

PHIL 2124W: Philosophies of Disability

Fall 2012

Prof. Megan Davis

Tuesday & Thursday, 9:35-10:50 am

2020K #23

Instructor Contact Information

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office hours: by appointment

Phillips 525A

Course Description

Disability presents an intense and interesting challenge to traditional philosophical presuppositions and principles. This course will examine various philosophical approaches to disability—both historical individual or medical paradigms as well as those that rely on frameworks of social or human rights. While disability studies has become more prominent in the fields of historical and literary studies, philosophical approaches have been more recent. Work in feminist philosophy, critical race theory and queer theory has challenged such presuppositions and, therefore, provides a the foundation on which we can consider the disabled body itself along with larger social and political considerations related to cultural treatment and understanding of disability.

Learning Outcomes

- Students will analyze theoretical, social, and political contexts surrounding historical and contemporary ideologies and theories of disability.
- Students will appraise the validity and soundness of arguments in theoretical works.
- Students will assess the conditions under which ideas of disability change.
- Students will construct evidence-based written arguments in which they apply critical methodologies in a final research project.

Prerequisites

There are no prerequisites for this course. In order to receive WID credit, however, you must have already completed UW20 (you cannot be registered for it concurrently with this class).

In order to access materials for this course and to complete the assignments you will need to:

- upload and download files from Blackboard
- submit assignments and exams through Blackboard (including attaching files)
- create a narrated multimedia presentation

Required Texts

Foucault, Michel. *Abnormal: Lectures at the College de France, 1974-1975*. Trans. Graham Burchell. New York: Picador, 2003.

Foucault, Michel. *Madness and Civilization: A History of Insanity in the Age of Reason*. New York: Vintage, 1988.
Stiker, Henri-Jacques. *A History of Disability*. Trans. William Sayers. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2000.

The three textbooks are available at the GW bookstore.
Additional readings will be available in PDF format on Blackboard.

Course Requirements

Attendance and Participation

You are expected to attend class and actively participate in discussions. You are responsible for keeping up with the reading and assignment schedule and come to class prepared to discuss the readings/films.

Surveys

You will be asked to complete a survey at the beginning of the course and additional surveys during the course designed to provide feedback about various assignments. There are no right or wrong answers to these surveys. They are intended to assist the instructor in evaluating the effectiveness of particular assignments and to ensure that course objectives are being met throughout the term. You will receive points for completing the surveys that will go towards your participation grade.

Book Review (Group Paper and Group Multimedia Project)

Each group will select an autobiography and create both a *multimedia presentation* (to be posted on a Blackboard discussion board) on the book and a short *book review* (to be submitted via an assignment link on Blackboard). The paper should be 3-5 pages, double spaced, and follow the standard academic book review format. A list of approved autobiographies will be provided but students are also welcome to request approval to write on another book. Requests should be submitted via email at least two weeks before the assignment is due.

Once the projects are posted on the discussion board, each student will submit *feedback* (via an assignment link) on two groups' projects (other than their own) using a form.

Paper on representations of disability in film/literature (Individual Paper and Individual Multimedia Project)

Each individual student will write a paper on representations of disability in a film/book of their choice (topic must be approved via email at least two weeks before the due date). The paper should be 3-5 pages, double spaced, and comply with MLA guidelines. In addition, each individual student will create a 5-7 minute multimedia presentation on their topic to be posted on a discussion board. Once the projects are posted on the discussion board, each student will submit *feedback* (via an assignment link) on three projects (other than their own) using a form.

Exams

- Exam 1 - This exam will cover material from the first third of the term and will consist of short answer and essay questions. This exam will be completed on Blackboard.
- Exam 2- This take home exam will cover material from second third of the term and will consist of short answer and essay questions. This exam will be completed on Blackboard.

- Final Exam- This take home exam will primarily cover material from the final third of the term but will be cumulative. This exam will consist of essay questions and will be completed on Blackboard.

Research Project

In this paper you will apply the critical methodologies from the course to a cultural, political or social object that we have not covered in class directly. The short paper will be due via the link on Blackboard as a .doc or .rtf document. I expect your essays to be polished and be free of all grammar and spelling errors. I also expect your essays to have proper citations and follow MLA style guidelines. The paper should be 6-8 pages, double spaced. Your papers should have a strong and clear introduction, be well organized, and have a strong conclusion. The components of the final project are as follows:

- **Proposal with Annotated Bibliography:** In advance of your research paper and presentation, you will be required to submit a research paper proposal (1-2 pages, double spaced) plus an annotated bibliography. These will be submitted via the assignment link on Blackboard AND posted to your learning team blogs. The proposal and annotated bibliography is due by 12:00 pm EDT on June 17, 2012.
- **Presentations:** Each student will create a 5-8 minute presentation on their research paper topic that applies at least two methodologies from the course. Your presentations can be created using PowerPoint, Voice Thread or video. Presentations will be posted to the presentation discussion board.
- **Peer Feedback on Presentations:** You will be required to provide feedback on three presentations using a form. Feedback will be submitted via the assignment link.

Assignment	Points
Attendance & Participation	70
Surveys (30 points)	
Entry Survey	10
Midterm Survey	10
Exit Survey	10
Exams (300 points)	
Exam 1	50
Exam 2	100
Final Exam	150
Book Review Group Project (120 points)	
Group Paper	50
Group Presentation	50
Peer feedback on 2 presentations	20
Representation of Disability Paper (180 points)	
Paper	100
Presentation	50
Peer Feedback	30
Research Paper (300 points)	

Proposal and Annotated Bibliography	30
Draft of Final Paper	40
Final Paper	100
Presentation	100
Peer Feedback on Presentation	30
TOTAL POINTS	1000

Course Policies

Style

All written assignments for this course should comply with MLA or style guidelines. Please use the style with which you are more familiar. Please consult with a current style guide or the Purdue OWL site for guidelines on [MLA](#) style.

Grading Scheme

930-1000	A
900-929	A-
870-899	B+
830-869	B
800-829	B-
770-799	C+
730-769	C
700-729	C-
670-699	D+
630-669	D
600-629	D-
below 600	F

Late Assignments

Late work is only accepted in the case of extenuating circumstances. Any and all requests for extensions must be made via email. The terms and conditions of any extension will be communicated to you via email so that we both have a written record.

Academic Integrity

Students should familiarize themselves with the George Washington University Code of Academic Integrity, if not already familiar with it. The full code can be found at

<http://www.gwu.edu/~ntegrity/code.html>. When preparing written assignments for this course, please give particular attention to the following section:

“Section 1: Definition of Academic Dishonesty

Academic dishonesty is defined as cheating of any kind, including misrepresenting one's own work, taking credit for the work of others without crediting them and without appropriate authorization, and the fabrication of information.

Common examples of academically dishonest behavior include, but are not limited to, the following:

Cheating...

Fabrication - intentional and unauthorized falsification or invention of any data, information, or citation in an academic exercise.

Plagiarism - intentionally representing the words, ideas, or sequence of ideas of another as one's own in any academic exercise; failure to attribute any of the following: quotations, paraphrases, or borrowed information.”

Often, plagiarism results from not being careful while writing or doing research or from being uncertain of citation styles, rather than from intentional use of someone else's words as your own. Please make sure any and all quotations, paraphrases or ideas that you draw from someone else are cited properly in assignments you turn in for this course. If you are unsure about how or whether to cite something, ask before you turn in the assignment. Plagiarism will not be tolerated in this course. If you are caught plagiarizing I will apply the maximum sanctions allowed.

University Policy on Religious Holidays

1. Students should notify faculty during the first week of the semester of their intention to be absent from class on their day(s) of religious observance;
2. Faculty should extend to these students the courtesy of absence without penalty on such occasions, including permission to make up examinations;
3. Faculty who intend to observe a religious holiday should arrange at the beginning of the semester to reschedule missed classes or to make other provisions for their course-related activities.

University Writing Center

The Writing Center is a wonderful resource provided to the university community. Staff at the writing center can help all writers with projects at various stages of the writing process including generating ideas, finding supporting materials, and developing arguments.

Appointments are required and sessions generally last from 30-50 minutes. The Writing Center is a free service for students who seek help with their writing. Please see the Writing Center website for more information <http://www.gwu.edu/~gwriter/>.

DSS Statement

Any student who feels s/he may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact the Disability Support Services office at 202-994-8250 in the Marvin Center, Suite 242, to establish eligibility and to coordinate reasonable accommodations. At a student's request, DSS prepares an individualized letter to professors which verifies the nature of the student's disability and documents the need for auxiliary aids and services and/or academic adjustments. Students are encouraged to meet with each professor early in the semester to discuss the academic implications of the disability as they relate to the specific course and to request accommodation. For additional information please refer to: <http://gwired.gwu.edu/dss/>.

UCC Statement

The University Counseling Center (UCC) assists students in addressing personal, social, career, and study problems that can interfere with their academic progress and success.

Services for students include:

- academic support and Peer Tutoring Services:
 - <http://gwired.gwu.edu/counsel/AcademicSupport/>, <http://gwired.gwu.edu/counsel/AcademicSupport/PeerTutoringService/>
- crisis consultations at 202-994-5300 (24/7)
- confidential counseling services (individual and small group)
- podcasts and self-help materials on website:
 - <http://gwired.gwu.edu/counsel/PodCast/>, <http://gwired.gwu.edu/counsel/OutreachSelfHelp/>