

Rider University
BHP 305: INCLUSIVE EDUCATION
AND REPRESENTATIONS OF
DISABILITY IN LITERATURE
AND MEDIA

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About Us:

Dr. Delisio has spent the last 18 years in education and truly has a passion for the field of special education. She taught for 9 years in New York City and Orlando, FL in general education, inclusive, and self-contained settings, and in both public and private schools. After that she, went on to earn a Ph.D. in Exceptional Student Education from the University of Central Florida, has been teaching at Rider as an associate professor of special education since 2015. She is most interested in (and conducts research related to) students with ASD, and the use of Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles in curriculum design. On a personal level, she is married and has boy-girl twins, Lorenzo and Nicoletta. In her very limited spare time, she loves to work out, shop, read, and travel.

Dr. Harris teaches a variety of courses in writing, literature, film, and gender studies. She received her Ph.D. in English Literature from the Graduate Center of the City University of New York, and she began her full-time teaching career at Queensborough Community College on the border of Long Island. She came to Rider in 2014, and she has made her home in the Film and Media Studies and Gender and Sexuality Studies programs as well as in the English Department. She loves reading and writing about twentieth-century culture with a particular focus on changing ideas of gender, sexuality, and race. She is also parent to a five-year old, Shoshana, and cares for a school of neon tetras as well. When she has time, she loves reading for fun, watching her favorite television shows, catching up with old and new friends, chatting with neighbors, and exploring the weird and wonderful sites of New Jersey.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

In “Inclusive Education and Representations of Disability in Literature and Media,” we will explore how literature, film, television, and other media (i.e., podcasts, blogs, etc.) portray disability in ways that contribute to—or challenge—clinical concepts. We will particularly attend to how these texts and other media represent the education of students with disabilities and how they aim to educate readers, viewers, and consumers of these various media. We will also be focusing on diversity in a number of ways. The assigned readings and media texts demonstrate diversity across genres, and will represent diversity in disability, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, and more. We will examine the various ways in which diversity has influenced perceptions of disability, the education of students with disabilities, and representation of disability in the media.

Assignments include written papers, book club discussions, and in-class discussion.

There are no exams.

COURSE GOALS AND BIG IDEAS

We envision this course as a supportive and inclusive learning community where we can share experiences, engage critically with relevant texts, ask big questions, and discuss our thoughts and ideas. Our goal is for this course to be a highly interactive class that relies on your thoughtful contributions.

There will be readings from a variety of texts, including poetry, historical fiction, realistic fiction, memoirs, graphic novels, and more. We will also be active and critical consumers of a variety of media, such as blogs, podcasts, television and film.

There are **five essential questions** that will guide your learning experience in this course, that you will be able to answer by the end of the semester:

1. What is disability and how, where, and when do definitions of disability change?
2. How do literary and media texts influence the way we approach disability, and how have literary and media texts helped us understand disability in new ways?
3. How do literary texts and various media intersect with practices and theories in special education?
4. How and why has education become more inclusive over the last fifty years?
5. What are the perceptions and misconceptions of students with disabilities in the classroom? How might literary and media texts contribute to or challenge these perceptions and misconceptions?

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Readings and Other Media:

Course Texts:

We will read and discuss fictional and nonfictional literary texts, such as:

- *Out of My Mind*, by Sharon Draper
- *Beauty is a Verb: The New Poetry of Disability*, Edited by Jennifer Bartlett, Sheila Black, and Michael Northen
- *The Man Who Mistook His Wife for a Hat*, by Oliver Sacks
- *Disability Visibility: First-Person Stories from the Twenty-First Century*, by Alice Wong
- *The Pretty One*, by Keah Brown
- *Unbroken: 13 Stories Starring Disabled Teens*, Edited by Marieke Nijkamp
- *Meet me in Outer Space*, by Melinda Grace
- *The Degenerates*, by Jennifer Ann Mann
- *Care Work: Dreaming Disability Justice* by Leah Lakshmi Piepzna-Samarasinha
- *Fun Home* by Alison Bechdel
- *Stitches* by David Small

Podcasts: *(These will be provided to you, or you can access them for free)*

We will listen to and discuss selected clips from podcasts, such as:

- Disability Visibility Project: <https://disabilityvisibilityproject.com/podcast/>
- Inclusive Education Project: <https://www.inclusiveeducationproject.org/podcast>
- The Special Ed Files: <https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/the-special-ed-files/id1524523875>

Disability Blogs:

- Finding Cooper's Voice: <https://www.findingcoopersvoice.com/>
- Carly Findlay: <http://carlyfindlay.com.au/>

Film and TV: *(We will provide selected clips in class)*

We will sample and discuss selected clips from films and television shows, such as:

- *Rainman*
- *Coda*
- *Sound of Metal*
- *Crip Camp*
- *Warm Spring*
- *I Am Sam*
- *What's Eating Gilbert Grape*
- *The Other Sister*
- *The Theory of Everything*
- *Love on the Spectrum*
- *Atypical*
- *Breaking Bad*
- *Ozark*

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*****Other readings or media may be assigned throughout the semester; please check Canvas regularly for updates to reading assignments. Most are already posted in the corresponding module, but if something new related to our content becomes available, we will share it with you.*****

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

These are the big ideas we have used to create this course, so our goal is that by the end of this semester you will have, or will be able to do the following:

Course Learning Outcomes	University Learning Outcomes	Sample Assignments
Define disability and demonstrate an understanding of how, when, and where definitions of disability change.	Critical Thinking Social and Ethical Responsibility	Compare and contrast the representation of disability in a literary and clinical text.
Analyze how literary and media representations influence our understanding of disability.	Critical Thinking Social and Ethical Responsibility Written Communication	Compose a 6-8-page research paper analyzing representations of disability.
Explain how and why education has become more inclusive over the past fifty years.	Critical Thinking Social and Ethical Responsibility	Write discussion questions in response to readings on accessible education.
Synthesize literary and media representations of disability with practices and theories of special education.	Critical Thinking Social and Ethical Responsibility Written Communication	Compose a 6-8-page research paper analyzing representations of disability with theories of special education.
Assess how literary and media representations contribute to or challenge misrepresentations of disability.	Critical Thinking Social and Ethical Responsibility Written Communication	Compose a 6-8-page research paper assessing representations of disability.
Explain how disability intersects with other forms of identity like race, sexuality, and gender.	Critical Thinking Social and Ethical Responsibility	Write discussion questions in response to readings about disability as intersecting with race, gender, and sexuality.

COURSE EXPECTATIONS:

Submitting Assignments: Our preference is that you upload each assignment (or share a link to your Google doc, Google slides, Google Site, etc.) to our course Canvas site. However, if you are not able to submit via Canvas, you can always **email your assignment** as an attachment to BOTH of your professors at: LHarris@rider.edu and LDelisio@rider.edu

Redoing Assignments: As educators, we make a commitment to be lifelong learners, who are always striving to improve our craft. Therefore, we believe strongly in the power of formative assessment and constructive feedback. Our goal is for you to learn as much as possible from this course and be able to effectively and efficiently apply these tools in your own classrooms. Therefore, in certain cases, if we notice you have struggled with a specific assignment, we will provide you with feedback and allow for resubmissions of assignments (and will regrade these assignments) within one week of our initial feedback.

Late Work Policy: Ideally, your work *should* be submitted by midnight on the due date. (Due dates can be found highlighted in yellow in the section below titled “Course Assignments” as well as on the Course Schedule). However, we are also human beings like all of you and understand that life happens- kids, family issues, emergencies, flat tires, medical issues – and everything in between. We also understand that you are individuals who learn at different paces and in different ways.

Therefore, we have **TWO** flexible options for you to submit late work, and we encourage you to use **BOTH** of these options one time each throughout the course of the semester without penalty, explanation, or question (so, you can submit 2-3 late assignments without penalty --see below). Please reach out to BOTH of your professors directly should you have any difficulties with other assignments.

- **Option 1: “The Time Bank”** - You have a two-day grace period for one assignment **OR** two one-day extensions for two different assignments. (So, 1 or 2 late assignments, depending on which option you choose)
- **Option 2: “The Late Work Day”** – There will be ONE day in the semester (please see course schedule for date), in which you can submit any assignment you missed.

OUR Expectations of You:

We expect that you will be an enthusiastic, active, professional participant in this course. We expect that you will maintain a positive and appropriate disposition with your peers and colleagues, and we expect that you will keep an open line of communication with us so that we can support you throughout our time together in this course. Email is the best way to reach us, but we are also always willing to set up one-on-one meetings with you.

Your Expectations of US

You should expect both of us to be supportive, knowledgeable, responsive leaders who are passionate about the fields of special education and disability studies. This means we will respond to your emails/questions within 48 hours. It means we will model our own professionalism, collaboration skills, and educational philosophies through open communication and a supportive, inclusive learning environment. It means we will always respect your opinions, ideas, backgrounds, and differences.

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Students with Disabilities Policy:

Your success in this class is important to us. We will all need accommodations because we all learn differently. If there are aspects of this course that prevent you from learning or exclude you, please let BOTH of us know as soon as possible. Together we'll develop strategies to meet both your needs and the requirements of the course. We encourage you to visit the Student Accessibility & Support Services office to determine how you could improve your learning as well. The Student Accessibility & Support Services office is located in the BLC, Suite 201. The phone number is (609) 895-5492 and the email is accessibility@rider.edu. If you need official accommodations, you have a right to have these met. There are also a range of resources on campus, including a wide variety of supports offered through the Academic Success Center (located in the BLC – Suite 237).

We will all need accommodations because we all learn differently. If there are aspects of this course that prevent you from learning or exclude you, please let us know as soon as possible. Together we'll develop strategies to meet both your needs and the requirements of the course. We encourage you to visit the Student Accessibility & Support Services office to determine how you could improve your learning as well. The Student Accessibility & Support Services office is located in the BLC, Suite 201. The phone number is (609) 895-5492 and the email is accessibility@rider.edu. If you need official accommodations, you have a right to have these met. There are also a range of resources on campus, including a wide variety of supports offered through the Academic Success Center (located in the BLC – Suite 237).

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS

Book Club Essay and Presentation

Working individually or in groups of up to three, students will read a realistic, fiction, non-fiction biography, or autobiography about an individual with a disability. The book title must be approved by the instructors. The group will write a summary of the book, and explain how reading this book impacted them. You will also compare the book's representation of disability with a textbook clinical, medical, or educational definition of that disability. This assignment includes written report and individual reflections related to student specific standards. Groups will present information collectively to the class. will write up your reflections on the book, specifically focusing on the disability and how it affects the life of the main character as well as the other people in the book.

Reading Response Portfolio

Almost every class period, you will be given time to write about the assigned reading or screening. This writing will help propel our discussion as it helps you gather your thoughts and ideas. At the midterm and in the tenth week of the course, we will collect five of these in-class writings that you select as especially important or insightful. You will also compose a 1-2-page cover letter explaining why you have chosen these five writings and what they collectively show about your experience in the class and/or what we have been exploring in class.

Class Discussion Facilitation

You will select one assigned text on which to lead discussion individually or with a partner. You will post at least five discussion questions before class begins, and you will lead the class discussion for at least the first twenty minutes.

Class Contribution, Participation, and Professionalism

Much of the work of this class evolves through conversation. These conversations help you see our literary texts differently, in greater depth, and from different perspectives. Given the importance of participating in these discussions to build our collective knowledge, you are expected to come to class regularly and on time with the reading completed. You are also expected to participate actively and thoughtfully in class discussions and activities. As we define it, participation may take the form of verbally discussing ideas but it may also take the form of active listening and notetaking. In short, if you are prepared and not distracted you will contribute to the success of the class. Your final class contribution grade will be determined by how well you meet these expectations (see addendum below).

Final Research Paper Proposal and Annotated Bibliography

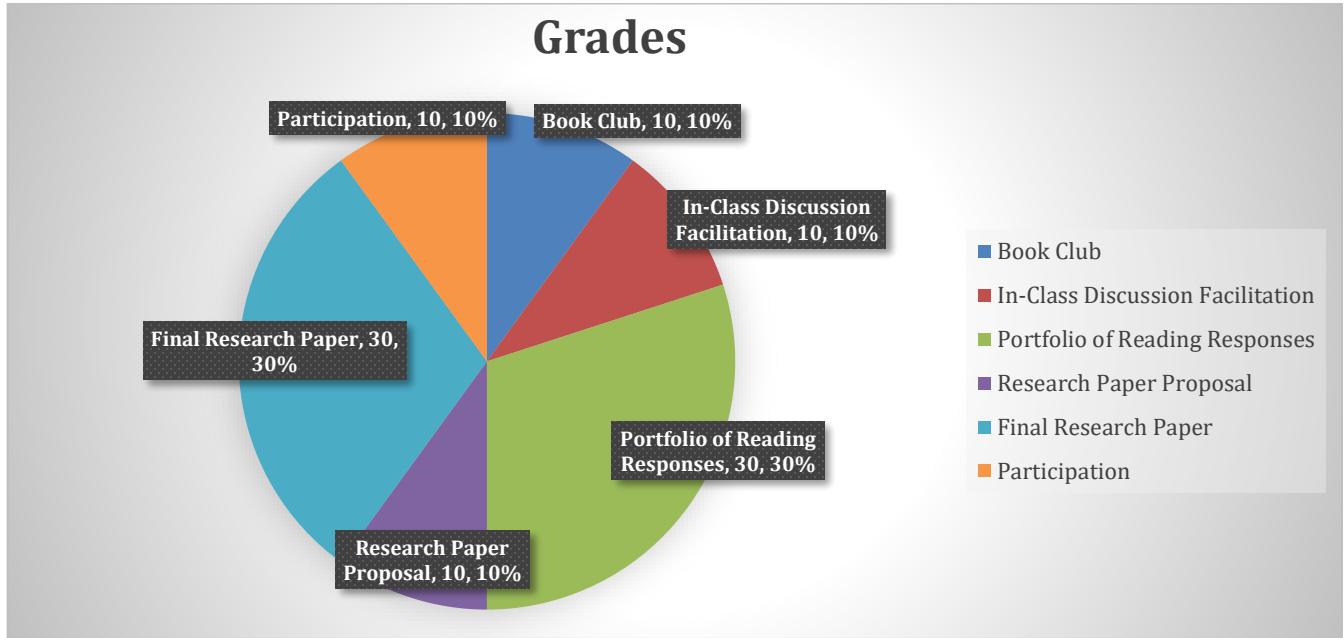
You will submit a 1-2-page research paper proposal that states a research question or point of connection between two course texts as well as the reason you are interested in exploring this question. You should also include an annotated bibliography of at least two scholarly sources that contribute to the topic.

Final Research Paper

For your final 6-to-8-page, double-spaced research paper, you will explore in depth the question raised in your research paper proposal. You can use either APA or MLA style to cite your resources and references. A detailed rubric will be provided to you in order to guide you in writing this paper.

GRADING

Grades will be calculated as follows:



COURSE ASSIGNMENT	POINT VALUE
In-Class Discussion Facilitation	10 points
Book Club	10 points
Portfolio of Reading Responses	30 points
Research Paper Proposal	10 points
Final Research Paper	30 points
Participation & Professionalism	10 points
TOTAL:	100 points

Grading Scale

Number grades will be converted to letter grades as follows:

50 - 60 = F	70 - 73 = C-	80 - 83 = B-	90 - 93 = A-
60 - 70 = D	73 - 77 = C	83 - 87 = B	93 & above = A
	77 - 80 = C+	87 - 90 = B+	

COURSE SCHEDULE (*Subject to Change*)

Dates	Topic(s)	Assignments DUE
Week One	<p><i>Week 1 Big Questions: Introduction: What is disability? Why and how does the representation of disability matter?</i></p> <p>Relevant Texts and Other Media:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rachel Adams, Benjamin Reiss, and David Serlin, “Disability,” Michael Berube, “Representation,” and Margaret Price, “Education” from <i>Keywords for Disability Studies</i> • IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act; 1975, reauthorized 1990, 1997, 2004) – <i>**Available on Canvas**</i> 	
Week Two	<p><i>Week 2 Big Questions: How, where, and when do/have definitions of disability change/changed? Examining our own perceptions, experiences, knowledge, comfort level (and what are the influencing factors?)</i></p> <p>Relevant Texts and Other Media:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Beauty is a Verb: The New Poetry of Disability</i>, Edited by Jennifer Bartlett, Sheila Black, and Michael Northen • <i>Rainman</i> (selected film clips) • <i>I Am Sam</i> (selected film clips) • <i>What’s Eating Gilbert Grape</i> (selected film clips) • <i>The Other Sister</i> (selected film clips) • Blog: Carly Findlay: http://carlyfindlay.com.au/ 	
Week Three	<p><i>Weeks 3-6 Big Questions: How has disability been portrayed in texts across media? How has that changed in the last 50 years? How do literary texts and various media influence the way we approach and think about disability, and how have these various media helped us understand disability in new ways?</i></p> <p>Relevant Texts and Other Media:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The Degenerates</i>, by Jennifer Ann Mann • <i>Disability Visibility: First-Person Stories from the Twenty-First Century</i>, by Alice Wong • <i>The Man Who Mistook His Wife for a Hat</i>, by Oliver Sacks • <i>Coda</i> (selected film clips) • <i>Sound of Metal</i> (selected film clips) • <i>Crip Camp</i> (selected film clips) • <i>Atypical</i> (selected TV clips) 	

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Dates	Topic(s)	Assignments DUE
Week Four	<p>Weeks 3-6 Big Questions: <i>How has disability been portrayed across media? How has that changed in the last 50 years? How do literary texts and various media influence the way we approach and think about disability, and how have these various media helped us understand disability in new ways?</i></p> <p>Relevant Texts and Other Media:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The Degenerates</i>, by Jennifer Ann Mann • <i>Disability Visibility: First-Person Stories from the Twenty-First Century</i>, by Alice Wong • <i>The Man Who Mistook His Wife for a Hat</i>, by Oliver Sacks • <i>Coda</i> (selected film clips) • <i>Sound of Metal</i> (selected film clips) • <i>Crip Camp</i> (selected film clips) • <i>Atypical</i> (selected TV clips) 	
Week Five	<p>Weeks 3-6 Big Questions: <i>How has disability been portrayed in texts across media? How has that changed in the last 50 years? How do literary texts and various media influence the way we approach and think about disability, and how have these various media helped us understand disability in new ways?</i></p> <p>Relevant Texts and Other Media:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The Pretty One</i>, by Keah Brown • <i>Unbroken: 13 Stories Starring Disabled Teens</i>, Edited by Marieke Nijkamp 	Book Club Reports and Presentations Due
Week Six	<p>Weeks 3-6 Big Questions: <i>How has disability been portrayed in texts across media? How has that changed in the last 50 years? How do literary texts and various media influence the way we approach and think about disability, and how have these various media helped us understand disability in new ways?</i></p> <p>Relevant Texts and Other Media:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The Pretty One</i>, by Keah Brown • <i>Unbroken: 13 Stories Starring Disabled Teens</i>, Edited by Marieke Nijkamp 	

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Dates	Topic(s)	Assignments DUE
Week Seven	<p><i>Weeks 7 -8 Big Questions: How do literary texts and various media texts intersect with practices and theories in special education?</i></p> <p>Relevant Texts and Other Media:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Fun Home</i>, by Alison Bechdel • <i>Beauty is a Verb: The New Poetry of Disability</i>, Edited by Jennifer Bartlett, Sheila Black, and Michael Northen • <i>Dodge Poetry: Poetry and Disability Justice</i> (screening) 	Reading Portfolio #1 Due
Week Eight	<p><i>Weeks 7 -8 Big Questions: How do literary texts and various media texts intersect with practices and theories in special education?</i></p> <p>Relevant Texts and Other Media:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Fun Home</i>, by Alison Bechdel • <i>Beauty is a Verb: The New Poetry of Disability</i>, Edited by Jennifer Bartlett, Sheila Black, and Michael Northen 	
Week Nine	<p><i>Weeks 9 and 10 Big Questions: How and why has education become more inclusive over the last fifty years? What are the perceptions and misconceptions of students with disabilities in the classroom? How might literary and media texts contribute to or challenge these perceptions and misconceptions?</i></p> <p>Relevant Texts and Other Media:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Out of my Mind</i>, by Sharon Draper • <i>Meet me in Outer Space</i>, by Melinda Grace 	Final Research Paper Proposal Due
Week Ten	<p><i>Weeks 9 and 10 Big Questions: How and why has education become more inclusive over the last fifty years? What are the perceptions and misconceptions of students with disabilities in the classroom? How might literary and media texts contribute to or challenge these perceptions and misconceptions?</i></p> <p>Relevant Texts and Other Media:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Out of my Mind</i>, by Sharon Draper • <i>Meet me in Outer Space</i>, by Melinda Grace • Disability Visibility Project Podcast: https://disabilityvisibilityproject.com/podcast/ • Inclusive Education Project Podcast: https://www.inclusiveeducationproject.org/podcast • The Special Ed Files Podcast: https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/the-special-ed-files/id1524523875 	

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Dates	Topic(s)	Assignments DUE
Week Eleven	<p><i>Week 11: Bringing it all together: What does it all mean? Why is this important?</i></p> <p>Relevant Texts and Other Media:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Care Work: Dreaming Disability Justice</i>, by Leah Lakshmi Piepzna-Samarasinha • <i>Disability Visibility</i> (podcast) 	
Week Twelve	<p><i>Weeks 12 and 13: Course Wrap up; discussion and presentation during class time of research papers</i></p> <p>Relevant Texts and Other Media:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Care Work: Dreaming Disability Justice</i>, by Leah Lakshmi Piepzna-Samarasinha • <i>Disability Visibility</i> (podcast) 	Reading Portfolio #2 Due
Week Thirteen	<p><i>Weeks 12 and 13: Course Wrap up; discussion and presentation during class time of research papers</i></p>	Final Research Paper Due

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Participation & Professionalism Rubric

	Exemplary 3 points	On Target 2 points	Unsatisfactory 1 point
<i>Preparation for class</i>	Student consistently comes to class prepared with readings, which have been completed. Student's participation in class discussions and other activities clearly indicates that the student engages with the readings and integrates them into course performance. Student is prepared with printed materials as indicated on the syllabus.	Participation in class provides adequate evidence that the student is keeping up with the readings. Student may not consistently come to class prepared with readings, handouts, and/or other critical course materials.	Inconsistent evidence of readings. Participation in class may or may not provide evidence of preparation with respect to readings
<i>Participation in class discussions and activities</i>	Consistently shares ideas that are thoughtful, emerge from reflection, derived from readings and build on class discussion. Demonstrates forethought and planning when sharing ideas and comments. Consistently focuses on tasks assigned to the group and contributes to the group working together.	Occasionally shares ideas during large-group class discussions. Ideas may not always emerge from reflection or from the readings. Engages peers in discussion. Is more or less focused on small-group tasks although may not necessarily get the group working together.	Disinterested at times in class discussions. Contributes minimally to small-group tasks. Distracts peers from task.

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	Exemplary 3 points	On Target 2 points	Unsatisfactory 1 point
<i>Professionalism</i>	On time consistently at the start of class, and student remains for the duration of each class period. Has missed one or fewer classes. Student is alert and engaged during every class session. Consistently completes activities according to directions given. Class assignments are complete and submitted on-time. Makes ahead-of-time arrangements with professors for make-up work or remote class participation, and applies independent problem-solving skills to work through obstacles that might arise.	Has missed two or more classes. Absences may have been undocumented. Student may have also been occasionally late to class. Student is alert and engaged during most class sessions. Completes activities more or less according to directions. Class assignments may not have been complete or submitted on-time, but occasionally attempts to independently navigate obstacles that may arise.	Has missed several classes. Student may have also been late to class and/or demonstrated poor engagement during some class sessions (i.e. sleeping, checking cell phone, etc). Does not complete activities according to directions given. Class assignment may not have been complete or submitted on-time. Does not make timely arrangements for make-up work, and does not attempt to apply independent problem-solving skills to obstacles that may arise
<i>Communication</i>	Student consistently communicates positively, both verbally and nonverbally, as well in oral and written communication. Student shows strong active listening skills during small-group activities. Student conveys an openness to others through verbal and nonverbal communicative strategies. Allows peers equal opportunities to share ideas and thoughts; Responds to conflict thoughtfully and respectfully.	Student demonstrates adequate communication skills. Student uses verbal and nonverbal modes to communicate with peers. Generally responds to others thoughtfully and respectfully.	Student's communication skills need improvement. Student shows difficulties in either verbal, nonverbal, oral or written communication. Student's communication messages may not convey respectful engagement in class conversations.

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	Exemplary 3 points	On Target 2 points	Unsatisfactory 1 point
<i>Collaborative skills and contributions to group work</i>	Student collaborates exceptionally well with his/her team and contributes substantially to the team project.	Student needs some improvement in his/her collaborative skills. Student may not have contributed sufficiently to the team project.	Student needs significant improvement in his/her collaborative skills. His/her dispositions this semester raise concerns. Student may not contribute sufficiently to the team project.

Total: ____/15

Comments: