

Carleton University

Fall 2019

Pauline Jewett Institute of Women's and Gender Studies

DBST 1001A: Introduction to Disability Studies

Location: AT 102

Day and Time: Thursdays, 2:35 pm to 4:25 pm

Instructor: Allyson Green

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Office: TBC

Office Hours: Thursdays, 4:35 – 5:25 pm (by appointment please!)

Teaching Assistants:

Context

In 2017, one in five (or 6.2 million) Canadians aged 15 years and over reported having one or more disabilities that limited their daily activities in disabling ways.¹ Although the prevalence of disability tends to increase with age, a significant number of Canadian youth aged 15 to 24 (540,000) report experiencing one or more disabilities; they are most likely to experience mental health-related and learning impairments.² Across all age groups, women³ are more likely to experience disability compared to men and those with disabilities – particularly severe disabilities – are more likely to live in poverty.⁴ But what causes disability and can anything be done to mitigate it?

Course Description

In the first part of this course, we will survey how disability has been explained conceptually, politically, and linguistically in Canada. We will pay particular attention to the debate over whether disability is a fixed characteristic in body and mind or a series of disabling barriers that exclude people with impairments from able-bodied/able-minded society. We will also consider whether experiences of disablement are complicated by intersecting identity factors such as

¹ "Canadian Survey on Disability, 2017." *Statistics Canada* (November 28, 2018): <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/daily-quotidien/181128/dq181128a-eng.htm>

² Ibid.

³ Ibid. Statistics Canada disaggregated the Canadian Disability Survey (CDS) data by men and women. Incidence rates for gender diverse Canadians was not reported.

⁴ Ibid.

gender, sexuality, race, and class. In the second part of the course, we will deploy a critical disability lens (a theoretical approach which defies the arbitrary division between ‘ability’ and ‘disability,’ ‘normal’ and ‘abnormal’) to explore the social, economic, political and cultural logics that naturalize able-bodiedness and able-mindedness as ideal states of being. In conclusion, we will ask: How can we defy and disrupt able-bodied norms and ableist/sanist attitudes in ways that will allow us to resist the tyranny of ‘normal’? Throughout the course, students will be given opportunities to reflect upon their personal relationships to able-bodiedness and able-mindedness.

Course Objectives:

- To lay a conceptual foundation for disability studies by surveying current theories and debates within the field.
- To understand if and why experiences of disability are shaped by the complex interrelationship between one’s race, class, gender, sexuality, religion, culture, language, etc.
- To challenge the notion that there is, and can only ever be, one ‘normal’ and valued state of being.
- To examine specific examples of political and artistic interventions that disrupt able-bodied and able-minded privilege.
- To promote critical reflection upon one’s personal relationship to disability.

Required Readings

Most mandatory readings are available electronically through the MacOdrum library website (see Library Reserves on cuLearn) or online (see hyperlink in syllabus).

The only required text is:

Withers, A. J. *Disability Politics and Theory*. Halifax: Fernwood Publishing, 2012.

It costs approximately \$24.00 and is **available at the university book store**. We will be reading from this text at the beginning of the course so please purchase it early in the term.

Weekly Theme and Reading Schedule

September 5: Course Overview and an Introduction to Disability Studies

Course Outline

Clare, Eli. “The Mountain” in *Exile and Pride: Disability, Queerness and Liberation*, 1-13. Cambridge, MA: South End Press, 2009.

September 12: Conceptualizing Disability, Part 1

Withers, A. J. "Constructing Difference, Controlling Deviance: The Eugenic Model" in *Disability Politics and Theory*, 13-30. Halifax: Fernwood Publishing, 2012.

Film: "Surviving Eugenics" (44 min)

Withers, A. J. "For Us, Not With Us: The Charity Model" in *Disability Politics and Theory*, 57-80. Halifax: Fernwood Publishing, 2012.

***Tutorials commence on Monday, Sep 16th**

September 19: Conceptualizing Disability, Part 2

Withers, A. J. "Diagnosing People as Problems: The Medical Model" in *Disability Politics and Theory*, 31-56. Halifax: Fernwood Publishing, 2012.

Withers, A. J. Selection from "Revolutionizing the Way We See Ourselves: The Rights and Social Models" in *Disability Politics and Theory*, 86-97. Halifax: Fernwood Publishing, 2012.

September 26: Disability in Canada

Prince, Michael J. "Introduction: Disability, Politics, and Citizenship" in *Absent Citizens: Disability Politics and Policy in Canada*, 3-24. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2009.

Employment and Social Development Canada. "Making an accessible Canada for persons with disabilities." Government of Canada (June 28, 2019): <https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/programs/accessible-people-disabilities.html>

***Upload your Reflexive Assignment (Part 1) to cuLearn by 11:55 pm.**

October 3: Disability and Neoliberalism

Video Clip: "This is Neoliberalism" <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=myH3gg5o0t0> (3 min)

Long, Robyn. "Sexual Subjectivities within Neoliberalism: Can Queer and Crip Engagements Offer an Alternative Praxis?." *Journal of International Women's Studies*, 19 no. 1 (2018): 78-93.

October 10: Access and Language

Titchkosky, Tanya. "Disability: A Rose By Any Other Name? 'People-first' language in Canadian Society." *The Canadian Review of Sociology and Anthropology* 38, no. 2 (2001): 125-140.

Clare, Eli. "Freaks and Queers" in *Exile and Pride: Disability, Queerness and Liberation*, 81-85. Cambridge, MA: South End Press, 2009.

Lakshmi Piepzna-Samarasinha, Leah. "Making Space Accessible is an Act of Love for our Communities" in *Care Work: Dreaming Disability Justice*, 74-79. Vancouver: Arsenal Pulp Press, 2018.

October 17: Disability and Intersectionality

Lakshmi Piepzna-Samarasinha, Leah. "Preface: Writing (with) a Movement from Bed" in *Care Work: Dreaming Disability Justice*, 15-29. Vancouver: Arsenal Pulp Press, 2018.

Tam, Louise. "Whither Indigenizing the Mad Movement? Theorizing the Social Relations of Race and Madness through Conviviality" in *Mad Matters: A Critical Reader in Canadian Mad Studies* eds. Brenda A. LeFrançois, Robert Menzies and Geoffrey Reaume, 281-297. Toronto: Canadian Scholar's Press, 2013.

October 24: Fall Break – No Class

October 31: Midterm Exam

***Note: No tutorials between Monday, October 21 and Friday, October 25.**

November 7: 'Coming out Crip': Disability and Mad Pride

McRuer, Robert. "Crip" in *Keywords for Radicals: The Contested Vocabulary of Late-Capitalism*, ed. K. Fritsch, C. O'Connor and A. K. Thompson, 119-125. Oakland, CA: AK Press, 2016.

Lewis, Bradley. "A Mad Fight: Psychiatry and Disability Activism" in L. Davis (Ed.), *The Disability Studies Reader 3rd ed.* Edited by Leonard Davis, 160-176. New York: Routledge, 2010.

Film: Davies, M. (Producer) & Patrichi, C. (Editor). (2013). *The inmates are running the asylum: Stories from MPA* [Motion Picture]. Vancouver, BC: History of Madness Productions.

November 14: Disability Art and Representation

Kelly, Christine and Michael Orsini. "Introduction: Mobilizing Metaphor" in *Mobilizing Metaphor: Art, Culture, and Disability Activism in Canada*, ed. Christine Kelly and Michael Orsini, 3-21. Toronto: UBC Press, 2016.

Chandler, Eliza. "Reflections on Crippling the Arts in Canada." *Art Journal* 76, no. 3-4 (2017): 56-59.

Recommended Reading: Reid, Jenna. "Crippling the Arts: It's About Time." *Canadian Art* (2016): <https://canadianart.ca/features/cripping-arts-time/>.

***Upload your Research Assignment to cuLearn by 11:55 pm.**

November 21: Disability Justice, Activism, Coalitional Organizing and Allyship

Clare, Eli. "Preface to the 2009 Edition, A Challenge to Single-Issue Politics: Reflections from a Decade Later" in *Exile and Pride: Disability, Queerness and Liberation*, ix-xiii. Cambridge, MA: South End Press, 2009.

Kafer, Alison. "Accessible Futures, Future Coalitions" in *Feminist Queer Crip*, 149-169. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2013.

November 28: Looking Forward: Imagining Worlds Otherwise

Kafer, Alison. "Introduction: Imagined Futures" in *Feminist Queer Crip*, 1-24. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2013.

Rice, Carla, Eliza Chandler, Jen Rinaldi, Nadine Changfoot, Kirsty Liddiard, Roxanne Mykituk and Ingrid Mündel. "Imagining Disability Futures." *Hypatia* 32, no. 2 (2017): 213-229.

December 5: Reflexive Assignment (Part 2) Due – No class

***Upload your Reflexive Assignment (Part 2) to cuLearn by 11:55 pm.**

Course Format

This course is comprised of a weekly two-hour lecture *and* a one-hour tutorial meeting. I will deploy a variety of teaching methods including lectures, large group discussions, small group activities, multi-media presentations, etc. to deliver course materials. During lectures, I

encourage questions from students and will strive to energetically engage with those who are present.

Assignments and Grading

Assignment	Weight	Due Date
Tutorial Attendance and Participation	20%	Ongoing
Reflexive Assignment, Part 1	15%	September 26
Midterm Exam	25%	October 31
Research Assignment	10%	November 14
Reflexive Assignment, Part 2	30%	December 5

Evaluation

Tutorial Attendance and Participation (20%)

Attendance and participation in nine (9) of the possible ten (10) tutorials is mandatory. You are expected to complete the required readings each week and come to class prepared to contribute to the discussion. Marks for tutorial attendance and participation will be awarded *each week* as follows:

- 1 point for attendance;
- 1 point for active engagement that demonstrates your understanding of the course readings; and
- 1 point for unique interventions that enrich the conversation and/or extend the tutorial dialogue beyond the course readings.

Reflexive Assignment, Part 1 (15%)

In this short assignment, you are required to reflect upon your understanding of, and relationship to, impairment and disability. To complete the assignment, please elaborate on each of the following three statements:

- I currently understand disability to mean...
- My understanding of disability is shaped by...
- I am taking this course on disability studies because...

The purpose of this assignment is to establish and reflect upon your individual point of departure for engaging with the content in this course. *At the end of term, we will return to this assignment to explore whether or not your answers have changed.*

This reflection should be written from your own personal point of view in full sentence/paragraph form. Using “I” statements is strongly recommended. Please note that **you do not need to cite academic/scholarly works in this assignment.** This assignment should demonstrate self-awareness as you critically reflect on your own relationship with impairment and disability. Although the assignment is a personal reflection, it must nonetheless employ proper grammar and spelling.

This assignment should be double-spaced and 1,000 words in length.

Please upload your Reflexive Assignment, Part 1 to cuLearn on before Thursday, September 26 at 11:55 pm.

Midterm Exam (25%)

The in-class Midterm Exam on **October 31** will consist of a combination of multiple choice, short and long answer questions based on materials covered in class and in tutorials between September 5 and October 17. More details will follow as the term progresses.

Please note that arrangements can be made with the Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities for those students who receive exam-based accommodations.

Research Assignment (10%)

This assignment is an opportunity for you to research an issue, theory, or concept related to the course content that is of personal interest. To complete this assignment, please do the following research tasks:

- **Choose an issue, theory, or concept that is of personal interest to you.**
- Using the library resources, identify **five (5) scholarly works** that pertain to your chosen topic.
- Create a **reference list** and record each of your five (5) scholarly works alphabetically using one of the following reference styles: Chicago, MLA, or APA. See https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/purdue_owl.html for guidance on proper referencing.
- Write a short **200 word summary of two (2) of your chosen scholarly works**. Be sure to recount the author's **main argument, primary research question(s) and key arguments**.

Reflexive Assignment, Part 2 (40%)

In this second part of your Reflexive Assignment, we reflect upon your whether, and if so how, your understanding of, and relationship to, impairment and disability has changed since beginning this course.

To complete the assignment, you will need to return to your first Reflexive Assignment where you elaborated on the following three statements:

- I currently understand disability to mean...
- My understanding of disability is shaped by...
- I am taking this course on disability studies because...

Then, write a second reflexive paper that includes each of the following elements:

- A unique title.
- A short introduction that communicates what your understanding of, and relationship to, impairment and disability was at the beginning of the course.
- A clear statement that summarizes whether, and if so how, your relationship to impairment and disability has changed. Why or why not has it not changed?

- **Two (2) examples** that contextualize your current relationship to impairment and disability, supported by at least **four (4) course readings**.
- A thoughtful discussion of **an issue, theory, or concept that is of personal interest** and that you began exploring further in your Research Assignment. Please support this discussion by drawing upon **the two (2) scholarly works not included in our weekly readings that you identified in the Research Assignment**.
- A full **Works Cited list for all referenced materials** (including course readings). Please use one of the following reference styles *consistently* throughout your paper: Chicago, MLA, or APA. See https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/purdue_owl.html for guidance on proper referencing.

Once again, this reflection should be written from your own personal point of view in full sentence/paragraph form. Work that makes clear links between course readings and concepts will receive higher marks than work that merely summarizes course materials or personal opinions.

As before, using “I” statements is strongly recommended. Although the assignment is a personal reflection, it must nonetheless employ proper grammar and spelling.

This assignment should be double-spaced and 2,500 words in length.

***Please upload your Reflexive Assignment, Part 2 to cuLearn on before Thursday, December 5 at 11:55 pm.**

Course Policies

Please submit your assignments on cuLearn on the due date before 11:55 pm to avoid a late penalty. Specific submission folders will be set up for this purpose. **Please include your name, student number, course code, my name and your Teaching Assistant’s name on all of your assignments.**

Please keep an extra copy of all your submitted assignments.

Requests for extensions on assignments must be made in writing to the Course Instructor at least **two working days before the assignment is due**. These requests will be assessed on a case-by-case basis and extensions are not guaranteed, particularly if the request is made less than two working days before the assignment due date.

A **late penalty of 2 marks per day** (including weekends) will be applied to late assignments for up to 10 days. After that, you will receive a zero on the assignment.

Please **allow up to 48 working week hours for me to respond to your email** and note that I generally do not respond to emails on the weekend.

This syllabus is subject to change throughout the semester.

University Policies

Letter Grades

In accordance with the Carleton University Undergraduate Calendar Regulations, the letter grades assigned in this course will have the following percentage equivalents:

A+ (90-100)	A (85-89)	A- (80-84)
B+ (77-79)	B (73-76)	B- (70-72)
C+ (67-69)	C (63-66)	C- (60-62)
D+ (57-59)	D (53-56)	D- (50-52)
F (Below 50)	WDN (Withdrawn from the course)	
DEF (Deferred)		

Plagiarism

The University Senate defines plagiarism as “presenting, whether intentional or not, the ideas, expression of ideas or work of others as one’s own.” This can include:

- reproducing or paraphrasing portions of someone else’s published or unpublished material, regardless of the source, and presenting these as one’s own without proper citation or reference to the original source;
- submitting a take-home examination, essay, laboratory report or other assignment written, in whole or in part, by someone else;
- using ideas or direct, verbatim quotations, or paraphrased material, concepts, or ideas without appropriate acknowledgment in any academic assignment;
- using another’s data or research findings;
- failing to acknowledge sources through the use of proper citations when using another’s works and/or failing to use quotation marks;
- handing in "substantially the same piece of work for academic credit more than once without prior written permission of the course instructor in which the submission occurs."

Plagiarism is a serious offence, which cannot be resolved directly with the course’s instructor. The Associate Deans of the Faculty conduct a rigorous investigation, including an interview with the student, when an instructor suspects a piece of work has been plagiarized. Penalties are not trivial. They can include a final grade of “F” for the course.

Read more about academic integrity here: <https://carleton.ca/registrar/academic-integrity/>

Requests for Academic Accommodation

You may need special arrangements to meet your academic obligations during the term. For an accommodation request, the processes are as follows:

Pregnancy obligation

Please contact your instructor with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For more details see the [Student Guide](#).

Religious obligation

Please contact your instructor with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For more details see the [Student Guide](#).

Academic Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

The Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities (PMC) provides services to students with Learning Disabilities (LD), psychiatric/mental health disabilities, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD), chronic medical conditions, and impairments in mobility, hearing, and vision. If you have a disability requiring academic accommodations in this course, please contact PMC at 613-520-6608 or pmc@carleton.ca for a formal evaluation. If you are already registered with the PMC, contact your PMC coordinator to send me your Letter of Accommodation at the beginning of the term, and no later than two weeks before the first in-class scheduled test or exam requiring accommodation (if applicable). After requesting accommodation from PMC, meet with me to ensure accommodation arrangements are made.

Please consult the PMC website: <https://carleton.ca/pmc/> for the deadline to request accommodations for the formally-scheduled exam (if applicable).

Assistance for Students

Academic and Career Development Services: <http://carleton.ca/sacds/>

Writing Services: <http://www.carleton.ca/csas/writing-services/>

Peer Assisted Study Sessions (PASS): <https://carleton.ca/csas/group-support/pass/>

Additional Resources

Abbas, Jihan, Kathryn Church, Catherine Frazee and Melanie Panitch. 2004. "Lights... Camera... Attitude!: Introducing Disability Arts and Culture." Ryerson RBC Institute for Disability Studies Research and Education: <https://www.ryerson.ca/ds/pdf/artsreport.pdf>.

Clare, Eli. *Brilliant Imperfection: Grappling with Cure*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2017.

Chandler, Eliza. "Reflections on Crippling the Arts in Canada." *Art Journal* 76 no. 3-4 (2017): 56-59.

Cvetkovich, Ann. *Depression: A Public Feeling*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2012.

Garland-Thomson, Rosemarie. "Feminist Disability Studies." *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 30 no. 2 (2005): 1557-1587.

Garland-Thomson, Rosemarie. "Staring Back: Self-Representations of Disabled Performance Artists." *American Quarterly* 52 no. 2 (2000): 334-338.

Ignagni, Esther and Kathryn Church. "Disability Studies and the Ties and Tensions with Arts-Informed Inquiry: One More Reason to Look Away?" in *Handbook of the Arts in Qualitative Research: Perspectives, Methodologies, Examples, and Issues*, ed. Gary Knowles, 1-13. Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications, 2008.

Gorman, Rachel. "Mad Nation? Thinking through Race, Class, and Mad Identity Politics." In *Mad Matters: A Critical Reader in Canadian Mad Studies* eds. Brenda A. LeFrançois, Robert Menzies and Geoffrey Reaume, 270-280. Toronto: Canadian Scholar's Press, 2013.

Jacobson, Rose and Geoff McMurchy. "Focus on Disability and Deaf Arts in Canada." *Canada Council for the Arts* (2010): <https://canadacouncil.ca/-/media/Files/CCA/Research/2011/09/FocusonDisabilityandDeafArtsinCanadaEN.pdf>.

Kelly, Christine and Michael Orsini. *Mobilizing Metaphor: Art, Culture, and Disability Activism in Canada*. Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2016.

Kuppers, Petra. "Community Arts and Practices: Improvising Being-Together." *Culture Machine* 8 (2006): <http://culturemachine.net/index.php/cm/article/view/45/53>.

LeFrançois, Brenda A., Robert Menzies and Geoffrey Reaume eds. *Mad Matters: A Critical Reader in Canadian Mad Studies*. Toronto: Canadian Scholar's Press, 2013.

Lewis, Victoria Ann. "Crip." In *Keyword for Disability Studies*, ed. Rachel Adams, Benjamin Reis and David Serlin, 46-48. New York: New York University Press, 2015.

McRuer, Robert. *Crip Theory: Cultural Signs of Queerness and Disability*, 1-32. New York: New York University Press, 2006.

McRuer, Robert. *Crip Times: Disability, Globalization and Resistance*. New York: New York University Press, 2018.

Sweeney, Elizabeth M. "(Dis)played: American Able and the Display of Contemporary Disability Art." Research Paper submitted to the Graduate Program in Critical Disability Studies, York University, 2012.

Sweeney, Elizabeth. "Shifting Definitions of Access: Disability and Emancipatory Curatorship in Canada." *Canadian Museums Association* (2010): <http://www.urbis-libnet.org/vufind/Record/ICCROM.ICCROM106788>.

Sandahl, Carrie. "Queering the Crip or Crippling the Queer?: Intersections of Queer and Crip Identities in Solo Autobiographical Performance." *GLQ* 9 no. 1-2 (2003): 25-56.