home Assignment #3- Part A (Bring Drafts to Class) Part B will be completed in class*

Week #10: (3/14) NO CLASS Spring Break

Week #11: (3/21)
Power differential and the disability experience. Common reactions of adults who suddenly acquire impairments and common reactions of others to adults with disabilities

Week #12: (3/28)
*Group Oral Presentations: Supplementary Readings #3, 4A, 4B and 4C*
*Best Seat in the House (Rucker) must be read by this date*

Week #13: (4/4)
Prejudice, bigotry, social inequality, discrimination and exploitation in the context of disability. Social movements and social change in the US and UK: From the Medical and Charity Models of Disability to The Disabled People's Movement (UK), The Independent Living Model of Disability (US) and the American's with Disabilities Act.
Peer Evaluations, Course Evaluations, All Journals Due
*Unquiet Minds (Jamison) must be read by this week*
Week #14 (4/11)
Film: Passion Fish

Week #15: (4/18)
Group and Class Discussion of Take-home Assignment #4 and 5 (Bring drafts to class)
EXAM #2

Week #16: (4/25)
Exam #2 and Journals will be returned

Week #17: (5/2) Finals Week
Take Home Final is due in my office (CPR 224) on or before 5:00.
Outline of Concepts to be Covered on Exam #1:

Disability
  Impairment
  Assistance Needs
    ADLs
    IADLs
  Handicap
Stigma
  Courtesy Stigma
  Own, Wise, Others

Social Action Theory
  Social Action, Interaction and Communication
    Instrumental Rational
    Value-oriented Rational
    Traditional Non Rational
    Affective Non Rational
  Form vs. Content of Social Interactions

Socialization
  Bonding
  Importance of Play and Peer Interactions
  Learning about Statuses and Roles
    Status
      Achieved
      Ascribed
      Master Status
    Roles
      Role Conflict
      Role Strain
  Sick Role
  Impression Management, Covering nd Passing

Data Sources to Which these Concepts Should be Applied:

Book: Simon
Film: Temple Grandin
Supplementary Readings: #1A, 1B, 2A and 2B
Personal Observations (those reported in your journal thus far)
Outline of Concepts to be Covered on Exam #2.

Culture: Material Culture and Non-material Culture
- Postulates
  - Ends
  - Means
    - Values
    - Interests
    - Goals
    - Norms
    - Rules
    - Technologies

Merton’s Typology of Deviant Behavior
- Conformity
- Innovation
- Ritualism
- Retreatism
- Rebellion

Weber’s Typology of Social Resources
- Privilege
- Prestige
  - Force
  - Dominance
  - Authority
  - Attraction

Exchange Theory
- Rebalancing Strategies
  - Motivational Withdrawal
  - Cultivating Alternative Resources
  - Developing Internal Resources
  - Coalition Formation

Resocialization to the Master Status of “Disability”
- Common Reactions of the Newly Disabled Individual
  - Self Imposed Moratorium on Social Interaction
  - Sequential Selection of Social Settings
  - Sequential Selection of Associates
    - Individuals with Newly Acquired Disabilities are Unprepared for their Role as “Alchemists” who Often Inspire Self-evaluation in “Others.”
- Common Reactions of “Others” to Individual with Disabilities
  - Nurturing/Mothering
  - Loving Rejection/Charity
  - Withdrawal/Aversion (Sadness, Fear/Anxiety)
  - Spiritual Connectedness/Personal Growth

Social Inequality; Stratification; Discrimination; Prejudice; Bigotry
Social Movements as Reactions to Discrimination, Prejudice and Bigotry
- Conversion of a Category of Individuals from a “Class in Itself” to a “Class for Itself”
  - Medical Model
  - Charity Model
  - Independent Living Model of Disability
  - Americans with Disabilities Act

You will need to be able to apply these concepts to the situations described in the following sources: Jamison’s book “Unquiet Minds;” Rucker’s book “The Best Seat in the House;” the film “Passion Fish;” Supplementary Readings Number 3, 4A, 4B and 4C and your own experiences
**Perceived Stigma Scale**


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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Moderately Agree</th>
<th>Slightly Agree</th>
<th>Moderately Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Most young men and women would be reluctant to date a person with a disability</td>
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<td>2. Most people in my community feel nervous and/or awkward when they meet someone with a disability</td>
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<td>3. Most people in my community feel sad when they meet someone with a disability</td>
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<td>4. Most people in my community would treat a person with a disability just as they would anyone else</td>
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<td>5. Most people think less of a person who has a disability than they do of other people</td>
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<td>6. Most people would willingly accept a person with a disability as a close friend</td>
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<td>7. Most employers will hire a person with a disability if he or she is qualified for the job</td>
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<td>8. Most people feel that having a disability is a sign of personal failure</td>
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Note: For items 1, 2, 3, 5 and 8, “Strongly Agree” is coded 5 and “Strongly Disagree” is coded 1. Items 4, 6 and 7 are reverse coded so that “Strongly Agree” is coded 1 and “Strongly Disagree” is coded 5.

**NOTE:** Please answer the questions on the other side of this page as well.
1. Do you yourself have (or have you ever had) a disability or impairment (or a difference that other people consider to be a disability or impairment)?

(  ) No
(  ) Yes (if yes, please indicate the nature of the disability or impairment below)

__________________________________________________________________

2. Does someone in your immediate family (your parent, sibling, child, spouse or life partner) have (or have they ever had) a disability or impairment?

(  ) No
(  ) Yes (if yes, please indicate the nature of the disability or impairment below)

__________________________________________________________________

3. Does a more distant family member (grandparent, cousin, aunt, uncle, etc., or a friend) have (or have they ever had) a disability or impairment?

(  ) No
(  ) Yes (if yes, please indicate the nature of the disability or impairment below)

__________________________________________________________________

4. Does your current job (or your future career plan) include working with people with disabilities or impairments?

(  ) No
(  ) Yes (if yes, please describe your job or career plans below)

__________________________________________________________________