

# ***The Special Psychology Syllabus Fall 2012***

**Credits:** 2.0

**Course information:** PSY 122

**Prerequisites:** PSY 125 or PSY 120

**Instructors:** Nina Bagdasarova, PhD, [nina.bagdasarova@gmail.com](mailto:nina.bagdasarova@gmail.com)

**Class meets:** Thursday 12:45-14:00 p.m. in Room 225

**Office hours:** By appointment, at least 2 days before in advance via e-mail or in person

## ***Course Description***

This course is about people who are different. It does matter why they are different. Do they feel different because the majority of people perceived them in this way? Or maybe they feel perfectly “normal” but we don’t trust their feelings? Since the very first steps psychotherapy was about put individual “together” with his or her environment and bringing life satisfaction into one’s life. Now we are interested not only in individual but in environment as well. The studies on disabilities and disabled people is one of the most advanced and challenging field in contemporary Psychology. We cannot avoid answering some crucial questions working in that field. Who might be considered as normal and why? How do we come dependent upon our loved ones and make them dependent on us? Who decide about labeling somebody as “disabled”? Where should we draw a line making decision about a child with mental retardation relating his/her attendance in general school or in special institution? What is a meaning of the group of people sharing my way of perception and interaction with this world? During this course we will explore the very edge lying between “normal” and “abnormal”, “social” and “asocial”, “integrated” or “segregated”. Actually these knowledge and skills may help you to be really excited about routine of everyday activity in the field of social work.

To get better understanding of Special Psychology we will try to acquire the following skills:

- Understand how different types of social attitudes shape our vision of “disability”
- Analyze what is a role of social and family policies in creating boundaries between “normal” and “abnormal”
- Define the full range of possible psychological problems faced by people with different types of disabilities (and their families)
- Get a basic understanding of “interventions” for resolving psychological problems of disabled people at the individual and micro-group (including families) level
- Get a basic practical skills of communication with disabled people and their families

## ***Course Organization***

The course is organized in two major streams: (1) acquiring of theoretical approaches and (2) application of theories to the field research

## ***Methods***

We are going to employ the following learning methods:

- participating in seminar discussion (listening and talking);
- independent reading
- consolidating notes and material after seminar;
- groups’ field research;
- preparing and conducting group presentations;
- group analysis in seminars;
- preparing and drafting research paper

## ***Seminar Discussion***

It is essential that all students complete the required reading and preparing examples/presentations before class in order to participate fully in seminar discussion. Everyone is expected to take part in discussions, which will be based on a required reading, as well as some examples or relevant materials provided by students. You will be asked to respond to issues raised by the readings and in the seminar presentations. Seminars also provide you with an opportunity to ask questions about things that you don’t understand.

Your participation in seminars is a crucial part of your own and others' learning, and is an important transferable skill. Seminars require the full participation of all students in order to make them effective learning environments.

### **Study Groups**

It's necessary to form students' groups (preferably in pairs) for conducting a small field research and preparing a research paper.

### **Educational results**

Upon completion of the course a student is expected to be capable to:

1. Explain "disability" as a social construct
2. Analyze disability representations in media and culture
3. Interpret the disability phenomena according different models of disability, models of care, family models and social policies/social work approaches
4. Prepare and conduct field work on disability issues, analyze and presented results of the research

### **Literature**

1. Devlieger P., Rusch F. and Pfeifer D. *Rethinking Disability as same and different! Towards a Cultural Model of Disability*
2. Devlieger P. *From "Idiot" to "Person with Mental Retardation": Defining Difference in an Effort to Dissolve It*
3. Ray McDermott and Hervé Varenne, "Culture as Disability" in *Anthropology and Education Quarterly*, 26:323-348, 1995
4. *Rethinking Disability Representation in Museums and Galleries*, RCMG, University of Leicester, 2008
5. Ярская Смирнова Е., Романов П. «Образ власти и власть образа. Больное тело в культуре», .... зима-лето 2010-2011
6. Романов П. В., Ярская-Смирнова Е. Р., *Политика инвалидности: Социальное гражданство инвалидов в современной России*. – Саратов: Изд-во «Научная книга», 2006.
7. Philip M. Ferguson, *Winks, Blinks, Squints and Twitches: Looking for Disability and Culture through My Son's Left Eye*.
8. Романов П. В., Ярская-Смирнова Е. Р., «Жила-была маленькая девочка, которая любила танцевать...» семейные истории инвалидов-колясочников», в // *Семейные узы: модели для сборки* / Под ред. С. Ушакина. М.: Новое литературное обозрение, 2004.
9. Darja Zavir's'ek, "Critical Commentary Social Work with Adults with Disabilities: An International Perspective" in *British Journal of Social Work*, (2009) 1–13
10. Сара Филлипс, Инвалидность, маскулинность и сексуальность в постсоветской Украине // *Журнал исследований социальной политики*
11. Patrick J. Devlieger, Gary L. Albrechtb, Miram Hert, "The production of disability culture among young
12. African–American men", in *Social Science & Medicine*, 64 (2007) 1948–1959
13. Gillian Bridge, "Disabled Children and Their Families in Ukraine: Health and Mental Health Issues for families Caring for Their Disabled Child at Home", in *Social Work Visions from Around the Globe: Citizens, Methods, and Approaches* (ed: Anna Metteri et al.) The Haworth Social Work Practice Press, an imprint of The Haworth Press, Inc., 2004, pp. 89-105.
14. OECD report on inclusive education in Central Asia

<http://www.slideshare.net/kelechekplus>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tu8lJ6qfWak>

<http://teatrprosto.ru/>

<http://www.ivu.ru/watch/41443>

[http://vk.com/videos-22064771?z=video-22064771\\_162418088](http://vk.com/videos-22064771?z=video-22064771_162418088)

[http://vk.com/videos-22064771?z=video-22064771\\_156662991%2Fclub22064771](http://vk.com/videos-22064771?z=video-22064771_156662991%2Fclub22064771)

<http://www.ivu.ru/watch/41443>

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[http://vk.com/videos-22064771?z=video-22064771\\_156662991%2Fclub22064771](http://vk.com/videos-22064771?z=video-22064771_156662991%2Fclub22064771)

<http://neinvalid.ru/novosti/elison-lepper-alison-lapper-rasskaz-o-sebe/>

### *Topics and schedule*

	Topics	Required readings, homework and assignments
<b>Week 1</b>	<b>Introduction to the course</b>	
Thu, 06/09	The concept of disability. Historical and social conditions determining disability perception. The models of disabilities.	
<b>Week 2</b>	<b>The models of disability</b>	
Thu, 13/09	Class discussion on models of disability existing in Kyrgyzstan	Devlieger P., Rusch F. and Pfeifer D. <i>Rethinking Disability</i> Devlieger P. <i>From "Idiot" to...</i>
<b>Week 3</b>	<b>How disability is represented? The "exclusive" and "inclusive" cultures: institutions, media, private life</b>	
Thu, 20/09	Class discussion on readings	Ray McDermott and Hervé Varenne, "Culture as Disability" ... Ярская Смирнова Е., Романов П. «Образ власти и власть образа. Большое тело в культуре»
<b>Week 4</b>	<b>How disability is represented? The "exclusive" and "inclusive" cultures: institutions, media, private life</b>	
Thu, 27/09	Film screening on media products about disabilities), materials about Down Syndrome Peoples Theater Class discussion	<i>Rethinking Disability Representation</i> pp. 7-27  Романов П. В., Ярская-Смирнова Е. Р., <i>Политика инвалидности... pp. 140-142, 148-152</i> Assignment #1: Reflection paper on media-products about disabilities (deadline Monday, October, 1 <sup>st</sup> )
<b>Week 5</b>	<b>How disability is represented? Psychological effects of disability representations</b>	
Thu, 04/10	Class presentations of the projects for field interviews with disabled people and their families	Darja Zavir's'ek, "Critical Commentary Social..." Сара Филлипс, Инвалидность, маскулинность...  Field work preparation: Questions for interview
<b>Week 6</b>	<b>A life with a disability. What about families?</b>	
Thu, 11/10	The family models of coping disability. What does it mean to be "independent"? The exercising of power and submission. Who is a power subject in a family with disabled person? What psychological problems may arise in these families? Movie fragments screening.	Philip M. Ferguson, <i>Winks, Blinks, Squints</i> Gillian Bridge, "Disabled Children and Their Families..." Романов П. В., Ярская-Смирнова Е. Р., «Жила-была...»
<b>Week 7</b>	<b>A life with a disability. What about families?</b>	
Thu, 18/10	Class presentations of the projects for field interviews with disabled people and their families	Field work preparation: Questions for interview

<b>Week 8</b>	<b>The disability culture. What about groups?</b>	
Thu, 25/10	The condition of the emerging of “sub-culture”. The boundaries between “special groups” and larger society: how solid these boundaries are? The mutual movement ‘towards” or “away” from each other: the integration/segregation collision	Patrick J. Devlieger, Gary L. Albrechtb, Miram Hert, “The production of disability culture...
<b>Week 9</b>	<b>The disability culture. What about groups?</b>	
Thu, 01/11	Class presentations of the projects for field interviews with disabled people and their families	Field work preparation: Questions for interview
<b>Week 10</b>	<b>What have we learned so far and what interpretations we already have?</b>	
Thu, 08/11	The pairs’ presentations of the interviews results.	Field work: conducting the first interview with disabled people on their social life
<b>Week 11</b>	<b>What have we learned so far and what interpretations we already have?</b>	
Thu, 15/11	The pairs’ presentations of the interviews results.	Field work: conducting the first interview with disabled people on their social life
<b>Week 12</b>	<b>Thanksgiving Day. No classes Thu, 22/11</b>	
<b>Week 13</b>	<b>The disability culture. What about institutions?</b>	
Thu, 29/11	Class discussion on field visits	Field work: conducting a visit into special institution for disabled people
<b>Week 14</b>	<b>Psychosocial adjustment of disabled people and their families</b>	
Thu, 06 /12	Models and Measurement Tools for psychological problems of Chronic illness/Disability  <i>Depression, Anxiety, Grief, Loss, Suicide,</i>	TBD
<b>Week 15</b>	<b>Psychologist as professional in the field of psychosocial adjustment</b>	
Thu, 13/12	Class discussion on intervention strategies of psychological support for raising Self efficacy and Wellness of disabled people	TBD
<b>Week 16</b>	<b>FINAL EXAM</b>	
Thu, 20/12	<i>Analytical paper on field work based on acquired theories</i>	

### ***Requirements and Evaluation***

We will try to make classes interactive and practical for all of us. It will be possible if you come prepared to all classes, lectures and seminars, having read the required material. Productive work will also be possible if you attend classes regularly, come to class on time.

<b>Grading system</b>		<b>Assessment scale (%)</b>			
Participation in seminar discussions	100	<b>A</b>	91 and above	<b>C+</b>	66-70
Field work preparation and conducting	100	<b>A-</b>	86-90	<b>C</b>	61-65
Reflection paper	50	<b>B+</b>	81-85	<b>C-</b>	56-60
Final paper	150	<b>B</b>	76-80	<b>D</b>	51-55
		<b>B-</b>	71-75	<b>F</b>	50 and less
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>600 scores</b>				

### **Requirements for Seminar discussion**

A student comes to class with clear stated questions and relevant examples/illustrations concerning the reading. The questions should demonstrate student's critical and analytical skills. A student should actively participate in the discussion. Active participant should be ready to support his/her ideas by evidences. A student should be respectful to the opinions of others.

### **Requirements for Field Work**

Field work includes interviews that should cover following topics: psychological effects on disability representations, inclusiveness/exclusiveness of social environment in Kyrgyzstan, family life of disabled people, disability culture and social life of disabled people

### **Requirements for Reflection paper / Essay**

Your essay must be brief and clear (no more than 2,500 words), typed, and well presented with proper references and bibliography. Please choose the media product for analysis carefully. Links and connections with current situation in Kyrgyzstan are welcomed.

*Reflection paper on media-products about disabilities* – Choose a media product on disability and provide brief analysis on it. (**Dead-line** Monday, October, 1<sup>st</sup>)

### **Requirements for Final paper**

Final paper might be written on one or two aspects of disabilities choosing for analysis. It SHOULD NOT cover ALL topics and materials you gather during your field work. It should contain exhausted analysis of your theoretical assumptions with detailed and convincing illustrations from interviews as empirical arguments.

**Deadline: Week 16, Thursday, 20<sup>th</sup> of December, 2012, by 5:00 PM**

**Paper turned in after deadline will have 5 points deducted for each day it's late. There will be no rewrites. Please keep (hard and electronic) copies of your papers for your own records.**

### **Academic Integrity**

According AUCA policy the educational activity is free of fraud and deception. No cheating, plagiarism, fabrication of information and citations is acceptable. The facilitating acts of academic dishonesty by others, submitting work of another person or work previously used without informing the instructor, tampering with the academic work of another student, and lying to the instructor are unallowable. Please refer to the University's Undergraduate Catalog 2008-2010 for additional information on Honor Code, which is also available on AUCA website.

*Anyone found to be academically dishonest is subject to receiving an "F" for the course.*