The applied disability studies program combines courses in educational foundations with courses in social sciences and prepares students to work in the rapidly expanding area of disability services, education support and advocacy organizations.

**MULTIDISCIPLINARY STUDIES**

**BACHELOR OF ARTS IN MULTIDISCIPLINARY STUDIES (B.A.)**

Applied disability studies is a concentration within the new Bachelor of Arts Multidisciplinary Studies (MDST) degree. This degree program is an innovative major centered in the liberal arts and sciences, and cultivates multidisciplinary perspectives within the University’s established school and departmental structure. With careful guidance and academic advisement, students tailor their major to particular areas of strength and interest. The multidisciplinary studies coordinator directs the program and advocates on behalf of students enrolled in the major.

**CORE PROGRAMS**

With advisement, students are provided an opportunity to tailor studies to better meet their academic strengths and career goals. Disability studies is an emerging interdisciplinary field of scholarship that critically examines issues related to the dynamic interplays between disability and various aspects of culture and society, including social services and government policy. The MDST major with a concentration in applied disability studies has two core program tracks:

- **Core Program 1: Practicing within Social Institutions**
  - EDFN 211: Foundations of Modern Education
  - EDFN 241: Psychological Foundations of Teaching
  - SPED 237: Applied Foundations of Contemporary SPED
  - SPED 330: Oppression and Discrimination
  - EDFN 376: Whose School Is It?
  - ART 347: Design for Social Equity

- **Core Program 2: Disability Rights, History and Social Policy**
  - SOWK 307: Social Work and Healthcare
  - SOWK 309: Social Work and Mental Health
  - SOWK 350: Encounters of Diversity
  - HIST 106: Contours of U.S. History
  - HIST 458: U.S. Social History
  - HIST 480: History of Medicine

- **Capstone Experience**
  - Internship, Co-op or Research Seminar
SAMPLE COURSES

Social Discrimination and Oppression – The Social, political and cultural realities of living as a person with a disability. Examines social discrimination through consideration of the policies and practices of societies. Creates an understanding of the social, political and cultural, rather than the physical or psychological, determinants of the experience of disability. Disentangles impairments from the myths, ideology and stigma that influence social interaction and social policy. Through course content and activities, students will challenge the idea that the economic and social statuses and the assigned roles of people with disabilities are the inevitable outcomes of their condition.

Encounters of Diversity – An upper-level, multicultural, interdisciplinary, interactive course designed to enhance students’ knowledge, skills and values relative to working with people in professional situations within a diversity-embracing atmosphere.

Global Well-Being – This course is interdisciplinary and intercultural in nature. It is designed to prepare all students whose anticipated careers are primarily oriented to direct work with the global community, both domestically and internationally. There will be an emphasis on developing interpersonal communication skills for interacting with people whose way of life differs from one’s own; developing insights into the multifaceted issues impacting our world; and understanding global interconnection with oppression to foster social justice. The cornerstone of this course is service-learning opportunities on local and global levels. Course content is presented in the traditional (face-to-face) classroom, with portions of the class held online.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Students will demonstrate competency in understanding the biopsychosocial implications of disability and in producing interdisciplinary disability studies research questions and analyses.
- Students will learn to examine and critique enabling and disabling ideological assumptions that shape social institutions, professions, policies and systems of representation. Students will also demonstrate the ability to theoretically connect ideological assumptions about disability to those regarding gender, race, age, class, nationality and sexual orientation.
- Students will gain knowledge and understanding about disability history, rights, policies and contemporary issues, especially in terms of the way people with disabilities, through their own agency, advocacy and voices, have shaped conceptions of disability in specific historical and contemporary contexts.
- Students will demonstrate improved skills in working with people with disabilities, and increased ability to understand individual and family concerns.
- Students will demonstrate a broad awareness of the applicability of disability studies knowledge to a wide range of professions, and increased understanding of specific careers related to working with people with disabilities.

STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS

Career and Life Studies Student Mentoring Opportunities – Career and Life Studies is where individuals with intellectual disabilities can obtain a high-quality, individualized postsecondary education that will lead to social and professional networks, careers and bright futures. Disability studies students are invited to serve as mentors and participant scholars with students in this major.

Disability Student Union at Millersville University – The DSU@MU provides an opportunity for students with disabilities and those without disabilities to share ideas and advocate for resources that will enable students with disabilities to fully participate in activities that enrich the lives of all students.

CONTACT INFORMATION

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