

Finding Safety in Unexpected Places: Teaching “(Dis)ability, Education and the Arts” Online.

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We have developed an undergraduate course entitled “(Dis)ability, Education and the Arts”, in which we explore ways the arts may afford a lens through which we can more clearly see the ways our perceptions about (dis)ability affect our lives, and the lives of others. In this presentation we present course evaluations, excerpts from student written work, and examples of course projects to examine the outcomes of the course. Our findings suggest that many students experienced the online format as a particularly “safe space” in which to explore their (often limited) viewpoints and experiences with disability in a critical and reflective way. In both the online and f2f versions of the course, many students made robust and meaningful connections between the ideas of the course and their personal experiences with art and education.

Bios:

Carlyn Mueller is a prospective PhD candidate in Special Education at the University of Washington. Her research interests focus on disability identity development, disability awareness in adolescents, and the pedagogical intersections of disability studies and special education. At UW, she is involved with several disability-related research and teaching projects, including teaching undergraduate special education classes that include a disability studies lens and developing a course on the intersections of race and disability. As a person with physical and learning disabilities and a graduate of special education programs, this work is intensely personal and vital, and endlessly exciting.

Charles (Cap) Peck is currently professor of teacher education and special education at University of Washington. Cap’s primary research work over the past decade has focused on policy implementation and systemic change in teacher education. As somewhat of a sideline to his “day job” in teacher education and special education, Cap has considerable interest in the arts and learning, and in aesthetic perspectives on the work of education. He has taught several courses for practicing teachers in which the arts are used as tools for inquiry into the aesthetics of classroom life.