

# PSY 326: Introduction to Intellectual & Developmental Disabilities

EMILY MANN, M. ED  
[MANNEMIL@GVSU.EDU](mailto:MANNEMIL@GVSU.EDU)

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Course Description.....	1
Grading.....	1
Course Requirements.....	2
Policies.....	5
Resources.....	10
Schedule.....	11



### **Course Information:**

CRN: 15360

Prerequisites: PSY 101 and PSY 301

Location: Lake Michigan Hall Room 176

Day: Tuesday

Time: 4:00- 6:50 pm

### **Instructor Information:**

Emily Mann, M.Ed

Pronouns: she/her

Office: 2110 ASH

Email: [mannemil@gvsu.edu](mailto:mannemil@gvsu.edu)

Phone: 616-331-9233

Office Hours: Please email or talk to me in person about setting up a time to meet. Email is my preferred means of communication

## COURSE DESCRIPTION FROM CATALOG

This class is an overview of historical perspectives, current practices, and lifespan issues for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. The course covers diagnostic and assessment practices, etiology, prevention, and intervention strategies

OBJECTIVES: Upon successful completion of the course students will be able to:

1. Explain the evolving nature of terminology and practices in the field of Intellectual Disabilities
2. Describe how Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities are diagnosed, including relevant assessment instruments and issues related to classification
3. Articulate the biological and psychosocial factors that contribute to Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities
4. Describe a variety of current interventions, including biomedical interventions, early intervention practices, and school and community-based interventions
5. Describe contemporary practices related to lifespan planning for individuals with Intellectual Disabilities and their families
6. Explain relevant literature/research regarding intellectual disability

REQUIRED TEXT:

- No textbook required for this class
- Required readings will be placed on Blackboard.

POINTS POSSIBLE

Choice Assignment	15
Multimedia Project	15
Research Project	50
Application Assignments	65
Quizzes (3 x 20 points)	60
Final Reflection	10

Final grades are calculated by dividing your total number of points by the total points possible. I typically round up to the next percentage point at .6 and above. I utilize the following grading scale to determine the final grade. Please note **I do NOT offer extra credit on an individual basis**, nor do I negotiate final grades. Assignments will be accepted up to three days late with a 25%-point reduction. After that, they will not be accepted except for specific circumstances that are approved by the instructor.

## GRADING SCALE

A	93 and above
A-	90-92
B+	87-89
B	83-86
B-	80-82
C+	77-79
C	73-76
C-	70-72
D+	67-69
D	60-66
F	59 and Below

## course requirements

### QUIZZES (20 PTS EACH X 3 QUIZZES):

In lieu of a midterm and final examination, we will be having three quizzes throughout the semester and a final reflection paper at the end of the semester. These quizzes will consist of approximately 15 questions that will assess your knowledge of the content covered for the units previously taught. Dates for the quizzes can be found in the course schedule.

**Quiz Policies:** Make-up quizzes are only allowed in the case of an unavoidable emergency. An unavoidable emergency may include the following: serious illness, funeral, or unexpected car trouble. To make up an exam you **MUST** have documentation. Documentation can include: doctors note, towing or car repair receipt, program from funeral, etc. You must provide this documentation within 24 hours of the missed exam. Please note that make-up exams must be completed within 1-week of the scheduled exam date. **Failure to notify me in advance, provide documentation, or complete the quiz within the time frame, will result in a zero on the exam.**

During quizzes, you will be required to turn off all digital devices, such as cell phones, tablets, and laptop computers. Any student identified with such a device powered on during a quiz will receive an F on the test at the instructor's discretion.

## course requirements

### CHOICE ASSIGNMENT (15 POINTS):

You will get to choose which assignment to complete for this assignment. Whatever you choose, your paper should be 2-3 pages long. The choices are:

**Observation:** This option involves spending at least 2 hours in a setting with children or adults with disabilities. You will need to coordinate your visit with a teacher or supervisor to get permission to join their classroom. This option is ideal, especially if you do not have much experience with people with disabilities. Some ideas include:

- Special Education classroom within a school
- Early Childhood setting like Head Start with kids with disabilities
- Transition center for adults getting post high school services such as the Ottawa Area Center or these options in Kent County:

[http://www.kentisd.org/downloads/transition/kent\\_isd\\_transition\\_programs\\_2017\\_description.pdf](http://www.kentisd.org/downloads/transition/kent_isd_transition_programs_2017_description.pdf)

**Interview:** For this option, you will interview either an adult with an intellectual disability, a family member of someone with an intellectual disability, or a special education teacher.

More information will be available in class.

## course requirements

### MULTIMEDIA ASSIGNMENT (15 POINTS):

For this assignment, you will be asked to watch a movie or TV show episodes that feature a character with a developmental disability. Based on what we have learned in class readings and discussions, you will write a 2-3 page paper on if the character's disability was accurately portrayed

Pick a movie or a television show that features a character with an Intellectual and/or Developmental Disability. If you pick a TV show, watch 3 episodes. After watching the show/movie, write a short paper reflecting on the character in the show. Based on your knowledge of intellectual disabilities, was this an accurate portrayal of the disability? What did you notice about the character?

You may choose from the list of movies and television shows below or find another movie or show on your own. You can also use a search engine to find a show. Other movies or shows not listed below must be approved by me.

More information will be available in class.

#### Movies

Forrest Gump  
I am Sam  
Rainman  
Radio  
The Other Sister  
What's Eating Gilbert Grape?  
Of Mice and Men  
Gabby: A True Story  
Wonder  
The Peanut Butter Falcon  
A Smile as Big as the Moon

#### Television/Netflix

Glee  
Life Goes On  
Secret Life of an American  
Teenager  
Derek  
Special  
Atypical  
Born this Way  
Love on the Spectrum  
The Specials

## course requirements

### RESEARCH PROJECT (50 POINTS)

***Article Summary- 5 points***

***Synthesis paper- 40 points***

***Handout- 5 points***

The purpose of this project is to research the efficacy of an intervention for strategy that relevant to children or adults with disabilities. Make it relevant to the field in which you would like to pursue a career in. You will be required to: read and summarize empirical research, synthesize information into your paper. You must also create a easy reference pictograph type handout to share with classmates. Although you may choose your own topic, I will provide a list of suggested topics. Any topic that is not on the list must be approved by me.

### **Project Components:**

Article Summaries: 5 points

You must have a minimum of 2 articles from peer-reviewed journals. The articles that you select should: (1) be specific and relevant to your topic, and (2) include no more than 2 theoretical review papers. For each article, you must provide a 1-paragraph summary. These summaries should identify the research question, briefly describe the study methods, results, and important limitations

Synthesis Paper: 40 points

This 3-4 page paper should (1) describe the intervention or strategy, and (2) summarize the research related to the efficacy of the intervention. This paper should be written in APA style. Please note, you are expected to synthesize the research, rather than simply reviewing each study.

Handout: 5 points

Create a 1-page handout about the intervention or strategy that the others in the class could reference later on in their schooling or careers.

More information will be available in class.

## course requirements

### APPLICATION ASSIGNMENTS (65 POINTS)

Application assignments are given during the end of our weekly class period. These assignments may include in-class group activities, article responses, or case studies. Late assignments will not be accepted under any circumstances. Application assignments are quick checks that we are all on the right track with the content presented as well as an extra incentive to attend class. We will be doing 13 of these with 5 points possible for each one. If you miss an in-class activity, you will not be able to make it up, even if the absence is excused.

### FINAL REFLECTION PAPER (10 POINTS)

Instead of a more traditional final exam, you are going to write a 2 page paper reflecting on what you learned through the semester and how you plan to use the information to aide your future professional and personal life. What was the biggest takeaway from the semester? How will you apply the information learned to advocate for fair treatment and justice for individuals with disabilities? What are your personal next steps on educating yourself on people with disabilities?



# COURSE POLICIES



Attendance: Lecture attendance is essential for earning a satisfactory grade in this class. Attendance will not be taken during lectures. If you do need to miss a class period, please be aware of the following: (1) I will not go over the lecture with you or help you complete the lecture notes (you must consult with a peer in this class), (2) Most class period will consist of an Application Assignment for points. These will not be able to be made up.

Lecture notes: Typically, I will post my lecture notes on blackboard prior to lecture. These notes typically outline the lecture, and do not contain all important information. Therefore, it is recommended that you take notes during lecture, as you will be held accountable for the lecture content, including information that is not posted on the slides. Although I will make every effort to post slides prior to lecture, it is not guaranteed. It is likely that there will be days those slides are not posted prior to class. Please do not email me and ask when the slides will be posted. In addition, some slides may be changed/added after I post.

Preparation for lecture: I expect that all students will be fully prepared for lecture. This is defined as reading the assigned text *prior* to the lecture and identifying any questions for clarification. I often plan small group activities/discussions for during lecture, and it is essential that you are prepared to fully participate/benefit from these activities.

Electronic Devices: All electronic devices (cell phones, tablets, etc.) are to be turned off and put away during lecture. There will be exceptions. For example, if conducting polls, I may ask you to use your phones or laptop computers to answer. Please refrain from text messaging, emailing, surfing the web, etc. during lecture. This is very disruptive to other students. Laptop computers are permitted for taking course notes only. If it becomes apparent during the term that laptops are being used for other purposes (emailing, instant messaging, surfing the web, etc.) I reserve the right to institute a “no laptop policy.”

Canceled Classes: If classes are canceled at the university, any exam or assignment missed due to the cancellation will take place at the next scheduled class meeting time. If I cancel a class, I will notify the class via email.

Assignment Submissions: **Assignments are due on Tuesdays before the start of class 3:59pm OR Quizzes are due by Fridays by 11:59pm.** Assignments should be turned in electronically via Blackboard. Assignments turned in after the due date will be considered late. Late assignments will be accepted up to 1 day beyond the due date with a 25% deduction in points (i.e., if the deadline is Tuesday, work will be accepted through Wednesday). Late assignments should also be submitted via Blackboard.





# UNIVERSITY POLICIES



This course is subject to the GVSU policies listed [Course policies](#)

**Academic Integrity:** Students are expected to adhere to the university's policies on Academic Honesty. These policies are described in the catalog and in the Student Code. Cheating and plagiarism will be dealt with as per the procedures described in the Student Code.

**Plagiarism:** As described in Section 223.01 of the Student Code, “any ideas or material taken from another source for either written or oral presentation must be fully acknowledged. Offering the work of someone else as one's own is plagiarism. The language or ideas taken from another may range from isolated formulas, sentences, or paragraphs to entire articles copied from books, periodicals, speeches or the writings of other students ... Any student who fails to give credit in written or oral work for the ideas or materials that have been taken from another is guilty of plagiarism.” In sum, copying the work of any other individual, whether that of another student, researcher, author, or editor is considered plagiarism. This is not acceptable and will be dealt with according to the policies set forth in the Student Code, which may include receiving a ZERO on the assignment, failing the course, and/or other university consequences. If you have questions regarding the appropriate use of citations and plagiarism, please contact the instructor BEFORE turning the assignment in. Please note that taking extensive content word-for-word from a journal, book or website is considered plagiarism.

**Fire Procedures:** Immediately proceed to the nearest exit during a fire alarm. Do not use elevators. More information is available on the University's Emergency website located at [GVSU Emergency](#)

**Commitment to Inclusion & Equity & University Anti-Harassment/Non-**

**Discrimination:** As adopted by the Board of Trustees, in Administrative Manual Chapter 1, Grand Valley State University is committed to inclusion and equity and strives to establish a climate that welcomes and affirms the contributions of all students and employees. The University is guided by values for inclusiveness and community, which are integral to our mission to educate students to shape their lives, their professions, and their societies, and to enrich the community through excellent teaching, active scholarship, and public service. The University strives to provide all members of its community an inclusive environment and equitable opportunities for success.



# UNIVERSITY POLICIES



This course is subject to the GVSU policies listed [Course policies](#)

## Commitment to Inclusion & Equity & University Anti-Harassment/Non-

Discrimination: The University is also committed to maintaining a climate conducive to an educational, living, and employment environment that is free from unlawful acts of harassment and discrimination, as well as those defined by this policy. All members of the community are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that does not infringe upon the rights of others. It is neither the purpose nor intent of this policy to infringe on the First Amendment or academic freedom as defined by the University.

The University is an affirmative action, equal opportunity institution, consistent with its obligations as a federal contractor. It encourages diversity and provides equal opportunity in education, employment, all its programs, and the use of its facilities. It is committed to protecting the constitutional and statutory civil rights of persons connected with the University.

Members of the University community, including students, employees, faculty, staff, administrators, Board members, consultants, vendors, others engaged to do business with the University, candidates for employment or admissions, and visitors or guests have the right to be free from acts of harassment and discrimination, including sexual misconduct, as defined by this policy. In accordance with applicable federal and state law and this policy, acts of discrimination or harassment by members of the campus community are prohibited if they discriminate or harass based on age, color, disability, familial status, height, marital status, national origin, political affiliation, race, religion, sex/gender (including gender identity and expression), sexual orientation, veteran or active-duty military status or weight. This includes inappropriate limitation of, access to, or participation in educational, employment, athletic, social, cultural, or other university programs and activities. The University will provide reasonable accommodations to qualified individuals with disabilities. Limitations are lawful if they are: directly related to a legitimate university purpose, required by law, or lawfully required by a grant or contract between the university and the state or federal government. For the purposes of this policy, sex-/gender-based harassment includes sexual misconduct, sexual assault, interpersonal or relationship violence, and stalking.



# UNIVERSITY POLICIES



This course is subject to the GVSU policies listed [Course policies](#)

## Creating an Equitable and Inclusive Learning Environment

As an instructor, I will strive to create an equitable and inclusive learning environment in our class. It is my and the university's goal that you feel able to share information about your experiences as a student. University faculty and staff will seek to keep information you share private to the greatest extent possible. There is some information that may need to be shared with the university, especially regarding sexual misconduct or information about a crime that may have occurred on GVSU's campus. Below are additional resources available for support:

### **Title IX, Sexual Misconduct Policy, and Gender- and Sexual-Based Harassment Policy:**

Title IX makes it clear that violence and harassment based on sex and gender are Civil Rights offenses subject to the same kinds of accountability and the same kinds of support applied to offenses against other protected categories such as race, national origin, etc. Title IX's sex discrimination prohibition also protects students from discrimination based on gender identity or failure to conform to stereotypical notions of masculinity or femininity. If you or someone you know has been harassed, assaulted, or denied services on the basis of sex or gender, you can find the appropriate resources at [www.gvsu.edu/titleix](http://www.gvsu.edu/titleix) or contact the University's Title IX Coordinator, Theresa Rowland at 616-331-9530 or [rowlanth@gvsu.edu](mailto:rowlanth@gvsu.edu).

**Disabilities Support Resources:** If you have special needs because of a learning, physical or other disability, please contact the instructor as well as Disability Support Resources (DSR) at 616-331-2490 for assistance as soon as possible. Even if you have already documented your disability with DSR, please make an appointment with your faculty member to discuss your specific needs. Furthermore, if you have a disability and think you will need assistance evacuating the classroom and/or building in an emergency during in-person meetings, please make your instructor aware so that the university can develop a plan to assist you. You may also access resources at <http://www.gvsu.edu/dsr>. The university is eager to work with you to meet your learning goals. All discussions related to disabilities will remain confidential.

**Gender Expression and Identity:** Students whose preferred names do not match their state issued identification may have their preferred name on their GVSU ID card, the name associated with their student email account and in Blackboard, an online learning tool for discussions and class group collaborations. Students must make these requests by contacting Bill Widmaier ([widmaieb@gvsu.edu](mailto:widmaieb@gvsu.edu)) in the Registrar's Office. He will take your request and contact the Blackboard administrator to make the change. He also contacts professors to inform them that your name in Banner will not match the name in Blackboard. More information is available at <http://www.gvsu.edu/lgbtrc/name-gender-markers-130.htm>.



# UNIVERSITY POLICIES



This course is subject to the GVSU policies listed [Course policies](#)

## Creating an Equitable and Inclusive Learning Environment

As an instructor, I will strive to create an equitable and inclusive learning environment in our class. It is my and the university's goal that you feel able to share information about your experiences as a student. University faculty and staff will seek to keep information you share private to the greatest extent possible. There is some information that may need to be shared with the university, especially regarding sexual misconduct or information about a crime that may have occurred on GVSU's campus. Below are additional resources available for support:

**Bias Incidents or Harassment:** Anytime you or anyone in the GVSU community feels belittled, disrespected, threatened, or unsafe because of who you are, the entire university community is diminished. That's why it's important to report all bias incidents--even those intended as jokes. While Grand Valley safeguards individuals' constitutional rights and protected speech, the university is also committed to inclusion and equity. Grand Valley exercises the right to engage in educational dialogue and seeks constructive responses to address bias incidents. Go to <http://www.gvsu.edu/inclusion/bias-incidents.htm> to report bias incidents or for more information. In addition, for faculty/staff related complaints, you can file an informal complaint with the Division of Inclusion and Equity at [inclusion@gvsu.edu](mailto:inclusion@gvsu.edu) or 616-331-3296. For student related complaints, you can also contact the Dean of Students office at 616-331-3585.

**Student Well-Being:** As a student, you may experience a range of issues that can negatively impact your learning, such as anxiety, depression, interpersonal or sexual violence, difficulty eating or sleeping, loss/grief, and/or alcohol/drug problems. These mental health concerns or stressful events may lead to diminished academic performance and affect your ability to participate in day-to-day activities. In order to support you during such challenging times, GVSU provides a number of confidential resources to all enrolled students, including the University Counseling Center <http://www.gvsu.edu/counsel/> or 616-331-3266 and the Student Ombuds, Takeelia Garrett ([garrettt@gvsu.edu](mailto:garrettt@gvsu.edu)).

## Resources

### **Writing Center:**

The Fred Meijer Center for Writing, with locations at the Allendale and Pew/Downtown Grand Rapids, is available to help you with writing in any of your classes. Also, through your Gmail account, you have access to online consultations through Google Docs. Writing consultants, who are fellow GVSU students, are trained to help you with all stages of your writing process, from brainstorming to organizing to editing your papers. The Center's services are free and appointments are available. Simply bring a draft of your paper, the assignment sheet, and your questions/concerns about the writing to any of the Center's locations:

Allendale:

Lake Ontario Hall 120; Monday – Thursday 9:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m. & Friday 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. & Sunday 2 p.m. – 6 p.m.

Knowledge Market: Mary Idema Pew Library (1st floor) – Sunday – Thursday 6:00 p.m. – 11:00 p.m.

Online via Google Docs – Monday – Wednesday 8:00 p.m. – 12:00 a.m.

Pew Campus Downtown:

Eberhard Center 101 – Monday – Thursday 10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

Knowledge Market: Steelcase Library – Monday – Thursday 2:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.

CHS Building 100 – Tuesday–Wednesday 10 a.m. – 2 p.m.

### **Speech Lab:**

The mission of the Grand Valley State University Speech Lab is to empower speakers to shape their lives professions and society through confident and effective public presentations. Speech consultants, who are fellow GVSU undergraduates, are trained to assist with all parts of the speechmaking process including choosing a topic, organizing your thoughts, and practicing presentations. The Speech Lab is located in 154 Lake Michigan Hall (Allendale) and services are free for all Grand Valley undergraduates. For more information about the Lab, its hours, downtown locations, and to make an appointment, please visit the Lab website at: <http://www.gvsu.edu/speechlab>.

# Course Schedule Fall 2025

Readings are due the date of the lecture topic. It is possible that this schedule will change, as some weeks we will move more rapidly, and some more slowly. However, general deadlines will remain the same unless otherwise indicated by the professor.

DATE	TOPIC & ACTIVITIES	ASSIGNMENTS DUE	READINGS
Week 1: August 26	Syllabus and class introduction  Introduction to developmental disabilities		Review Syllabus & Assignment Descriptions <b>Articles:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Person First Language</li> <li>• Disability Etiquette</li> <li>• Law Chart</li> <li>• IDEA Process</li> </ul>
Week 2: Sept. 2	Historical Perspectives of Intellectual Disabilities		Beirne-Smith Chapter 1
Week 3: Sept. 9	Historical Perspectives of Intellectual Disabilities, continued  <b>Video:</b> 25 Years After Willowbrook		Beirne-Smith Chapter 2 <b>Articles:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ID Fact Sheet</li> <li>• Incidence</li> </ul>
Week 4: Sept. 16	Definitions and Terminology	<b>Tuesday, Sept 16:</b> <b>Choice Assignment due before class by 3:59pm</b>	Additional Readings posted
Week 5: Sept. 23	Psychosocial Causes of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities	<b>Friday, Sept 26:</b> <b>Quiz #1 due by 11:59pm.</b>	Beirne-Smith, Chapter 5  Additional Readings posted
Week 6: Sept. 30	Biological Causes of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities		Beirne-Smith Chapter 6  Fact Sheets on Biologically Caused ID
Week 7: Oct 7	Assessment and Introduction to Services and Supports	<b>Tuesday, Oct. 7:</b> <b>Article Summaries due before class by 3:59pm</b>	



## Course Schedule Continued

DATE	TOPIC & ACTIVITIES	ASSIGNMENTS DUE	READINGS
Week 8: Oct. 14	Autism	<p><b><u>Tuesday, Oct. 14:</u></b>  <b>Multimedia Assignment due before class by 3:59pm</b></p> <p><b><u>Friday, Oct. 17:</u></b> Quiz #2 on Blackboard due by 11:59pm</p>	
Week 9: Oct. 21	<b>Fall Break- No class</b>		
Week 10: Oct. 28	Characteristics of Mild and Severe Disabilities		Article TBD on Blackboard
Week 11: Nov. 4	Early Development and Intervention		<p>Articles: Early Interventions</p> <p>Following Links:</p> <p><a href="http://do2learn.com/disabilities/CharacteristicsAndStrategies/IntellectualDisability_Characteristics.html">http://do2learn.com/disabilities/CharacteristicsAndStrategies/IntellectualDisability_Characteristics.html</a></p> <p><a href="http://www.projectideasonline.org/v/intellectual-disabilities/">http://www.projectideasonline.org/v/intellectual-disabilities/</a></p>
Week 12: Nov. 11	Instructional Design and Interventional Strategies		
Week 13: Nov. 18	Transition to Adulthood	<b><u>Tuesday, Nov. 18:</u></b> <b>Research Project and handout due before class 3:59pm</b>	
Week 14: Nov 25	Transition to Adulthood- <b><u>Guest Speakers</u></b> from the Region III Transition Program	<b><u>Friday, Nov. 28:</u></b> <b>Quiz #3 on Blackboard due by 11:59pm.</b>	

# Course Schedule Continued

DATE	TOPIC & ACTIVITIES	ASSIGNMENTS DUE	READINGS
Week 15: Dec. 2	Disability Advocacy No in person class this week. Online assignment.	<u>Friday, Dec 5:</u> <b>Watch Intellectual Lives documentary and complete Application Assignment #15. Due by 3:59pm</b>	
Week 16: Dec 9	EXAMINATION WEEK. You do not need to attend class this week	<u>Tuesday, Dec 9:</u> <b>Reflection paper due by 3:59pm</b>	