COURSE NAME: Leadership in Disabilities Studies

COURSE NUMBER: Law 815 S, 3 credit hours

PROFESSOR: Bill Dittmeier

ESSENTIAL PREREQUISITES: none

DESIRABLE PREREQUISITES: none

COURSE BOOKS: No required text book, a number of articles and other materials will be posted for students to read

SUMMARY DESCRIPTION OF COURSE: The course provides an overview of the history of the treatment of individuals with disabilities by society and the law, including an overview of the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and other federal and state statutes applicable to individuals with disabilities. The course examines how individuals with disabilities have been regarded in the past and currently, the role of individuals with disabilities in society, and how the perception of individuals with disabilities is reflected in current legislation, policy, and funding for and availability of services for people with disabilities. The course generally has students from other disciplines (social work, education, etc.) who provide different perspectives on the issues discussed.

COURSE CONTENT: The class utilizes a number of guest lecturers to provide critical information and lead class discussions. Topics that can be discussed include disability and medicine, physical accessibility requirements, litigation challenging the confinement of individuals with disabilities, competency, guardianship, ethical issues, the criminal justice system, how individuals with disabilities are portrayed in art, literature and films, and employment. These and other sessions are led by individuals with practical experience in each of the areas. For example a member of the medical school faculty, an attorney/architect, Professor Kishhardt who was involved in Park vs. Pennhurst, a leading case challenging the use of large institutions for individuals with disabilities, family members of individuals with disabilities, individuals with disabilities, and individuals directly involved in efforts to change the way services are delivered.

METHOD OF GRADING & APPRAISAL OF STUDENT FOR GRADE: Each student will be responsible for leading one or more class discussions; a team project where the team picks a disability-related topic, analyzes that topic and presents its findings to the class; 3 short (3 to 5 pages) written reflections on a topic presented in class; class participation; and a final exam

RELEVANCY OF COURSE FOR CAREER PURPOSES: Course information could be applicable to education law, guardianship, disability, and elder law.

RELEVANCY OF COURSE FOR MO/MULTI-STATE BAR EXAMINATION: None