RARITAN VALLEY COMMUNITY COLLEGE  
ACADEMIC COURSE OUTLINE

HMNS – 110 INTRODUCTION TO DISABILITIES

I. Basic Course Information

A. Course Number and Title: HMNS 110—Introduction to Disabilities

B. Date of Proposal or Revision: Spring 2007

C. Sponsoring Department: Humanities, Social Sciences & Education

D. Semester Credit Hours: 3 credits

E. Weekly Contact Hours: 3               Lecture: 3
                                     Laboratory: 0

F. Prerequisites: None

G. Laboratory Fees: N/A

II. Catalog Description

This course provides an overview of physical and developmental disabilities with a social diversity practice model. It will examine historical perspectives, assessment, accommodations, social and emotional aspects, and relevant legislation impacting the lives of children and adults with disabilities. The role of direct support professionals in assisting individuals with disabilities and their families across the lifespan will be addressed, with an emphasis on schools and other community based settings.

III. Statement of Course Need

This course serves as a specialized elective for students in the Human Service program and Early Childhood certificate programs, for students not specifically interested in going into Special Education. It is also designed to provide students of other disciplines with an enhanced awareness of and sensitivity to youth and adults with disabilities, their support needs, community resources and public policy implications.

IV. Place of Course in College Curriculum

A. Free Elective

   • This course fulfills a specialized elective in the Human Service Degree and Education Certificate programs.
B. Course transferability: This course should transfer as a specialized elective into many social science and human service programs. (May also fulfill a diversity requirement at some schools).

V. Outline of Course Content

A. Dealing with differences and diversity
B. Historical influences and paradigms shaping services to persons with disabilities
C. Legislation and litigation effecting persons with disabilities
D. Program and services available to youth and adults with disabilities
   a. Persons with cognitive disabilities
   b. Persons with physical disabilities
   c. Persons with sensory disabilities
   d. Persons with emotional disabilities
E. Person centered planning processes
F. Service coordination

VI. Educational Goals and Learning Outcomes

Educational Goals

Students will:
1. develop an understanding of the historical influences and beliefs that have shaped services for and assumptions about persons with disabilities (G.E. 6).
2. examine the values and biases underlying our response to persons with disabilities (G.E. 5, 6).
3. use technology to prepare an oral presentation and factual information sheet on a specific disability (G.E. 3).
4. develop an understanding of disabilities within the context of diversity (G.E. 1, 5, 6).
5. examine the imagery of people with disabilities as portrayed in the media (G.E. 1, 2).
6. become aware of the benefits, services and community resources available to and needed by persons with disabilities and their families (G.E. 1, 4, 6).

Learning Outcomes

Students will be able to:
1. identify the major characteristics associated with common disabilities
2. describe the historical and philosophical influences that impact services for youth and adults with disabilities
3. critique the portrayal of individuals with disabilities in the media
4. compare and contrast the medical model and diversity model as applied to persons with disabilities
5. identify the primary provisions of major legislation and litigation that protects the rights of youth and adults with disabilities
6. identify the major provisions of family support, residential services, special education, vocational rehabilitation and other programs designed to assist persons with disabilities and their families
7. develop a “person centered plan” with an individual with a disability
VII. Modes of Teaching and Learning

The primary formats, modes, and methods for teaching and learning may include:

- lecture/discussion
- small-group work
- guest speakers
- student collaboration
- independent study
- library research
- service learning
- mass media
- personal interviews

VIII. Papers, Examinations, and other Assessment Instruments

Assessment methods used may be:

- research assignment
- oral presentations
- reflection papers
- active group participation
- written examinations
- written & verbal analysis of case scenarios
- journals

IX. Grade Determinants

In order to evaluate achievement of the goals and outcomes listed above, possible grade determinants may include:

- active participation in class discussions
- preparation of a disability fact sheet (FAQ)
- class presentations
- midterm and final examinations
- participation in service learning
- reflection papers

X. Texts and Materials

Samples of specific texts that may be used:


Miller, N.B. & Sammons, C.C. (most recent edition). Everybody’s different:

XI. Resources

- Library research for oral presentation and FAQ
- Computer access for preparation of research paper and field interview summaries
- Utilization of guest speakers from various disciplines and community services
- Service learning with a person with a disability
- Interviews with individuals with disabilities and their families

Revised 2/27/07