

Carleton University
Department of Sociology and Anthropology
Sociology 5401/ WGST 5901D/ ACCS 5001
Fall 2023
Critical Disability Studies

Instructor: Kelly Fritsch

Office Hours: Wednesday 3-4 pm or by appointment

Email: kellyfritsch@cunet.carleton.ca

Course Schedule: Wednesday 11:35-2:25 pm

Method of Delivery: In person

Course Description: Drawing on contemporary disability theory, culture, and activism, this seminar engages bodily difference and variation to consider competing definitions, conceptions, and social relations of disability, impairment, madness, neurodivergence, chronic illness and episodic conditions, as well as health and wellness. Drawing on critical academic scholarship as well as cultural and activist contributions, we will investigate the workings of power and social control, access and accessibility, norms and normalization, ableism, sanism, and medicalization, as well as explore crip, mad, and disabled identity formation, art and culture, and political agency. We will approach disability not as a fixed or singular category but rather as a shifting culturally specific formation that is entangled with intersecting categories such as race, ethnicity, class, gender, sexuality, age, and more. Students in this seminar will gain an understanding of the current debates, concepts, theories, and methodologies within the field of critical disability studies, and will engage with this broad understanding through class discussion, presentations, and written work. Together we will work to disrupt contemporary ableist relations of disability and raise questions about the limitations, contradictions, and directions of future critical disability studies research and disability justice.

Reading (s)/Textbook (s): On Brightspace

Course Requirements & Methods of Evaluation:

Facilitated Discussion 15%

Research Proposal 20%

Book Review Presentation 25%

Research Essay 40%