Course: Critical Disability Studies 5020 3.0: Social Justice in the Labour Force

Term: Winter 2017 (January to April)

Professor: Thomas Klassen
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   Office hours: Wednesday and Fridays 10:30 to 11:30 and by appointment
   Websites: www.yorku.ca/tklassen and www.thomasklassen.net

Date, time and location: Wednesday 11:30 – 14:20 in Vari Hall 1156

Course Description

This course examines aspects social justice for disabled people in regards to the labour market and workplace including employment rights. The purpose of this course is to provide a critical assessment about the extent to which social justice struggles have influenced employment policies and work experiences for people with disabilities. The course will focus on public policy, that is, the role of the state, in the labour market and the workplace in regard to people with disabilities.

Areas of analysis include: enabling and disabling workplace environments; disability employment accommodation theory and practice; the influence of activism and economic factors on policy-making; occupational health and safety; employment rights; the social construction of productivity and the valuation of work. Most of the course will focus on Canada, but some analysis of developments in the United States is also undertaken.

Cases studies will be examined to highlight the specific issues. More broadly gender, race, ethnicity, and class will also be discussed in relation to social justice, disability and the labour force.
This course will be primarily seminar discussion with some lectures. Students will be part of a group case study in which they will probe one instance of discrimination in employment. Students will have the opportunity to analyze one area of interest in depth as part of the research paper for the course.

**Course Resources**
An electronic collection of resources has been prepared for this course. Most materials can be accessed directly from the web or via the York Libraries collection. Some materials will be made available by the instructor.

**Evaluation**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title of Evaluation</th>
<th>Date due</th>
<th>Worth (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Seminar leadership (oral presentation of readings) and participation</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case study (group project)</td>
<td>Weeks 3 to 10 (presentations in weeks 10 and 11)</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research essay proposal</td>
<td>February 15</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research paper</td>
<td>April 5</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The last day to withdraw from this course without receiving a grade is March 10, 2017.

Notes to evaluation scheme:

1. Late assignments will not be accepted. Assignments may only be submitted in hard copy during office hours or class time.

2. Assignments must be written in grammatically correct English. Students must have assignments edited prior to submission.

3. For seminar leadership (oral presentation of readings) there will be an anonymous peer evaluation process to assist students to improve presentation skills.

4. It is strongly recommended that e-mail and other messaging services not be accessed during class time.

5. Plagiarism, or the submission of work which you did not write, is an extremely serious academic offense and may lead to formal charges of academic dishonesty, depending on the extent of plagiarism. Please see the [academic integrity tutorial section](#) on the Faculty Graduate Studies website.
6. Please note that additional required readings will be assigned based on the interests of students in the course.

**Grading**

Only a letter of grade will be given for assignments (no percentage grades will be provided). The grading scheme for the course is shown below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grades</th>
<th>Descriptions pertaining to the CDS program</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A+</td>
<td>Exceptional Excellence in writing, research, reading and originality.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Excellent Work that shows a superior command of the subject, clearly Written, creatively researched.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>High Work that shows a superior command of the material but limited in breath or depth of research and/or presentation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>Highly Satisfactory Research and writing skills may be flawed in some visible and correctable way. Absence of Critical perspective.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Satisfactory Work that meets minimum expectations of a graduate student in research, writing, and reading skills. Absence of Critical perspective.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Conditional Unsatisfactory work: flawed in methodology or critical assumption, incoherently organized, poorly written, or superficially researched. Absence of critical perspective.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>Failure Work that is far below what is required. Does not address the assignment adequately. Work that is plagiarized. Absence of critical perspective.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**WEEKLY SCHEDULE**

Overview of course: key themes, assignments, and related

2. January 18 – Canadian Dimensions of Labour Market and Workplace Policy

Watch the following YouTube video:


3. January 25 - Capitalism and Employment


Business and Disability: Available at the following link

4. February 1 – Rights and the Canadian Workplace (part 1)

Lynk, Michael. 2008. Disability and the Duty to Accommodate in the Canadian Workplace: Leading Principles and Recent Cases. Available at the following link

Bona Fide Occupational Requirements and Bona Fide Justifications under the Canadian Human Rights Act: The Implications of Meiorin and Grismer. 2010. Report by the Canadian Human Rights Commission. Available at the following link

One paper available online
5. February 8 – Additional Perspectives on Employment and Disability


Available online at the following link

6. February 15 – Rights and the Canadian Workplace (part 2)


Become familiar with reports of the Council of Canadians with Disabilities in regard to employment. Available at the following link

Ontario Human Rights Commission. 2009. *Policy and guidelines on disability and the duty to accommodate*. Toronto. Available at the following Link 1 and Link 2

February 22 – Reading week – no class meeting

7. March 1 - Integration and Accommodations for Workers with Disabilities in the United States

Available at the following link or the York University Library.

One more reading to be assigned based on interests of the students in the course.

8. March 8 - Workers with Disabilities in Canada the Developing World


Additional articles will be added based on the research interests of students

9. March 15 – Case Study: Disability, Age and Employment


Documentary video: *Living Forever: The Longevity Revolution* at the following [link](#)

10. March 22 - Case Study: Presentation and Debate (1)

In addition to the presentation and debate, each team will recommend one article/reading that all members of the class are to review

11. March 29 – Case Study: Presentation and Debate (2)

In addition to the presentation and debate, each team will recommend one article/reading that all members of the class are to review
12. April 5 – The Future of Disability at Work


Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. 2010. Sickness, Disability and Work: Breaking the Barriers - CANADA: Opportunities for Collaboration. Paris, OECD. At the following link
The proposal may be conceived as a map that provides direction for the research and writing of the research essay. The more detailed and developed the map, the less difficult it should be to write the essay.

You may select any topic of interest related to the major themes of the course, but need to consult with the course director before beginning to write the proposal. The readings for our course may provide you with suggestions or ideas, as well as sources. Aim to have a focused topic, problem, issue, controversy, debate or dilemma that is central to your proposal. Avoid vague and general topics. For your proposal you should also indicate why what you have selected to explore is interesting and important.

It is essential that the proposal be based on some (initial) research you have conducted. The proposal will require library and web-based research and you must include bibliography that includes the works consulted so far. It will not be acceptable to have only on-line documents in your bibliography.

There is no one format that will be most appropriate for the proposal. The length of the proposal should be no less than five pages, in addition to the bibliography.

The research essay must be professional in all aspects. As such, it must have a cover page, title, table of contents, five or six sections (such as introduction, etc.), bibliography and, if you wish, appendices. You are encouraged to use a few visual aids – graphs, charts, photos, diagrams and tables – that must be clearly labelled and referenced. The essay should be a holistic work that demonstrates considerable research and reflection, as well as strong writing skills.

The essay must be at least 20 pages in length using double-spacing and 12 point font. Grades will be deducted for grammatical errors. You must have the paper read (edited) by others before submitting it. Please attach your proposal to the essay, and the annotated bibliography.
YORK UNIVERSITY  
Critical Disability Studies Graduate Program  
Faculty of Graduate Studies  

Course: Critical Disability Studies 5020 3.0: Social Justice in the Labour Force  
PEER EVALUATION FOR ORAL PRESENTATIONS OF READINGS  

Presenter: ________________________________  
Topic/Title: ________________________________  
Date: ____________________  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>poor</th>
<th>average</th>
<th>excellent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge of the topic</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presentation technique/style</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Innovation/creativity</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Comments/Feedback:
Students will join small groups to collaboratively work on a case study; namely, a human rights complaint on the grounds of discrimination in employment due to disability. For this case study, each group will complete a Human Rights Tribunal of Ontario application. As part of the application the group will utilize a situation that has occurred (to a member of the group, or a drawn from the literature/media). In completing the application, the group will make reference to key readings from the course and the scholarly literature.

Each group of students will also act as a respondent to an application. This will involve reading an application and then drafting a reply. Both groups will have the opportunity to meet twice during class times to discuss the complaint and response. During the last weeks of the course, both groups will present their respective cases to colleagues in the class who will act as Tribunal members.

The objective of the case study is three-fold: i) to illustrate the complexity of human rights at the workplace; ii) allow students to apply the readings to a specific example; and iii) permit students to engage in discussion and debate.