

SOCI 5805H: Political Economy of Disability

Fall 2026 (Monday, 2:30-5:30 pm, in person seminar)

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The Political Economy of Disability offers a critical investigation of how economic forces shape disability and accessibility within global systems of power, value, and accumulation. We will examine how welfare regimes, labour markets, austerity policies, care infrastructures, and emergent technologies distribute life chances and organize the material conditions of disabled existence. Attending to processes such as commodification, privatization, financialization, and the market logics that structure social reproduction, we will analyze how value and power circulate through institutions, policy frameworks, and global economies.

Students will engage key debates, concepts, theories, and methods that ground a political-economic approach to disability and accessibility, drawing on scholarship in critical disability studies, feminist political economy, labour studies, social movement studies, and science and technology studies. Through seminar discussion, presentations, and written work, we will probe the contradictions and limits of contemporary economic arrangements, examine how struggles for accessibility and disability justice contest them, and explore transformative pathways for building more equitable and interdependent futures.