The disability rights movement made substantial progress in improving the freedoms, opportunities and political status of persons with disabilities, but there is a growing recognition that law and justice are not enough to ensure that people with disabilities are treated appropriately. Disabled people seek to be respected, appreciated and regarded as full members of society in education, sports, personal relationships and so on alongside wheelchair ramps and accessible buses. Unfortunately, they continue to face an uphill battle in these respects – disabled people are often silently ridiculed, portrayed as monstrous or gruesome in popular media, they tend to be pitied, stigmatized and disrespected, often in subtle ways by well-meaning people who have no intention to be insulting. For example, we may notice an aging parent, for example, struggling with some activity, so we immediately rush in to provide assistance, but our well-intentioned efforts may turn out to be somewhat disrespectful by inadvertently undermining or impugning the person’s own self-respect.

This course will take up the question: when we are in everyday social settings, what does it take to show people with disabilities proper respect and appreciation, and what obligations of respect do the disabled have to themselves? Not only is disability a multi-faceted concept, bringing together a multitude of perspectives, methodologies and experiences, but philosophical issues about how to treat people with disabilities depend on an understanding of the variety of contexts in which we encounter disabled people. We will examine issues of disability that arise in a variety of disciplines, including how disabled people are portrayed in the arts and literature, historical treatment of the disabled, feminist perspectives on disability, the role of geography and space, sociological studies of stigma, disability in education, and clinical accounts of disability.

The two themes of the course will be respect for the disabled and appreciation of them. We will ask, for example, whether choosing not to have a disabled child expresses disrespectful messages to the disabled, whether quality of life assessments that are prevalent in economics and health policy discriminate against people with disabilities, and how, if at all, we should go about deciding for the disabled when they are unable to exercise their own autonomy. Our focus will also be on appreciating and valuing the achievements, differences and abilities of the disabled, not only in how they overcome their impairments but also in the ways they challenge conventional understandings in art, literature, film, education and sexuality. Both respect and appreciation are the next step in full inclusion for people with disabilities, but it is incredibly difficult to determine how to put them into practice, so drawing on the experiences of people with disabilities, academic studies of disabilities, and artistic portrayals of them will give us the needed background to assess our own moral struggles with doing right by the disabled.

**Schedule**

(We will mostly be focused on selections from the following)

**Week 1 - Defining Disability – Models of Disability and Invisible Disabilities**


WEEK 2 - DISABILITY IN ART AND LITERATURE


WEEK 3 - DISABILITY IN POPULAR CULTURE


Look at excerpts from TV shows such as Family Guy, Glee and South Park and horror films.

WEEK 4 - SOCIOLOGY AND THE SOCIAL STIGMA OF DISABILITY


WEEK 5 - DISABILITY AND GEOGRAPHY – SPACE, SOCIETY AND IMMIGRATION


WEEK 6 - FEMINIST PERSPECTIVES ON DISABILITY – CAREGIVERS, BODY IMAGE AND OPPRESSION


WEEK 7 - HISTORY OF DISABILITY – EUGENICS AND ASYLUMS


**WEEK 8 - DISABILITY AND THE LAW – THE UGLY LAWS, SHAME AND DISGUST**


**WEEK 9 - DISABILITY AND AUTONOMY – DECIDING FOR OTHERS, ADVANCED DIRECTIVES AND PERSONAL DECISION-MAKING**


**WEEK 10 - SELECTING FOR OR AGAINST HAVING DISABLED CHILDREN AND THE MESSAGES THIS CAN SEND**


**WEEK 11 – DISABILITY, ECONOMICS AND PUBLIC POLICY – BURDENS OF DISEASE, QUALITY ADJUSTED LIFE YEARS (QALY’S) AND DISCRIMINATION**


WEEK 12 - CULTURES OF DISABILITY – CASE STUDY OF DEAF CULTURE AND COCHLEAR IMPLANTS

WEEK 13 - THE DISABILITY RIGHTS MOVEMENT

WEEK 14 - DISABILITY AND SEXUALITY

WEEK 15 - DISABILITY AND EDUCATION