I. **Catalog Course Description**

This course examines chronic illnesses and disability among adults, focusing on the medical and psychosocial aspects of various mental and physical health conditions. This course aims to foster understanding of how social workers work with clients with chronic illness and disability, as well as their significant others, within healthcare and community systems. This course also reviews relevant policies and welfare system components intended to support those with chronic illness and disability.

II. **Course Overview**

The primary aim of this course is to offer students an opportunity to explore the continuum of chronic illness and disability (CID) within adulthood. CID will be addressed from its theoretical underpinnings drawing from medical, psychosocial, and political schemas and how the various underpinning can interact for the individual, the family, the community, and the society-at-large. Attention is also given to preparing social workers to work within interdisciplinary teams to promote sensitivity and understanding of the field of CID in its broadest sense for more effective service with individuals with disabilities and their family members. An emphasis is placed on psychosocial assessment, navigation of the healthcare system, including understanding of disparities within the system, and the effective use of resources in service of the client and his or her support system.

III. **Place of Course in Program**

This is an elective course.

IV. **Course Objectives**
1. Examine key chronic illnesses and disabilities (CID) in adulthood and how they impact clients and their significant others.
2. Understand how critical thinking regarding definitions of CID and theories of CID development influence individuals’ and professionals’ approaches to managing CID.
3. Conceptualize social workers’ contributions within interdisciplinary teams around CID, which may include clients and their significant others.
4. Develop an understanding of psychosocial and risk assessment—as well as health promotion—in working with those with CID.
5. Acquire knowledge about, and understand key policies regarding, aspects of the health care services to assist clients with navigating systems and to advance social justice perspectives.
6. Develop a knowledge base of health care related resources to assist social workers in working more effectively with clients with CID.

V. Required Texts and Readings


The required texts (Orto & Power) can be purchased at the Rutgers University Bookstore or at http://rutgers.bncollege.com

Other required readings are posted on the e-companion website for this course: http://rutgersonline.net/

VI. Course Requirements

Students are expected to attend class and to complete readings on a timely basis so that they can participate effectively in class discussions. In addition, students are expected to take leadership roles in class discussion or exercises.

Assignments include the creation and presentation of a disability fact sheet, a mid-term exam, and a final paper (a psychosocial assessment). Paper topics require approval of the Course Instructor. Further details about assignments will be given in class.

VII. Grading

Grades will be weighted as follows: disability fact sheet or reaction paper on a
disability 30 percent (includes presentation); mid-term exam 30 percent; final paper 30 percent; class participation 10 percent. Assignments are due in class on the required date at the beginning of class. Excessive absences (two or more) will affect your grade negatively. Five or more absences will result in an F.

VIII. Course Evaluation

Rutgers University issues a survey that evaluates both the course and instructor. This survey is completed by students toward the end of the semester, and all answers are anonymous. The instructor may also choose to conduct a mid-point evaluation.

IX. Academic Integrity

All work submitted in a graduate course must be your own.

It is unethical and a violation of the University’s Academic Integrity Policy to present the ideas or words of another without clearly and fully identifying the source. Inadequate citations will be construed as an attempt to misrepresent the cited material as your own. Use the citation style preferred by the discipline.

Plagiarism is the representation of the words or ideas of another as one’s own in any academic exercise. To avoid plagiarism, every direct quotation must be identified by quotation marks or by appropriate indentation and must be properly cited in the text or in a footnote. Acknowledgement is required when material from another source is stored in print, electronic, or other medium and is paraphrased or summarized in whole or in part in one’s own words. To acknowledge a paraphrase properly, one might state: “to paraphrase Plato’s comment…” and conclude with a footnote identifying the exact reference. A footnote acknowledging only a directly quoted statement does not suffice to notify the reader of any preceding or succeeding paraphrased material. Information which is common knowledge, such as names of leaders of prominent nations, basic scientific laws, etc., need not be footnoted; however, all facts or information obtained in reading or research that are not common knowledge among students in the course must be acknowledged. In addition to materials specifically cited in the text, only materials that contribute to one’s general understanding of the subject may be acknowledged in the bibliography. Plagiarism can, in some cases, be a subtle issue. Any question about what constitutes plagiarism should be discussed with the faculty member.

Plagiarism along with any and all other violations of academic integrity by graduate and professional students will normally be penalized more severely than violations by first-year undergraduate students. Since all violations of academic integrity by a graduate or professional student are potentially separable under the Academic Integrity Policy, faculty members should not adjudicate alleged academic integrity violations by graduate and professional students, but should refer such allegations to the appropriate Academic Integrity Facilitator (AIF) or to the Office of Student
Conduct. The AIF that you should contact is Antoinette Y. Farmer, 732.932.2621. The student shall be notified in writing, by email or hand delivery, of the alleged violation and of the fact that the matter has been referred to the AIF for adjudication. This notification shall be done within 10 days of identifying the alleged violation. Once the student has been notified of the allegation, the student may not drop the course or withdraw from the school until the adjudication process is complete. A TZ or incomplete grade shall be assigned until the case is resolved. For more information regarding the Rutgers Academic Integrity Policies and Procedures, see: http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/integrity.shtml.

X. Disability Accommodation

Please Note: Any student who believes that s/he may need an accommodation in this class due to a disability should contact the Office of Disability Services, Kreeger Learning Center, 151 College Avenue; dfoffice@rci.rutgers.edu; 732-932-2847. Students must have a letter of accommodation from the Office of Disability Services in order to receive accommodations.

XI. Course Outline

A variety of methods are used including lectures, discussions, exercises and assignments, readings, videos.

I. INTRODUCTORY CONCEPTS

Week 1: Overview/ History of Chronic Illness
- Course introduction
- Introduction to chronic illness
- How has chronic illness evolved over time
- Key chronic illnesses today

Required Readings:
Dell Orto & Power- Chapter 1: The Disability Paradigm


Gehlert and Brown-chapter 15. Social Work Practice and Disability Issues

Week 2: Theoretical Models of Chronic Illness and Disability
- Theories of chronic illness development and management
- Theories of disability
- The continuum of chronic illness and disability

Required Readings:

**Week 3: Gender, Cultural and Spiritual Issues**

- Societal reactions to chronic illness and disability
- Terminology and person-first language
- The role of spirituality in perceptions and experiences of chronic illness and disability

**Required Readings:**


Dell Orto & Power- Chapter 23: Spirituality in Disability and Illness

Dell Orto & Power- Chapter 35: Reflections and Considerations


Myths and Facts About People with Disabilities


Disability Etiquette


**Week 4: Function and Risk Assessment**

- Risk assessment
- Functional assessment
- Psychosocial assessment
- Quality of life

**Required Readings:**

Gehlert and Brown. Chapter 8. Physical and Mental Health: Interactions, Assessment, and
Intervention


Medical Outcomes Study: 36-Item Short Form Survey
http://www.rand.org/health/surveys_tools/mos/mos_core_36item.html


**II. OVERVIEW OF CHRONIC ILLNESS AND DISABILITY**

**Week 5:** Chronic Illnesses (Medical and Psychosocial Issues)
- Review of key chronic illnesses
- Review of related medical terminology

**Required Readings:**

Gehlert and Brown-chapter 18. Social Work and Chronic Disease: Diabetes, Heart Disease, and HIV/AIDS

Center for Disease Control and Prevention,
Diabetes Fact Sheet
Stroke Fact Sheet

Minnesota Department of Health
Obesity Fact Sheet

*In class:* Cancer Statistics 2008: A Presentation from the American Cancer Society

**Weeks 6 and 7:** (DISABILITY FACT SHEET DUE)
- Overview of physical, cognitive, and sensory impairments
- Review of the response to the impairments within the individual, family, and community

**Week 6:** Physical/Cognitive/Sensory Impairment, Part I (Medical and Psychosocial Issues)
**Required Readings:**
Week 7: **Physical/Cognitive/Sensory Impairment, Part II (Medical and Psychosocial Issues)**

**Required Readings:**
- Dell Orto & Power- Part 5: Personal Statement: Life Lessons Taught Me by My Disability

Week 8: **Co-Occurring Mental and Physical Health Conditions**
- Review of mental and physical conditions that occur simultaneously
- Theoretical models to assess and treat co-occurring conditions

**Required Readings:**

Week 9 Midterm Exam (In Class)

**III. Social Justice, Chronic Illness and Disability**

Week 10: **Accommodations and the Americans with Disabilities Act**
- Review of the Americans with Disabilities Act
• What rights do those with disabilities have?
• The role of accommodations for those with chronic illness and disabilities
• Define assistive technology and its use

**Required Readings:**
Dell Orto & Power- Chapter 5: Social Work Practice with People with Disabilities in the Era of Disability Rights

Dell Orto & Power- Chapter 27: Users of Assistive Technology: The Human Component


**Week 11: Negotiating the Health Care System**

• Define the health care system
• Review clinical practice guidelines and how they may assist in care
• Barriers in the health care system
• The role of the social worker in the health care system

**Required Readings:**
  Chapter 1: Step 1 Make the Healthcare System Work for You
  Chapter 2: Step 2 Become a Savvy Survivor
  Chapter 4: Step 4 Form a Strong Support Team


Clinical Practice Guidelines
  American Diabetes Association

National Association of Social Workers
  Help Starts Here
  [http://www.helpstartshere.org/health_and_wellness/disabilities/default.html](http://www.helpstartshere.org/health_and_wellness/disabilities/default.html)

**Week 12: Health Disparities**

• Overview of key health care disparities for individuals with chronic illness and disability
• How to negotiate the health care system after having knowledge of the health care disparities

**Required Readings:**


**IV. SPECIAL TOPICS**

**Week 13: Health Promotion and Prevention**
• Define health promotion and prevention
• Lifetime management of chronic illnesses and disabilities
• Healthy People 2010

**Required Readings:**
Dell Orto & Power- Chapter 14: Quality of life and psychosocial adaptation to chronic illness and disability: Preliminary analysis of a conceptual and theoretical synthesis


Gehlert and Brown-chapter 22. Alternative, Complementary, and Integrative Medicine in a Conventional Setting


Healthy People 2010
http://www.healthypeople.gov/LHI/

Week 14: Chronic Pain (FINAL PAPER DUE)
- Define chronic pain as a chronic condition
- Psychological and physiological components in chronic pain
- Overview of treatment for those with chronic pain

Required Readings:

Gehlert and Brown- Chapter 21. Pain Management and Palliative Care

Week 15 Terminal Illness and Severe Disability
- Living with severe disability
- Ethical and societal issues with severe disability and terminal illness
- Decision making

Required Readings:
Dell Orto & Power- Chapter 16: Family Decision Making in Foregoing Life-Extending Treatments
Dell Orto & Power- Chapter 34: Eugenics, Euthanasia, and Physician-Assisted Suicide

Not Dead Yet
http://www.notdeadyet.org/docs/about.html