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UNIVERSITY OF  
**CALGARY**

FACULTY OF  
**MEDICINE**

*Community Rehabilitation  
and Disability Studies*

**CORE 425 (CALGARY)**

*Half (3-0)*

**New Psychologies of Disability**

**Calendar Description**

An inquiry based course on Social Construction, Social Problem Theory and Narrative as foundations for interdisciplinary study, health capacity, community practice and personal empowerment. The course is based on the completion of three inquiry based labs.

**Content/Objectives**

- Exploration of health discourse as it informs Health Capacity and Health Promotions.
- Personal understanding of how socially constructed meaning impacts on the experience of change, illness and disability
- Interdisciplinary approaches and practices in discourse, social problem theory and narrative.
- Social problem theory, the analysis of power and resources in social policy and inclusive practices.
- The role of script and story in personal reconstruction of self.

**Outcomes/Competencies**

Through three inquiry based labs related to a health or disabling condition, the student will demonstrate competence in

- Analysis of health discourse in disabilities and chronic health conditions
- Analysis of social problems within the condition chosen
- Narrative analysis of an autobiography related to illness and disability

**Assignments**

For a chosen condition, students will complete three inquiries:

1. Identify and analyze dominant and challenging health discourses, on line assignment	30%
2. Conduct a social problem analysis and prepare a Ministers briefing note.	30%
3. Complete a narrative analysis of an autobiography on line.	40%

**Resources**

Required Textbooks:

1. Gergen, K.J. (1999). *An invitation to social construction*. London: Sage Publications
2. Loseke, D.R. (2003). *Thinking about social problems. An introduction to constructionist perspectives* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). New York: Aldine De Gruyter.

*Details for current course offerings are available at: [www.crd.s.org](http://www.crd.s.org)*

## Instructor and Course Information

**COURSE:** Core 425

**TERM:** Fall 2009

**SECTION:** L01

**TIME/DATE:** Tuesday: 3:00pm – 5:50pm

**LOCATION:** TRB 101

**INSTRUCTOR:** Nancy Marlett  
Anne Hughson

**TELEPHONE:** 220-5657  
220-6273

**FAX:** 220-6494

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[hughson@telusplanet.net](mailto:hughson@telusplanet.net)

**OFFICE HOURS:** By appointment

## Course Content

This course is based on inquiries in the form of labs that students complete independently and in groups. Class times are primarily workshops. The majority of readings are based on the students own research.

<i>Date</i>	<i>Topic and work to be done</i>	<i>Assignments due</i>
Sep 8	Overview of course/ social construction and interdisciplinary study. Social construction and deconstruction as tools for health capacity building. Introduction and resources for the first lab.	
Sep 15	Health discourse. Deconstruction of health discourse. Level 1: Workshop on literature sources and research techniques.	Choice of topic and book for assignment ready
Sep 22	Health discourse continued, level 2 – Writing discourse statements	
Sep 29	Health discourse level 3 – Discourse analysis techniques	
Oct 6	Social problem theory and Briefing summary format	Health paper.
Oct 13	Social problem analysis in groups	
Oct 20	Social change and social problems as part of chaos theory	
Oct 27	Narrative analysis and Social Construction: an introduction to Narrative practice, workshop with author	
Nov 10	Story Chains and Plot analysis (this class is extended by 3 hours)	Ministerial briefing due
Nov 17	Metaphor analysis	
Nov 24	Scripts as personal theory (this class extended by 3 hours)	
Dec 1	Summary and sharing findings related to Health Capacity and Health Promotions	Narrative analysis due

## Details of Assignments

**Each of the following inquiries/labs enable the student to approach their chosen disabling or health condition from a different perspective or approach. Students are encouraged to work in groups and share resources but will complete their final products independently. Students are expected to reflect these different approaches in writing their assignments.**

## 1. Dominant and Challenging Discourses in Health

VALUE 30%

Students will explore the knowledge debates (scientific and health) related to the causes, cures, care, and symptom control currently being promoted for their chosen topic. This will include a survey and analysis of a number of academic and professional literature sources, including those found on the Internet. This assignment is available on line in a guided self study. Marks are assigned as below.

### Deconstructing Health Discourse

Health Discourse elements	Level 1: Current debates/knowledge, in related literature. Max 3 pages per category	Level 2: List of 3-5 discourses with title, voice, source of authority, implications for client and practitioners. This is an extension of level 1.	Level 3: Discourse analysis based on questions below. 1-2 pages per category
Cause / manifestation and diagnosis	Outline of causes, life course of condition and diagnostic processes. <b>Marks: (5)</b>	Identify main discourses related to the inception of the condition. This is the discourse of science and assessment. <b>(5)</b>	Critical discourse analysis related to dominant discourse and the current debates of cause, manifestation and diagnosis. <b>(10)</b>
Cure / Prognosis / Outcomes/Prevention	Outline of current debates related to cure, prognosis and outcomes <b>(5)</b>	Identify main discourses related to the prognosis of the condition. This is the physician discourse. <b>(5)</b>	Critical discourse analysis related to links between cause and cure, <b>(10)</b>
Care and Support	Outline current approaches and resources allocated to care and support <b>(5)</b>	Identify the main discourses related to care and support. This is the rehabilitation and welfare discourse. <b>(5)</b>	Critical discourse analysis of factors promoting or obstructing resources for care and support <b>(10)</b>
Control of unwanted symptoms	Describe language used to describe symptoms, who names symptoms and what aspects of control are contested. <b>(5)</b>	Describe the power foundations of control inherent in the discourses related to unwanted symptoms. This is the management of behavior discourse. <b>(5)</b>	Critical discourse analysis of location of blame. How is control justified, what limits are there to tolerance. <b>(10)</b>

**2-3 page analysis of what you have learned about the workings of discourse in health through the study of your condition. Which of the categories are most active in relationship to the discourse of your condition, what changes in discourse have been apparent and might become active in the future? What have you learned about the power of discourse within science and practice (20).**

## 2. Ministerial briefing note

VALUE 30%

This assignment is a three-step process.

a) Using local or internet advocacy/service groups, conduct a historical policy analysis of the service and resource needs of the condition (2-4 pages). Do this after you have read the Loseke's readings so that you are familiar with the construct.

- i. Brief history of the condition as recognized in science by the general public and media.
- ii. Brief look at resource needs and funding alternatives.
- iii. Overview of the current and proposed resource/service needs.
- iv. Alliances and Sensitivities.

b) Using Loseke's outline answer the following questions (3 –4 pages).

Identify the social problem (what has been identified as troublesome, prevalent and can and should be changed)

- v. Who is claiming that there is a social problem and how are they making these claims.
- vi. What authority are they drawing on (research or science, morality, professional expertise, service provider or consumer)?
- vii) What audience are they appealing to and how.

viii) What is it that they are hoping the audience will do based on the claims being made?

- c) Using the above information prepare a two page briefing note addressed to an appropriate Minister outlining the current political situation of the supporters of this condition as it relates to the social problem you have identified. An example of a Ministerial briefing note will be provided during class

Marks will be assigned for completing all questions, the quality of the analysis, identification of the social problem and style. This paper will be marked for the following style elements: general written expectations, statement of issue, and presentation of background information, argument, and recommendations. 10% is awarded to each step.

### 3. Personal Meaning and Narrative analysis

VALUE40%

This assignment will enable students to explore narrative theory and practice related to 'story', 'metaphor' and 'scripts' to understand techniques for working with people to achieve personal meaning of their changing condition.

Students choose an autobiography and complete a narrative analysis using the workbook available online. Marks will be assigned for completeness and ability to apply theory and techniques to a practice framework. General English standards will apply to this work. Students will include a 5 – 7 page summary of what they have learned from working with the autobiography, and how they may use the techniques in practice. Marks will be given for evidence of reflexivity and integration of concepts within the student's personal practice context.

**\*Late marks will be deducted from assignments which are not submitted on time. 5% will be deducted on the first late calendar day, 10% on the second, and 15% on the third after which time assignments will not be accepted**

## Marking Scheme

95 – 100	A+	80 – 84	B+	65 – 69	C+	50 – 54	D+
90 – 94	A	75 – 79	B	60 – 64	C	45 – 49	D
85 – 89	A-	70 – 74	B-	55 – 59	C-	Below 44	F

### NOTE:

**The last day to change/register for courses and pay balance of fees for the Fall session is September 21, 2009.**

**The last day to withdraw is December 8, 2009.**

All assignments will be held at the Community Rehabilitation and Disability Studies office for only one (1) year after the last day of term.

**Academic Accommodation:** Students with a disability, who require academic accommodation, need to register with the Disability Resource Centre <http://www.ucalgary.ca/UofC/Others/DRC> MC 295, telephone 220-8237. Academic accommodation letters need to be provided to course instructors no later than fourteen (14) days after the first day of class. **It is a student's responsibility to register with the Disability Resource Centre and to request academic accommodation, if required.**

**IMPORTANT:** Intellectual honesty is the cornerstone of the development and acquisition of knowledge and requires that the contribution of others be acknowledged. Consequently, plagiarism or cheating on any assignment is regarded as an extremely serious academic offence. Students should examine sections of the University Calendar that present a Statement of Intellectual Honesty and definitions and penalties associated with Plagiarism/Cheating/and Other Academic Misconduct.

## Purchasing a Textbook from the University of Calgary Bookstore:

- Shop On-line [www.calgarybookstore.ca/](http://www.calgarybookstore.ca/) Click on --> Shop On-line; Click on --> Textbooks; Follow the directions.
- Order by Phone: (403) 220-5937; Toll Free: 1-877-220-5937
- In Person: Go to the University of Calgary Bookstore, MacEwan Student Centre, Room 155, 2500 University Drive NW, Calgary, AB T2N 1N4