ACADEMY
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EXCELLENCE

Harper College

Harper College Graduate Equivalency Course (GEC) Syllabus

Creating an Accessible Learning Environment for Students With Disabilities
3 GEC Hours
Spring 2023
January 23, 2023 – March 17, 2023 (8 weeks)
This course is all online, with no synchronous sessions.

Faculty Information

Pascuala Herrera, M.Ed, Harper Faculty Emeritus

pherrera@harpercollege.edu; pascuala.harper@gmail.com 847-840-3436

Course Information

Course Description

Students with disabilities are entering postsecondary institutions like Harper in larger numbers than in the past. Regardless of the format of the course – online, blended, or face-to-face, Harper, like all public institutions receiving federal funding, must provide access. Access and Disability Services (ADS) who support and approve legally mandated accommodations for students with disabilities, faculty, and staff are all responsible in ensuring an accessible environment for all students. In this course, participants will have an opportunity to learn basic information about the ten most common visible and invisible disabilities, in order to evaluate a course or program and develop methods that make the learning environment inclusive and welcoming to all students, including students with disabilities. The course will utilize real case studies of past Harper students, to have an honest discussion about the challenges that students face when navigating an inaccessible learning environment. The pandemic added additional challenges that will be discussed in this course.

Course Goals

1. Participants will identify the basic characteristics and information about disabilities.
2. Participants will discuss the challenges faced by students with disabilities.
3. Participants will employ strategies and tips to create accessible environments for students with disabilities.
4. Participants will design their learning environment allowing students with disabilities to feel welcomed and included.

Learning Outcomes

I. By using a case study method, participants will gain a basic understanding of the characteristics and learning needs of students with disabilities.
II. Participants will use the course content to create an inclusive environment for all learners including students with disabilities.
III. Participants will apply the Universal Design principles in making a course accessible.

Course Outline

  I. Introduction to Disability Issues and the Law
  II. Learning Disabilities and Attention Deficit Hyperactive Disorder
  III. Anxiety Disorder and Depression
  IV. Intellectual Disabilities and Autism Spectrum Disorder
  V. Chronic Illness and Physical Disabilities
  VI. Deaf/Hard of Hearing and Blind/Visual Impairments
  VII. Presentations of your Accessibility Audit

Required Text

No Textbook is required.

Recommended books: *Not Always a Valley of Tears: A Memoir of a Life Well Lived* and *Life is a Garden to Cultivate: The ABC's Towards a Better Life,* by Pascuala Herrera.

All other material is available on Blackboard.

Student Expectations and Requirements

I. **Active Participation**:

This course requires active participation in the course. Participants will be expected to share their own experiences of successes and challenges in accommodating students with disabilities. We will all learn from each other. Must log onto Bb at least two times a week.

II. **Reading**:
Students will be expected to critically read the material for each module, watch the videos, and explore the links in each module. The material includes hyperlinks, and all participants are encouraged to read the materials associated with the links. Any questions or ideas that surface after carefully reflecting on the course materials should be posted on the discussion boards.

III. **Accessibility Audit**:

Participants will be expected to choose a course or college operation and to conduct an accessibility audit. Utilizing the strategies discussed, participants will design a plan and make at least one course or college operation inclusive and welcoming for students with disabilities.

Course Requirements and Assignments

I. Participation in discussion boards

II. Case Study Reflection Journal (choose 4 out of 10 disabilities)

III. Accessibility Audit/Action Plan (Presentations during last class)

Methods of Evaluation

I.   Participation (based on Bb activity)   6 classes at 10 points each*   = 60 pts

   *I exclude first and last class. Points based on Blackboard participation measured by posts and logging onto Bb at least two times a week.

II. Case Study Reflection Journal   4 at 10 points each   = 40 pts

III. Accessibility Audit/Action Plan   1 at 100 points   =100 pts

   TOTAL POINTS   =200 pts

Grading Scale

200 – 180 pts   = P
179 – 160 pts   = P
159 – 140 pts   = P
139 – 120 pts   = P
Below 120 pts   = F

Course Calendar

Class 1 -   Getting to Know You
Introduction to Disabilities
Homework: You can choose to write LD or ADHD Reflections

Class 2 -   LD and ADHD
Go over Case Studies and Reflections
Homework: You can choose to write Anxiety or Depression Reflections

Class 3 -   Anxiety and Depression
Go over Case Studies and Reflections
Homework: You can choose to write Intellectual Disabilities or Autism Spectrum Disorder Reflections

Class 4 -   Intellectual Disabilities and Autism Spectrum Disorder
Go over Case Studies and Reflections
Homework: You can choose to write Chronic Illness or Physical Disabilities Reflections

Class 5 -   Chronic Illnesses and Physical Disabilities
Go over Case Studies and Reflections

Homework: **You can choose to write Blind/Visual Impairment or Deaf/Hard of Hearing Reflections**

Class 6 -   Blind/Visual Impairment and Deaf/Hard of Hearing
                         Go over Case Studies and Reflections
                         Capstone Assignment – Accessibility Audit
                         Homework: Review Modules 1 -6
                         Homework: Complete Accessibility Audit/Action Plan

Class 7 -   Work on Accessibility Audit and write an Action Plan. Create a video (5-10 minutes in length) to share your work with me and the class.

Class 8 -   **Capstone Project Presentations**

Graduate Equivalency (GEC) Policies

Enrollment
The Academy for Teaching Excellence requires a minimum of six (6) faculty to be enrolled in any GEC to be offered. The maximum enrollment in any GEC is determined collaboratively with the instructor and the Academy. Enrollment is measured two (2) weeks before the first scheduled day of the course.

Faculty wishing to participate in a GEC will register for the course through the Academy website. All GECs are pre-approved for credit.

Registration and Withdrawal Policy
The registration deadline is two (2) weeks before the first scheduled day of the course.

A faculty member will have seven (7) calendar days from the beginning of the course (first day of class) to un-enroll by notifying both the instructor and kmichela@harpercollege.edu. After seven (7) days, any faculty member who does not successfully complete the course will receive a "XV" (Incomplete) on their transcript and no credit will be awarded.

Receiving Credit for GECs
GEC credits will appear in a faculty member's professional development list (full-time faculty) and transcript within two weeks after the end of each semester. A faculty member may repeat a GEC at any time; however, because GEC credit is used for promotion and tenure, credit for a course may only be awarded once.

Final Grades
GEC grades will be awarded as "PV" (Pass) for students who have successfully completed the course and "XV" (Incomplete) for students who have not. No other grade options will be assigned in any case.

Policies

Students with Disabilities and Academic Accommodations
Harper College strives to make all learning experiences as accessible as possible. If you anticipate or experience academic barriers based on your disability (including mental health, chronic or temporary medical conditions), please let Access and Disability Services (ADS) know immediately at 847.925.6266. ADS will privately discuss the options you have, including the accommodations they offer. You are welcome to register with Access and Disability Service by going to www.harpercollege.edu/ads and fill out the application for ADS services. Once you have your accommodations approved by ADS, please make arrangements with the instructor as soon as possible to discuss your accommodations so that they may be implemented in a timely fashion.

ADS contact information: 847.925.6266, ads@harpercollege.edu, Building I, Room 103.

Equal Educational Opportunity Statement
In providing educational programs and opportunities, the College will not discriminate against any individual based on race, color, religion, sex, national origin, ancestry, age, marital status, sexual orientation, gender-related identity, disability, unfavorable discharge from military service, or any other legally protected category. It is the intent of the Board of Trustees to comply with all applicable local, state, and federal statutes, regulations and ordinances prohibiting such discrimination.

If you believe you have experienced discrimination or harassment (whether on or off campus) that affects your ability to participate in class or any of Harper College's programs, please seek assistance from any of the following resources:

- For gender-based or sexual misconduct (including sexual assault and sexual harassment) by any person, visit the
Harper College Title IX resource page to learn more about your support and reporting options.
- For any other harassment/discrimination by an employee, contact the College's Chief Human Resources Officer at 847-925-6216.

Please be advised that faculty members are required to report to the College if they learn that a crime, harassment, or discrimination may have occurred.