An Internet-Based Mental Disability Law Program: Implications for Social Change in Nations with Developing Economies

Michael L. Perlin

Abstract
This Article first briefly discusses the use of distance learning in a law school environment, and considers the special implications of distance learning for persons with disabilities. It then explains the structure and rationale of these courses, reports on a course section taught in Nicaragua in the Fall-Winter of 2002, and considers plans to replicate the Nicaraguan experience throughout other nations with developing economies in Africa, Asia, Central America, and Central and Eastern Europe. Finally, this Article assesses the potential impact of such a course on developing-economy nations.

Recommended Citation

Mental disability and mental health care are surprisingly overlooked within the global discourse on health equality, and mental health has always appeared to be a side issue in both the public and academic health debate. There appears to be social distaste for issues pertaining to mental health and disability. While the social model has characterized the disability movement and has been adopted as a basis for a human rights approach to disability, it is not beyond critique. This is not because that nation is alone in experiencing the inequalities cited, but rather, it is a reflection of the fact that significant research has been conducted in this field within the US, while there is a relative paucity of evidence available from other countries.