

ENGL 220: COMPOSING DISABILITY

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course provides an introduction to disability studies, focusing specifically on the role of the body and embodied experience in compositional and rhetorical situations. In addition to engaging with readings about bodies—with an emphasis on how disability intersects with race, class, gender, and sexuality—students will examine representations of the body in contemporary media to enrich their understanding of what kinds of bodies are included and excluded in scholarly and popular discourse. Students will also be expected to practices that enable them to produce projects that follow the principles of universal design.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

- Students will be able to read, think, and speak clearly about different definitions, histories, and approaches to disability, especially in relation to race, class, gender and sexuality.
- Students will become familiar with a range of critical works that examine the role that the body plays in writing and communicative practices.
- Students will critically attend to practices and principles associated with universal (assessable) design.
- Students will produce written texts in which they critically engage the central theories and ideas of the course.
- Working in groups, students will create presentations that illustrate a key point or theme from the assigned readings.

COURSE MATERIALS

Students will be required to purchase the following texts for the course:

Nielsen, Kim. *A Disability History of the United States*.

Dolmage, Jay. *Disability Rhetoric*.

Wysocki, Anne and Kristin Arola, eds. *Composing Media, Composing Embodiment*.

ASSIGNMENT BREAKDOWN/ASSESSMENT

Attendance/Participation: 10%

Students are expected to be on time, and prepared to engage with the course readings, workshops, or other activities we have scheduled on a particular day. Students are required to contribute in-class to discussions. Arriving to class unprepared will result in progressively lowered grades for participation. Students are expected to attend class from the **beginning** of the class to the end throughout the semester. Latenesses will be noted after class time and added to the student's total number of absences at the end of the semester. I reserve the right to count *any* excessive lateness to class as a full absence, even if the student attends part

of the class. Please make sure cell phones are turned off and put away at the start of class. Anyone checking email, text-messaging, getting up to leave class, etc. will be marked as absent.

Weekly Reading Questions/Responses: 20%

Students will be expected to turn in at the start of each class discussion questions based on the assigned readings. Students will be expected to come up with two discussion questions per class session (when readings are assigned) and to compose a short response to at least one of the questions they have posed for class discussion. This will help facilitate class discussion and further ensure that students are keeping up with class readings.

Midterm Paper: 20% (3-4 pages)

The midterm paper assignment requires students to summarize key points or ideas from readings assigned during the first half of the semester, putting them into dialogue with other of the assigned readings. This will help ensure that students are able to recognize key themes in the readings and to synthesize, connect, and/or put them into dialogue with other assigned readings, gaining a fuller, more nuanced understanding of course content. A-level papers will demonstrate outstanding writing quality and the student's ability to make compelling, critically-engaged connections between at least six of the assigned readings. B-level papers will demonstrate above-average writing quality and the student's ability to make connections between at least five of the assigned readings. C-level papers will demonstrate average writing quality and the student's ability to make connections between at least four of the assigned readings. D-level papers will demonstrate below average writing quality and/or the inability to make compelling connections between assigned readings. F-level papers will demonstrate failed writing quality and/or the inability to make connections between the assigned readings.

Final Paper: 30% (5-7 pages)

The final paper assignment requires students to summarize key points or ideas from readings assigned during the second part of the semester, putting them into dialogue with other readings assigned in the second portion of the semester. This will help ensure that students are able to recognize key themes in the readings and to synthesize, connect, and/or put them into dialogue with other assigned readings, gaining a fuller, more nuanced understanding of course content. A-level papers will demonstrate outstanding writing quality and the student's ability to make compelling, critically-engaged connections between at least seven of the assigned readings. B-level papers will demonstrate above-average writing quality and the student's ability to make connections between at least six of the assigned readings. C-level papers will demonstrate average writing quality and the student's ability to make connections between at least five of the assigned readings. D-level papers will demonstrate below average writing quality and/or the inability to make compelling connections between assigned readings. F-level papers will demonstrate failed writing quality and/or the inability to make connections between the assigned readings.

Group Project: 20%

The group project encourages active, hands-on learning, by allowing students the opportunity of working together to come up with ways of applying (i.e., through an in-class activity or discussion) key ideas or principles from our readings. Students will be placed in

groups and assigned the readings they will be responsible for at the start of the semester. The goal of this assignment is to develop the students' research skills and ability to develop analytical questions and facilitate discussion.

GRADE BREAKDOWN

90-100% A
80-89% B
70-79% C
60-69% D

ACCOMMODATIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

UMBC is committed to eliminating discriminatory obstacles that may disadvantage students based on disability. If you have a disability and want to request accommodations, contact Student Support Services (SSS) in the Math/Psych Building, Room 213 or Academic IV- B wing Room 345 (or call 410- 455- 2459 or 410- 455- 3250). SSS will require you to provide appropriate documentation of disability and complete a Request for Services form available at <http://my.umbc.edu/groups/sss>. If you require accommodations for this class, make an appointment to meet with me to discuss your SSS- approved accommodations.

LATE WORK POLICY

All due dates are firm and all major assignments must be completed to pass the course. I may consider granting extensions in some cases, but you must contact me about the extension request at least one week in advance of the due date. Any/all late work will be docked a letter grade per calendar day that the work is late.

ON ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

"By enrolling in this course, each student assumes the responsibilities of an active participant in UMBC's scholarly community in which everyone's academic work and behavior are held to the highest standards of honesty. Cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, and helping others to commit these acts are all forms of academic dishonesty, and they are wrong. Academic misconduct could result in disciplinary action that may include, but is not limited to, suspension or dismissal." To read the full Student Academic Conduct Policy, consult the UMBC Student Handbook, the Faculty Handbook, or the UMBC Policies section of the UMBC Directory" (www.umbc.edu/provost/integrity/faculty.html).

WEEKLY SCHEDULE

WEEK ONE:

--course introduction/overview
Introduction, *DHUS*

“Prothesis,” *DR*, 1-18

WEEK TWO

“Disability Studies of Rhetoric,” *DR*, 19-30
Chapter 1 *DHUS*, 1-11

WEEK THREE

“An Archive and Anatomy of Disability Myths,” *DR*, 31-62
Chapter 2 *DHUS*, 11-30

WEEK FOUR

Chapter 3-4 *DHUS*, 31-77

WEEK FIVE

Chapters 2-3 *DR*, 63-124

WEEK SIX

Chapters 5-6 *DHUS*, 78-99

WEEK SEVEN

Chapter 7 *DHUS*, 100-130

MID-TERM PAPER DUE

WEEK EIGHT

Chapter 8 *DHUS*, 157-183
“A Repertoire and Choreography of Disability Rhetorics,” *DR*, 125-148

WEEK NINE

SPRING BREAK

WEEK TEN

IN-CLASS WORKSHOP/PLANNING SESSIONS FOR GROUP PRESENTATION
[NOTE: EACH GROUP WILL CHOOSE A CHAPTER FROM CMCE
TO FOCUS ON FOR THEIR PRESENTATION]

WEEK ELEVEN

Chapters 4-5 *DR*, 149-192

WEEK TWELVE

Chapter 6 *DR*, 225-288

“Prosthesis *DR*, 288-295

WEEK THIRTEEN

In-class presentations for groups 1 and 2

WEEK FOURTEEN

In-class presentations for groups 3 and 4

WEEK FIFTEEN

In-class presentations for groups 4 and 5

**[NOTE: FINAL PAPERS WILL BE DUE DURING
FINALS WEEK, DATE TBA]**