Social Work 466:
Disability: Social and Health Issues

Social Work and the Relation to this Class

For some of you taking this course, your main emphasis may be that you need a capstone and diversity course. This section will help to give you some background on the field of social work since this class falls under the heading of the School of Social Work. You may be unfamiliar with what a social worker does for a living and, in particular, what they do with people who are disabled. The following will provide you with some information so that you can be knowledgeable about the major identified criteria of the job of a “typical” social worker.

Many social workers are generalists with a wide variety of assessment tools, intervention experience, problem-solving skills, and other abilities to help both individuals and families in crisis situations or, at least, situations where their knowledge is limited and help from skilled personnel is needed. There are social workers at both an undergraduate and a graduate level. Most social workers are able to plan a comprehensive assessment of a problem situation in a client’s life as well as plan and intervene with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.

Social workers deal with the whole person. People are never considered in isolation of their environment or surroundings. When a social worker assesses another individual or family, they include the “bio/psycho/social/spiritual” perspective of each person involved. Let’s look at these so that you have a better understanding of each.

The “bio” or biological perspectives respect the fact that heredity, physiology, physical capacity, and all material body processes create and influence emotions, thoughts, and behavior in all people (Gizsberg, Nackerud, and Larrison, 2004). The focus of the biological perspective in social work includes:

- Health and wellness
- Body image and awareness
- Proper “use” of the body
- Care of the body
- The meaning and consequences of vulnerability, including death and dying
The “psycho” or psychological perspectives highlight the role of one’s cognitive and emotional status in adaptive social functioning. Many social workers are well versed in developmental theories that assume that all people pass through sequential states of emotional, cognitive, and moral development, along with their physical development.

The “social” perspective includes all aspects of the world outside one’s family—the neighborhood, school, and the larger community, including the workplace and the other organizations in which the person is connected. It is important for social workers to help individuals and families regain ties with the larger community’s social support systems. Finally, there is the spiritual component, which represents a fairly new focus of attention in social work.

Dennis Saleebey (2002), a famous writer on social work issues, wrote that the major principles of social work practice include the following:

- All people have strengths.
- Problems can be a source of challenge and opportunity.
- Practitioners can never know the “upper levels” of a client’s growth potential.
- There should be greater collaboration between practitioners and clients, to replace the traditional worker-client hierarchy.
- Every environment includes many resources (many of them informal) that can be mobilized to help clients change.

When asked to analyze a case study or a problem case in this class, one should refer back to these principals for guidance.

Why is a class on disability considered a class in social work? Most social workers spend a majority of their time working with individuals who have a disability of some kind or another. It might be a physical disability or it might be an invisible disability, such as working with a child who is dyslexic. Most clients, under stress, may be depressed or angry depending upon the situation. Also, many individuals and families do not have the medical care to handle medical situations as they arise because of their lack of funds. Besides these issues, you now have millions of soldiers with physical and mental disabilities coming back from the war. Baby boomers are aging and will be in need of more medical care. All of this leads to the need for someone to professionally guide and assess these individuals as they are provided with services.

In the book *Disability: A Diversity Model Approach in Human Service Practice*, Romel Mackelprang and Richard Salsgiver give six principles to guide you when working with people with disabilities.
The first one is that social workers should assume that people are capable or potentially capable. When a social worker first starts working with an individual, he or she may not have the capability, knowledge, or skill to solve a problem. However, as a social worker, it is your job to help that person attain those skills if at all possible. For example, if someone has a low IQ, he or she may not be able to handle money or be independent in his or her own home. Social workers can help to teach that person the skills necessary to keep a bank account or to learn to cook simple meals. Or, it may be your job to find a resource for that person who can teach these skills.

Second, social workers reject traditional methods of practice that assume that the problem with disability lies with the person and that individuals with disabilities must change or “be fixed” before they can function adequately in society (DeJong, 1979; Zola, 1983; Emener, 1991; Hahn, 1991; Blotzer and Ruth, 1995). You will learn in our course that the medical model has been prevalent for many years. This is where it is believed that a person is “sick” and can be “fixed.” However, the environment plays a role. Think of this situation: There is a person in a wheelchair wanting to cross the street; however, there are no curb cuts so the person cannot get across the street. Does the person have the disability or is it the environment that impairs him or her?

Third, social workers believe that people with disabilities suffer oppression, like other minorities. The solutions to problems faced by persons with disabilities rest primarily on access to society, as others have. Environmental, attitudinal, and policy barriers to participation in our society need to be eliminated.

Fourth, as you will find out in week 2 of our course, social workers believe there is a disability history and culture.

Fifth, although persons with disabilities have experienced oppression, they strongly believe that there is joy to be found in disabilities. Having a disability is only a part of an individual. It is not the end of the world and most people with disabilities are not profoundly depressed or miserable.

And, finally, sixth is that social workers believe that people with disabilities have the right to control their lives. This means that the consumer (individual with a disability) has the right to control how much a social worker or any other professional comes into his or her life. Social workers can bring their skills, expertise, and resources to the consumer, but it is the consumers who decide how much or how little they want to use.

I hope this gives you a better picture of what a social worker does and their beliefs about our topic, people with disabilities. To end, let me quote Judy Heumann, who at one point was assistant secretary for the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitation Services, in Washington, D.C.:
If you [professionals] don’t believe that disabled people can achieve, get out of the way. They [the professionals] need to learn as much as they can to help assure that disabled people are given the tools we need in order to move ahead in our lives. Professionals who work with kids need to give their parents positive images of their children’s abilities and possibilities. They should not limit people’s thinking; they should help expand people’s horizons. They need to understand the implications of discrimination and bias in order to allow people to remedy those problems. They need to be part of the solution, not part of the problem.
Instructor Responsibilities

As an instructor for this course, my most important responsibility to you is to be responsive to your needs. I will treat each student fairly and with respect.

It is also my responsibility to provide you with the latest disability information that I can find so you receive the most current knowledge available.

I will respond to you in a timely manner:

- I will respond to mail messages and telephone calls within 24 hours, Monday through Friday.
- I will provide feedback to you on all major assignments within one week of the due date.
- I will provide feedback on minor assignments within three days of the due date.

I want you to feel that you can ask me any course related question and receive a timely answer. If you need help you can contact me through the WebCampus messages.

Student Responsibilities

As a student of this course, you have certain responsibilities:

- First, you have a primary responsibility to yourself to do the best that you can in this course.
- You also have a responsibility to me, as your instructor, to let me know if you are having problems which are interfering with the progress in this course.
- You have a responsibility to turn in your assignments on the due dates and if you are going to be late to let me know.
- If you look in the syllabus you will find information about honesty, etiquette, and civility. You are expected to have these personal characteristics while in this course setting to your fellow students, the guest speakers, and to myself.
- You should observe a sense of confidentiality in this online classroom. Things that are said by other students are to be taken with respect and in confidence.
- And, finally, I hope that you enjoy the journey.
About Kris Tower

Dr. Kristine Tower originally developed this online course, and as the original author, her voice appears throughout the course. Dr. Tower passed away on October 19, 2005.

Dr. Tower spent her direct practice years in a variety of settings (she referred to herself as a “serial social worker”), including child welfare, mental health, hospital and home health social work, senior citizens, and a brief stint working with homeless families. Her favorite field of practice was medical social work. She used to work at the Washoe Medical Center on the Rehabilitation Unit and in the emergency room. A lot of her training and experience was with clients who had disabilities (traumatic, acquired, and congenital). She also did some private practice work with people who were newly-injured or recently diagnosed with serious medical problems. On occasion, she did expert witness testimony in legal cases involving medical issues. She also served on state and local boards and took an active role in the legislature on social work-related policies.

She was a licensed clinical social worker (LCSW) and earned her bachelor’s degree in social work at UNR. She received her MSW in New Mexico (1986) and finished her doctoral degree in education at UNR in 1996. She was named “Social Worker of the Year” in 1994, by the Nevada Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers. She was “Disabled Employee of the Year” in 1990 for the State of Nevada for her work at Washoe Medical Center. She also received the “Mentor of the Year” for the College of Human and Community Sciences and was appointed by the governor to the State of Nevada, Independent Living Council where she was elected to serve as chairperson.

Dr. Tower’s work appeared in publications such as Social Work, Journal of Social Work Education, and the Journal of Social Work in Education. She produced six social work documentaries, five of which have been broadcast on commercial and public television. She wrote and received over $500,000 in grants to fund social welfare projects.

She met her husband of many years after they both became disabled. Information about Randy Tower is shared throughout the course. Dr. Tower’s disabilities were not as “visible” as her husband’s. Dr. Tower was diagnosed with terminal cervical cancer at age 25 and lived for many years with “hidden disabilities.”

Dr. Tower considered her husband to be the true expert on disability. Over half of his life has been spent living with spinal cord injury. He was injured in 1971 during a time when little was known about avoiding complications, so he eventually lost his both of his legs. His life changed significantly in the early 1980s when he became involved in the disability community in Reno. He met people who had even more severe problems and he saw the fullness of their lives. They were going to college, starting new careers, finding lovers and spouses. More important, they shared an attitude that was liberating. They didn’t apologize for their differences. They didn’t feel self-pity or have low-esteeom. Disability could be cool. Soon he became an activist in the disability rights movement (which is how they met). He developed his skills in computer technology and became an assistive technology specialist for people with disabilities.
Course Description

Understanding disability requires a willingness to critically examine long-held personal beliefs. Misperceptions and stereotypes are barriers to effective social work practice. Students will be required to take an in-depth look at their own belief system about disabilities in order to become more self-aware of personal beliefs that may not match with social work values in a practice setting. Throughout this course, the emphasis will be on demystifying disability by examining the lived experiences of people with a variety of developmental, traumatic, and acquired disabilities. Students will explore disability from bio-psycho-social and cultural perspectives. They will gain knowledge of the disability community’s common language, norms of conduct, economic concerns, political issues, and struggles with stigmatization. This course is designed to prepare students for generalist practice with emphasis on social and health issues that impact on people with disabilities across the life span. Theories of human behavior, best-practice models, important government policies, and current research studies that are relevant to professional service to individuals with disabilities are presented. A number of specific disabilities will be discussed with attention to the needs associated with each.

**Prerequisite:** Junior/senior standing and the completion of English 102 and Core Humanities 201.
Course Goals

Educational Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this course, the student should be able to demonstrate competency in the following areas:

1. Awareness of self-regarding common fears and myths about disability. Increased sensitivity to the perspectives of people with disabilities and their families.
2. Understanding of the resources that exist to promote the inclusion of people with disabilities through adaptations, technology, and public awareness. Students will gain knowledge of state and federal programs and examine the proliferation of private rehabilitation services. Students will increase their awareness of the role of professionals in accessing, implementing, and developing resources.
3. Knowledge of the characteristics, etiology, and demographics of the most common disabilities.
4. Awareness of the cultural aspects of disability, including (a) contemporary disability culture, and (b) disability and race/ethnicity.
5. Understanding of the major federal laws and policies that impact on children and adults with disabilities.
6. Comprehension of the dynamic nature of rehabilitation and medical practices and awareness of the limitations of the medical/rehabilitation model.
7. Understanding of the influence disability on the behavior of the individual and the family within the context of their environment.
8. Understanding disability as a form of human diversity that is susceptible to oppression on micro/meso/macro levels.

Objectives Common to all Capstone Courses

As an integrative capstone course, this class is designed to:

1. Build upon the core curriculum by providing the opportunity for students to bring to bear knowledge gained in core courses and knowledge derived from major and elective courses.
2. Promote integration, multi- and trans-disciplinary cooperation, and foster cross-cultural competency.
3. Focus on ethical and substantive issues, problems, and themes that affect the world community and broad cross-sections of humankind.
4. Encourage critical thinking, reaching beyond traditional approaches and perspectives.
5. Improve and enhance writing ability through a rigorous writing component.
Required Textbooks and Materials

Textbooks


Audio Equipment

In order to participate in live chats, students must have a microphone and speakers hooked up to or installed on their computers.

Please note that most computers do not have strong enough microphones and speakers for our required voice tools. It is recommended that you purchase a headset with a built-in microphone from the ASUN Bookstore or another local retailer.

Electronic Publications

Students are required to read the following electronic publications:

*Understanding the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)*, a publication of the United Spinal Association.


Required Viewing

Students are required to watch two films in this course: *The Ten Commandments of Communicating with People with Disabilities* and *King Gimp*.

Videos will be provided as streaming files in the weeks that they are assigned.

If you are unable to watch an online video, you may be able to borrow a copy of the video from Online and Independent Learning (O&IL). However, you are strongly encouraged to watch the online version; O&IL has a very limited number of copies available, and checking out the assigned viewing should be used as a last resort.

Details for checking out audiovisual materials from O&IL can be found in the *Loan Policy for Audiovisual Materials*; if checking out materials by mail order, students will need to fill out an *Audiovisual Order Form*. Please be sure to request all materials at least two weeks in advance of the date you will need them.
ASSIGNMENTS

Requirements

This term we will have a variety of academic assignments that will widen your understanding of how people with disabilities relate to the environment around them. These academic assignments will include discussions around specific topics, discussions with guest lecturers, small written assignments in which you will express an opinion and your reasoning behind it, a book report, and a term paper or an experiential assignment called a Social Action Project, a midcourse examination, and a final examination.

Because we are working online, each student will be in charge of his or her own assignments, and we will not be grouped together unless you request it. Most students who take online classes do so because of their varied schedules. Therefore, I do not feel that it would be fair to students to expect them to pair up with others.

I will be giving you reasons for the assignments as well as some background information on a weekly basis. Most of these assignments are short and meant to give you a chance to learn new information.
# This Semester at a Glance

This is a suggested outline only. The instructor may change topics or the schedule as needed.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Assignment</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>Week 1:</td>
<td>Introduction and Overview</td>
<td>Discussion</td>
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<tr>
<td>January 30</td>
<td>– February 5</td>
<td>Voice Board</td>
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<td>Written Assignment</td>
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<td>Introduction Survey</td>
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<td>Self-Test</td>
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<td>Week 2:</td>
<td>Disability through the Lens of Culture</td>
<td>Written Assignment</td>
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<td>February 6</td>
<td>– 12</td>
<td>Self-Test</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 3:</td>
<td>Disabilities Recognized in Childhood</td>
<td>Discussion</td>
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<td>February 13</td>
<td>– 19</td>
<td>Quiz (Weeks 1–3)</td>
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<td>Self-Test</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 4:</td>
<td>How Do Families Cope?</td>
<td>Discussion: Guest</td>
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<td>February 20</td>
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<td>Discussion: Final Project Ideas</td>
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<td>Self-Test</td>
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<td>Week 5:</td>
<td>Mental Health</td>
<td>Discussion</td>
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<td>February 27</td>
<td>– March 4</td>
<td>Self-Test</td>
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<td>Schedule/Request Midcourse Exam</td>
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<td>Week 6:</td>
<td>Dual Diagnosis</td>
<td>Midcourse Exam Review</td>
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<tr>
<td>March 5</td>
<td>– 11</td>
<td>Quiz (Weeks 4–6)</td>
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<td>Self-Test</td>
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<td><strong>Midcourse Examination: March 12–16</strong></td>
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<td>Week 8:</td>
<td>Chronic Pain, PTSD, and TBIs</td>
<td>Self-Test</td>
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<tr>
<td>March 19</td>
<td>– 25</td>
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<td>Week 9:</td>
<td>Adjustment to Disability: Theories</td>
<td>Self-Test</td>
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<tr>
<td>March 26</td>
<td>– April 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 10:</td>
<td>Adjustment to Disability: Development</td>
<td>Written Assignment</td>
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<td>April 2</td>
<td>– 8</td>
<td>Discussion</td>
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<td>Quiz (Weeks 8–10)</td>
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<td>Self-Test</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 11:</td>
<td>Adjustment to Disability: Coping</td>
<td>Discussion: Guest</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 9</td>
<td>– 15</td>
<td>Self-Test</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 12:</td>
<td>Deafness and Blindness</td>
<td>Discussion: Michael Peterson and Elizabeth Moses,</td>
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<td>April 16</td>
<td>– 22</td>
<td>Guests</td>
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<td>Self-Test</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Schedule/Request Final Exam</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 13:</td>
<td>HIV/AIDS</td>
<td>Discussion: Guest</td>
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<td>April 23</td>
<td>– 29</td>
<td>Self-Test</td>
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<td><strong>Final Examination: April 30–May 4</strong></td>
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Point Distribution and Grade Scale

Most assignments are due on Sunday evening at 11:59 p.m., Pacific Standard Time (PST), during the week they are assigned. Due dates are listed under the weekly modules, the “at a glance” section under the syllabus, and the calendar. I will also be sending out reminders for some of the major assignments. Assignments received after the deadline will have a two-point deduction for every day late. Late discussion postings will not be accepted (WebCampus will not allow you to post after the deadline). Exams must be taken when they are assigned; early or late exams are not allowed. There will be no exceptions. Remember, you must make arrangements with Online and Independent Learning in advance to take the midcourse and final examinations; see the examinations page for details on scheduling your exams.

Point Distribution

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Points</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week 1 Assignments (5 worth 2 points each)</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussions with guest lecturers (4 worth 5 points each)</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final project discussion in weeks 3 and 4 (2 worth 5 points each)</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussions in weeks 3, 4, 5, and 10 (4 worth 15 points each)</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Written Assignments (2 worth 25 points each)</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quizzes (3 worth variable points)</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Action Project / Term Paper</td>
<td>50</td>
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<tr>
<td>Midcourse Exam</td>
<td>50</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>50</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total points possible</td>
<td>346</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Grade Scale

A  346–329  C  238–221
A- 328–311  C- 220–203
B+ 310–293  D+ 202–185
B 292–275  D 184–167
B- 274–257  D- 166–149
C+ 256–239  F 148 and under
Critical Thinking and How It Relates to Your Grades

This semester, your grade will be based in part on your ability to use critical thinking in your written assignments. The guidelines for critical thinking will be based on a project through Washington State University’s Critical Thinking Project, which developed a set of guidelines for encouraging critical thinking in students. For this class, I have developed rubrics to use when grading any class assignment. Prior to turning in your written assignments, book review, discussions, disability simulation, and social action project, you may want to look at the rubric provided to see if you have met the criteria outlined. The four general criteria I will be using are:

- **Criteria I:** Develops and communicates OWN perspective, hypothesis, or position
- **Criteria II:** Presents, assesses, and analyzes appropriate supporting data/evidence
- **Criteria III:** Identifies and assesses conclusions, implications, and consequences
- **Criteria IV:** Is organized, the use of language is clear and effective, errors are minimal

Voice Tools

During the course, we will be using three kinds of voice tools. They are very simple to use and will help to personalize the course.

All of the voice tools require speakers (for listening) and a microphone (for speaking). The easiest way to satisfy this requirement is by obtaining a headset with a microphone; some computers have built-in speakers and microphones that will work as well. It is important that, if you get a pair of new speakers, you make them operational by setting them as your computer’s default speaker when you use them. For example, if you get a Logitech headset, you will first go to the directions given in the package. This will tell you step-by-step how to make them operational. You must also run the Wimba Wizard so that you know that all the parameters are working. If you find you cannot hear something, like a voice message, first go back and make sure your headset is working. I am not used to technology and I found this very easy to do just by going step-by-step through some simple directions.

Voice Recorder

Voice recorder is a tool that allows me to directly send voice messages to your WebCampus course. Examples might be to welcome you to the class, to explain how we are going to introduce ourselves to one another, and to record some additional comments about the lecture notes or about the weekly welcomes in each module. I will be doing all of the work with Voice Recorder, as I will be making the messages and they will be available every Monday morning to you. You will need to use headphones or your computer’s speakers to hear. You will also need to make sure your computer is set up to receive messages. For this, you will need to run the tool’s Setup Wizard. The Setup Wizard is very much like the process you go through when you prepare your computer for WebCampus.
When you go to hear a message, you will press a green arrow and this will allow you to hear the message. The black box will stop the message. If you want to give this a try, go to any of the messages I have made for the first week of this course.

**Voice Board**

The voice board is just like a discussion board, only we can use voice and text to create or add to a message. For example, if you go to a discussion board in this class you will have the option of either asking a question or making a comment by voice or by text. I am hopeful that after our first week’s experiences, you will have the confidence and the abilities to use the voice rather than the text option.

You will find that I have made an introductory comment in each discussion board. I put in an introduction to give you an example of what it sounds like. You will see a little megaphone icon next to my subject. This will show you that I can be heard. You can then either go to the small icon that says “REPLY,” which will allow you to post a response to my comment, or you can go to the “NEW” button located in the upper left-hand corner of the Voice Board; this is where you can start a new thread or subject. If you click the “New” button to compose a new subject or thread, then a “Compose” window will appear.

To enter text to accompany your recording, click and type in the large text field at the bottom of the “Compose” window. Typing the message is optional. If you want to reply to my message then you click on the word “Reply” and a recording device will appear. If you click on the green arrow, you will be able to replay my comment.

If you want to record your message, you first enter a title for your post in the “Subject” field. This field is required. Then you click on the “Record” button, which is the red circle, and speak into the microphone or headset connected to your computer to record your message. When you are finished recording, you can press the black button to stop it.

**Voice Direct**

Voice direct is used when we are going to have a live voice and chat. It is a live voice and chat application that we are going to be using in three ways:

1. The first is the chat we are going to have with Gary Karp, a well-known motivational speaker on disability. For details about this chat, see week 2’s assignments.
2. The second is for chats within our group. I have scheduled two chat rooms—one will be the week before the midterm exam and the second will be the week before your final exam. These will provide a chance to ask questions about information you don’t understand or need clarification on. I will hold chats on two days and times for both the midterm chat and the final chat. One will be on a weekday, late in the afternoon, and one will be on the weekend. You will be able to attend one that fits your schedule the best.
3. The third will be for office hours. I will be available for office hours. I have not set the
time yet because I wanted to find out more about your schedules and what would work
best for you. Voice Direct will give us a chance to have as many students as we want
listening and talking at the same time.

Speaking in voice direct is very easy. When a person is speaking, he or she has total control over
the floor. Any individual within the conference can type comments at any time. We will be
setting a limit on the amount of minutes you can speak at any one time.

There are two ways to request the microphone within a voice direct conference. Click the
“Request” button (which is a hand) located in the lower right-hand corner of the board or hold
down the Control key on your keyboard as you speak.

When you have finished speaking, be sure to release the microphone so others in the conference
may have a chance to speak.

There are other directions but for right now I think this gives you a good understanding.

Discussions

Due: On a weekly basis when instructed to do so.
Points: 60 points total (15 points each)

All discussions must be completed during the week they are assigned. The discussion board will
be open on the Monday of the week the discussion is assigned and must be completed by Sunday
of that same week by 11:59 p.m. (PST), unless otherwise directed.

Remember, WebCampus can be accessed from any computer with Internet access. If you have
technical problems on your home PC, you have the option of using a colleague’s or family
member’s computer, a public library, an Internet café, etc. It is each student’s responsibility to be
certain assignments are submitted properly and received by the instructor.

All students are expected to participate in class by posting on the discussion board responses to
assigned discussion topics. Discussion questions/topics appear under the weekly learning
modules as well as under the discussion tool. It is highly recommended that you check the course
site frequently to see how the discussions are progressing. Your initial posting should be
completed by Wednesday or Thursday of the week it is due, and your response to two other
postings by other students should be completed by Sunday at 11:59 p.m. (PST). Please note that
the instructor will use the rubric to determine your points for each discussion.

When you have a guest lecturer, you will be asked to post all your questions by Thursday night
of the week the guest is answering questions. It is not appropriate to leave your questions until
late in the week as your other colleagues will not benefit from his or her answers or reflections.
In some weeks when we do not have a guest lecturer the class will be split into three randomly chosen groups to help facilitate more dynamic group discussions. In other weeks, because of special events or guest lecturers, the class will meet as one group.

When looking at the discussions in the course tools section, you will see that there are four discussions that will continue during the entire semester. These are not graded, but will be used to discuss disability issues, textbook viewpoints, and questions and help messages.

The grading rubric provided will help you to determine the criteria for the points given in the discussion boards.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Needs Improvement</th>
<th>Below Average</th>
<th>Average</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Excellent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Promptness and Initiative</strong></td>
<td>(1 point) Does not responds to most postings; rarely participates freely</td>
<td>(2 points) Responds to most postings several days after initial discussion; limited initiative</td>
<td>(3 points) Responds to several postings several days after initial discussion; minimum initiative</td>
<td>(4 points) Consistently responds to postings with a 24-hour period; requires occasional prompts to post</td>
<td>(5 points) Consistently responds to postings in less than 24-hours; demonstrates good self-initiative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Delivery of Post</strong></td>
<td>(1 points) Utilizes poor spelling and grammar in most posts; posts appear “hasty”</td>
<td>(2 points) Errors in spelling and grammar evidenced in several posts</td>
<td>(3 points) Minimal errors in spelling and grammar evidenced by several posts</td>
<td>(4 points) Few grammatical or spelling errors are noted in posts</td>
<td>(5 points) Consistently uses grammatically correct posts with rare misspellings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Relevance of Post</strong></td>
<td>(1 points) Posts topics which do not relate to the discussion content; makes short or irrelevant remarks</td>
<td>(2 points) Often posts off topic; most posts are short in length and offer no further insight into the topic</td>
<td>(3 points) At times the posting may not pertain to the topic and average level of effort is put into the topic</td>
<td>(4 points) Frequently posts topics that are related to discussion content; prompts further discussion of topic</td>
<td>(5 points) Consistently post topics related to discussion topic; cites additional references related to topic</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Written Assignments**

Due: See the weekly modules for specific due dates.
Points: Written assignments are worth 25 points each.

There will be two written assignments for you to complete during the course. These written assignments will be focused on your ability to analyze a subject and write a 3–4 page paper with your opinion. The papers will have required readings to help you understand the issue presented. There is no right or wrong answer to these assignments. What I am looking for is the student who can present a clear picture of his or her opinion backed up by facts from the required reading material as well as any additional material found in journals, books, or the Internet. My main emphasis in grading will be on our ability to present your thoughts in a logical and supported manner.

The assignments should be double-spaced, in twelve-point font, and with one-inch margins. Your written assignments will be submitted as attachments via the assignments tool.

Your written assignments will be graded using the following rubric.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Overall Presence of the Assignment: Explores, explains, expands upon the issues being assigned</th>
<th>Failing</th>
<th>Below Average</th>
<th>Average</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Exceptional</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(0 points) The student did not explore the subject area or explore any of the issues assigned.</td>
<td>(1 point) The student only explored one subject area that could be used in this assignment.</td>
<td>(2 points) The student explored two subject areas that were mentioned in the articles for this assignment.</td>
<td>(3.5 points) The student was able to explain, explore and expand upon the issues of the assignment.</td>
<td>(5 points) The student excelled in expanding on the subject matter of the written assignment. There was in-depth exploration of the subject.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Presents a logical opinion backed by facts</th>
<th>Failing</th>
<th>Below Average</th>
<th>Average</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Exceptional</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(0 points) The student did not present any logical opinions which were backed by factual material</td>
<td>(1 point) The student used only personal opinions to express his/her viewpoint.</td>
<td>(2 points) The student used personal opinions and only used a minimal amount of articles with factual information.</td>
<td>(3.5 points) The student does a competent job for his/her grade level in stating logical opinions backed by facts.</td>
<td>(5 points) The student excelled in presenting his/her opinions in a logical and flowing manner.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Uses all the</th>
<th>Failing</th>
<th>Below Average</th>
<th>Average</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Exceptional</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(0 points)</td>
<td>(1 point)</td>
<td>(2 points)</td>
<td>(3.5 points)</td>
<td>(5 points)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>assigned material to help present ideas</td>
<td>The student did not use any of the assigned material to present his/her ideas. Only ideas from personal experience were used.</td>
<td>The student only used one article for use to help explain his/her opinions.</td>
<td>The student only mentions two articles required for this assignment in the written assignment.</td>
<td>The student used all the assigned material and also included other articles/fact from professional articles, books, or the Internet.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
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<td>---</td>
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<td>---</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing Mechanics: Adherence to academic spelling and grammar</td>
<td>(0 points) The student had more than 7 errors in spelling and grammar.</td>
<td>(1 point) The student had more than 6 spelling and grammar errors.</td>
<td>(2 points) The student had more than 3 spelling and grammar errors.</td>
<td>(3 points) The student had only two spelling or grammar errors in the assignment.</td>
<td>(5 points) The student did not have any spelling or grammar errors in the written assignment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provides a thorough summary of thoughts at the end of the paper</td>
<td>(0 points) The student did not provide a summary of personal opinions at the end of the written assignment.</td>
<td>(1 point) The student provided a summary at the end of the written assignment however it was not complete or well written.</td>
<td>(2 points) The student provided a summary of thoughts at the end of the paper that it lacked an ability to get his/her point across.</td>
<td>(3.5 points) The student provided a summary of thoughts at the end of the paper that was logical and complete.</td>
<td>(5 points) The student's summary was complete, well-written, and completed the thought process of the entire written assignment.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

out of 25
Quizzes

Due: Weeks 3, 6, and 10
Points: 44 points total (point value will depend on the quiz)

This semester we will have four short quizzes in weeks 3, 6, and 10. Their purpose is to help you review for the midcourse and final examinations. The quizzes will be available the weeks they’re assigned, but once you begin one, you will have a fixed time in which to finish it.

Self-Tests

This semester we will have optional self-tests at the end of each week. The material will review each week’s lecture to help you know if you understand the material. You have the option of taking or not taking the self-tests. There is no point value. They are there for your review only.

Social Action Project

Due: Week 13
Points: 50

Your social action project should be at least five pages in length, double-spaced, written in 12-point, and submitted through the assignments tool as a Word attachment by the end of week 13.

You should invest at least 20 hours of time on your project. You will include a summary of the dates and times spent on your project and it will be attached to your written paper. It might be helpful for you to write down the dates you worked and what you did in a journal so your social action project will be complete and include all the details.

This will be one of the most important assignments of the semester. Because of this, students should begin at the beginning of the semester to choose a project they believe would fit into this category. I will be working with you to answer any questions or provide assistance throughout the course. While most previous students were hesitant about the social action project, they usually felt at the end of the semester it had a significant impact on their lives. There is something very special about an individual who is getting into social work who wishes to choose a project that contributes to the welfare of people with disabilities.
Note: If you are being assigned an internship in another class you may use this as a basis for your social action project. This is particularly true if you are assigned a placement where you are working with children or adults with some types of disabilities. This then, can be basis for your social action project. You can then add a project to the individuals with which you are already working. For example, one student was working part-time in an after school program. There was a young boy who was deaf in the class that was fairly isolated. This student worked out a program where she taught the other children and teachers some sign language with stories and flash cards. She then helped the child integrate into the after school program. Please check with your advisor to see if this can be arranged.

**Finding a Project**

You will let me know by week 3 if you plan to complete a social action project. You will do this by completing the final project discussion in weeks 3 and 4. This discussion will help you to finalize a project, narrow it down or perhaps broaden it, and get some ideas from fellow students about possible resources.

You will then do the research on contacting the individuals and making the arrangements that will fit your schedule. During the semester, we will discuss your progress and make sure things are going as expected.

**What I am NOT Looking For**

Since I mentioned that this is a major project for the semester, there are certain projects that will not be accepted.

1. Attend a couple of AA or NA meeting and write report on them.
2. Go and observe a special education program or take a tour of a school with special education features.
3. Participate in a walkathon or some other special benefit without doing any other work for that project. You should be actively involved in a special benefit and not just on the sidelines.
4. Going to a couple of legislative meetings and then writing a report on what you saw.

I want you actively involved in the project. I want it to mean something to you. And, I don’t want you to wait until the end of the semester and just put something together. If you can’t think of something in the first three weeks, let me know so we can start brainstorming some possibilities.
**Criteria for Grading**

The criteria for the grading of your social action project will be a rubric which the instructor will follow. The 60 points for this project will be based on the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Failing</th>
<th>Below Average</th>
<th>Average</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Exceptional</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>The project idea and whether it fit the criteria presented</strong></td>
<td>(1 point) The project did not fit into the criteria presented</td>
<td>(2 points) The project was not appropriate for the criteria presented</td>
<td>(6 points) The project idea fit into the criteria given but did not seem challenging</td>
<td>(10 points) The student met the criteria outlined for the project criteria</td>
<td>(15 points) The student’s idea was very creative and fully met the criteria for the project criteria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>The amount of interaction with people with disabilities</strong></td>
<td>(1 point) The student had minimal contact with people with disabilities; mostly watched and observed</td>
<td>(2 points) The student had minimal contact with people with disabilities and interacted with only a few people with disabilities</td>
<td>(6 points) The student interacted with an average amount of people with disabilities and it was appropriate for the amount in the project</td>
<td>(10 points) The student interacted with almost all of the people with disabilities as indicated in the project</td>
<td>(15 points) The student fully engaged people with disabilities in the project; people were fully included</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>How well was the project carried out</strong></td>
<td>(1 point) The project was not organized; seemed hastily put together</td>
<td>(2 points) The project was only minimally organized and there did not appear to be well thought out</td>
<td>(4 points) The project was carried out properly with an average amount of thought and skill</td>
<td>(5 points) The project was well carried out and the student seemed to put a lot of thought into the project</td>
<td>(6 points) This project was well thought out and creative. It appeared that a great deal of work went into the project.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>How well was the paper organized as well as grammar and spelling</strong></td>
<td>(1 point) The project was disorganized and there were more than 7 spelling and grammar</td>
<td>(2 points) The student attempted to organize the paper but it still seemed hastily put together; there were</td>
<td>(4 points) The project appeared to have the paper organized and readable; there were</td>
<td>(7 points) The project was organized and well-written. It seemed to flow nicely and it was understandable</td>
<td>(8 points) The student wrote an exceptionally well thought out and comprehensive assignment that flowed well and</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Did the student spend an appropriate amount of time with the project

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(1 point)</td>
<td>The student spent less than 5 hours on this project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2 points)</td>
<td>The student spent less than 8 hours on this project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(4 points)</td>
<td>The student spent 16-17 hours on this project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(5 points)</td>
<td>The student spent at least 20 hours on this project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(6 points)</td>
<td>The student spent over 20 hours on this project</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

out of 50

Sample Projects

I have included two social action projects that I found to be good examples of the kind of project I want you to do. You can find them at these links: Social Action Project: Sample One and Social Action Project: Sample Two. Both papers are used with permission.

Term Paper

Due: week 13
Points: 50

The term paper should be at least seven pages in length, double-spaced, using a 12-point font, and submitted through the assignments tool as a Word attachment.

This semester you will have your choice to do either a term paper or a social action project. The social action project instructions are given in a separate section of the syllabus.

The topic of the term paper should be focused around the area of disability; however, it will not be about a specific disability or syndrome. I am providing you with 20 examples of subjects that I would consider appropriate. You may choose one of these or submit one of your own choosing. You will then complete the final project discussion in weeks 3 and 4. This discussion will help you to finalize a topic, narrow it down or perhaps broaden it, and get some ideas from fellow students about possible resources.

1. Psychological Adjustment to Disability
2. Job Site Modifications
3. Disability and Sexuality
4. The Caregiver in the Life of the Disabled
5. Inclusion and Mainstreaming
6. Disability and Recreation
7. Assistive Technology
8. Family Attitudes toward the Disabled
9. Employer/Employee Attitudes toward the Disabled
10. Independent Living Centers
11. Social Work Counseling the Family of the Disabled
12. How to Modify the Home of the Disabled
13. Current Attitudes toward Sheltered Workshops
14. Social Work Counseling with Individuals with Psychiatric Disabilities
15. Stem Cell Research and its Effects on the Disabled
16. Chronic Pain and its Psychological, Social and Physical Aspects of Disability
17. Current Research on the Disabled
18. Peer Support Programs for the Mentally Ill, Spinal Cord Injured, and the Veterans
19. Why are the Disabled Still Marginalized?
20. Resources for the Disabled in the Community

Criteria

When you work on this term paper, the focus will be on the subject matter and how it is presented. You should display knowledge of the subject by providing an extensive background of the subject along with current research in the topic area. This knowledge will be shown by citing sources from professional journals, articles, websites, and sources from the Internet. I am also looking for knowledge of the subject area. Depending on your topic selection, you will need to review the current issues of the topic. For example, you might find available emerging paradigms, emerging technologies, issues with ethical dilemmas, or a public policy dispute.

Let me give you an example. Perhaps you choose to write about independent living centers. You would want to find out about the history of independent living (IL) centers and their current status in the United States and particularly in your community. If you live in Reno you would want to visit an IL center and interview the directors and perhaps some consumers. You would want to know what services they provide, their funding sources, and the benefits of being involved with a center. Find out, because of the current economy, if they’re having any difficulties right now in maintaining the centers.

I would expect you to spend about 20 hours doing and preparing your research for this paper. This is approximately the same number of hours required for the social action project.

Your paper may be subject to submission to DirectSubmit, a program that can review how much of your work is original as opposed to copied from other sources.
# Guidelines for Grading

This rubric will be used as the grading form for the term paper.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Failing</th>
<th>Below Average</th>
<th>Average</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Exceptional</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge of the Subject Area</td>
<td>(0 points) The student did not know the subject area</td>
<td>(5 points) The student only displayed a minimum about of knowledge of the subject area</td>
<td>(8 points) The student seemed to have a good grasp of the subject area</td>
<td>(12 points) The student seemed to have an above average understanding of the subject area</td>
<td>(15 points) The student showed that he/she understand the subject matter in all areas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review of Current Issues</td>
<td>(0 points) The student only reviewed a minimal amount of current issues</td>
<td>(5 points) The student only reviewed 1–2 current issues of the subject matter</td>
<td>(8 points) The student seemed to cover most of the current issues but did not go into detail</td>
<td>(12 points) The student seemed to cover the major current issues and provided a fairly good review</td>
<td>(15 points) The student went into all of the current issues and was clear and logical</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of Resources</td>
<td>(0 points) The student only used the Internet for a resource</td>
<td>(3 points) The student used the Internet and 1–2 outside resources</td>
<td>(4 points) The student used the Internet and 3–4 outside resources</td>
<td>(5 points) The student used a variety of resources including professional journals/books/interviews</td>
<td>(6 points) The student used professional journals, books, research and interviews to clearly research the area of study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Following APA Guidelines</td>
<td>(0 points) The student did not follow the APA Guidelines</td>
<td>(4 points) The student used the APA guidelines but made many errors</td>
<td>(5 points) The student used the APA Guidelines but made 4 or more mistakes</td>
<td>(7 points) The student used the APA Guidelines and seemed to understand the rules</td>
<td>(8 points) The student clearly understood the rules of the APA guidelines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing Mechanics</td>
<td>(0 points) Spelling, composition and grammar were very poor</td>
<td>(3 points) Spelling, grammar and composition of the paper was below the standards for a junior or</td>
<td>(4 points) There were some spelling, grammar, and composition errors (4 or more)</td>
<td>(5 points) The grammar, spelling, and composition met acceptable standards with only 2–3 errors</td>
<td>(6 points) The student had no spelling, grammar, or composition errors on the assignment. It was clearly written</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APA Formatting

All information and ideas from other authors should be properly cited using APA formatting. APA formatting applies to citations within the body of your document as well as proper referencing at the end of your paper. There may be references or websites for the APA style on the Internet to guide you if you are not familiar with how to cite your references. Some examples of websites are APA Citation Format and APA Style Essentials. You may also contact UNR’s Knowledge Center for books on this style or follow their reference material guidelines.

Examinations

Requirements

Rigorous testing policies and procedures are required of an accredited university; therefore, exams must always be administered in a proctored/supervised, educational setting.

Students are required to complete all proctored exams / writing assignments. Students cannot pass the class without completing all proctored exams / writing assignments.

Exam dates: Refer to the weekly learning modules for scheduled exam dates.

Students Testing in the Reno/Sparks Area

Students living in the Reno/Sparks area are required to take their exams at the Online and Independent Learning Office OR at the Redfield Campus. (The Redfield Campus is open during limited days and times; call Online and Independent Learning for availability.) The Online and Independent Learning Office is located at:

University of Nevada, Reno Campus
Continuing Education Building
1041 N. Virginia Street, Room 225
Reno, NV 89557

Space is limited; therefore, students are required to make an appointment with Online and Independent Learning at least two weeks in advance through an online appointment scheduler. Please keep in mind that, while exam appointments must be made early, they cannot be made too far in advance; the online appointment scheduler will be available one month before the scheduled exam dates and appointments cannot be made before then. Refer to the specific exam module in the weekly learning modules for more information.
Important note about exam appointments: Online and Independent Learning may not be able to accommodate early check-ins to exam appointments or drop-in appointments. These last-minute changes will only be permitted if the testing schedule allows them.

**Drop-in exam appointments are strongly discouraged and will only be accommodated if space allows.** Students who take their exams at the Online and Independent Learning Office without an appointment or at a time other than their scheduled appointment will be charged a **$50 drop-in fee**. If an exam appointment is scheduled but cannot be kept, it needs to be rescheduled via the online appointment scheduler. If the exam schedule is full or if the online schedule has closed, exam appointments cannot be rescheduled and students must keep their original appointments.

**Students Testing Outside of the Reno/Sparks Area**

Students living outside the Reno/Sparks area must also take their exams in a **proctored/supervised setting**. You may request your test by completing the online exam request form. You may also email this proctor/test supervisor information to **iltesting@unr.edu** or fax it to (775) 784-1280.

Exam requests MUST BE SUBMITTED TWO WEEKS PRIOR TO THE TEST DATE. **Failing to request that your exam be sent to an out-of-town proctor TWO WEEKS before the test date may result in a “0” for the exam.** Faxing of exams is NOT allowed. Failure to request exams in a timely manner could mean that the test does not arrive to your proctor site by the testing deadline and you will be assigned a grade of “0” for the exam. **Requesting exams late will result in a fee of $60.**

**Note:** Please be aware a proctoring fee may apply. All fees associated with proctoring are the responsibility of the student.