

Department of Anthropology
ANTHRO 3354F-200/9230A
Disability and Health in Local and Global Worlds
Provisional Course Outline
Fall 2023

Version date: August 29, 2023

Instructor and Class information:

Mode of Delivery: Blended format, 2 hours in-class and 1 hour asynchronous.

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Prerequisite: Registration in third or fourth year in any Anthropology module or Disability Studies module.

Antirequisites: None.

Credit value: 0.5

Course Description:

This is a course about intersections. Disability cuts across age, gender, class, caste, occupation, religion- or does it? By some measures, people with disabilities are the largest minority group in the world today. In this course, we critically examine both the experiences of people with experiences with disability or chronic health conditions as well as the politics and processes of writing about such experiences through an anthropological lens. Indeed, questions of representation are perhaps at the core of this course. Is there such a thing as an international or universal disability experience? What does it mean to be disabled or have a chronic health condition in different social, economic, and political contexts in today's world?

In the beginning of the course, we will develop an anthropological foundation from which to talk about local and global contexts as well as disability. We will consider issues of local development, globalization, and transnationalism (Note: of specific relevance to MER students). We will ask whether disability is a universal category, and we will consider how experiences of health, illness, disability, and debility vary over temporal and spatial contexts. We will engage in "concept work" by analyzing the relationships between disability and impairment and we will critically evaluate the different models employed to think about disability. In doing so, we will rethink (perhaps) previously taken for granted understandings of disability and health and we will also engage with broader questions about international development, human rights, the boundaries of the nation, the family and other kinship affiliations, and identity and community formation (Note: Of specific relevance to MER students). How is occupying and decolonizing health and disability both a productive analytic and a lens for thinking about pressing questions and concerns in today's world?

Learning Outcomes:

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Evaluate disability, occupation and health in diverse local and global political, economic, and social contexts

- Analyze the role that development or policy initiatives have played historically and currently in occupying and decolonizing disability and health
- Evaluate what is specific and what is universal about diverse health and disability experiences
- Understand the multi-disciplinary and inter-disciplinary nature of disability studies and key debates in the field
- Remember terms, definitions, and controversies regarding health and disability
- Analyze readings competently and critically
- Work collaboratively with a group of peers to develop shared understandings of class readings and to prepare regular oral presentations on those themes

Course Materials:

For this course we will use the textbook: *Occupying Disability: Critical Approaches to Community, Justice, and Decolonizing Disability*, the special issue [Disability Worlds](#) from *Current Anthropology* and other readings posted on OWL.

Evaluation:

Discussion Participation – 25%

Students will be expected to actively engage synchronously and asynchronously in this course. Each week you will post/share 1 Discussion Question (DQ) and 1 Weekly Reflection (WR) on the readings and online lessons and respond to at least 2 other students' posts.

Discussion questions (DQs) should be essay-type questions that don't have a simple yes or no answer, like something you would see in an essay exam. It must be directly related to the week's readings. Think of one, Starting in Week 2, you must post your questions by Tuesday by each week and respond to someone else's question by Friday of each week.

Weekly Reflections (WRs) are reflections can be anything that connects the week's readings to something from your experiences out in the world. They might be drawn from literature, film, social media, news articles, blogs or personal experiences. Post one of these by Tuesday and respond to someone else's post by Friday

Discussion Leadership 25%

Students will rotate responsibility for selecting readings or films (with instructor approval) and leading a class during the term. By Sunday 11:55pm, prior to their week leading class, Leaders will post any materials they have prepared as an online lesson and they will lead the synchronous (in-class) and asynchronous (OWL Forum) discussions throughout the week.

Essay – 25%

During this course, you will be expected to turn in a paper of 1500-1750 words on a topic of your choosing as long as it is relevant to and cites class learning objectives, readings, and discussions. Go to OWL Assignments Tab for due dates. Accommodations or extensions to these deadlines may be provided on a case-by-case basis upon formal request, possibly in consultation with students' academic counselors.

Group Assignment: Create a Lesson – 25%

Discussion groups will create one or more Lessons using communication modalities your choice (video, painting and artist statement, poster, slide presentation, graphic narrative etc.) on a topic

of your choosing that you feel should have been covered in the course but wasn't. Video/audio submissions must include a transcript. See due date in the OWL Assignments tab.

Academic Statements and Policies:

Institutional Statements and Policies:

All students should familiarize themselves with Western's current academic policies on Academic Rights and Responsibilities with regards to academic appeals, accommodation, scholastic discipline and code of conduct. These policies are outlined in the [Academic Calendar under Academic Rights and Responsibilities](#).

Course Specific Conditions Required to Pass this Course

Students are required to have a passing grade on their essay to pass this course. **The evaluation methods described in this course outline are essential requirements for the course.**

Grading Policy

All posted grades are final. Students are encouraged to read assignments and rubrics carefully consult with the instructor well before the due date to ensure full understanding of what is expected. Students may also meet after receiving grades in order to get additional feedback and suggestions for future assignments. However, Dr. Block will not regrade assignments for this course.

Learning Community

Just like there are many learning styles there are also many teaching styles. Some courses are structured with information flowing primarily from the instructor to the student and then flowing back from the student to the instructor, perhaps mediated by teaching assistants. This is effective for lower levels of knowledge acquisition: remembering and understanding. This is not how I am teaching this course. For higher levels of knowledge acquisition: applying, analyzing, evaluating and creating, we will establish what is called a learning community. Knowledge in a learning community circulates, flowing between all participants through online and small group discussions. The instructor assumes a mentoring role rather than as sole authority and there is recognition of different sorts of knowledge available in the classroom, especially when learners come from many disciplines and backgrounds. Research shows students reach higher levels of understanding when they are actively engaged in the learning process in this way. [Here is a site with some more information](#). As well as [this PDF article](#).

This style may not work for everyone, indeed may make even some people uncomfortable. I invite you to review our syllabus carefully and consider if you are prepared for this level of engagement. Your active weekly participation and engagement in this course through direct communication with other students during small group discussions (using text, audio or video) and via a group project is essential to your success here.

Collective Access

In this course we are all "in it" together. It is our shared responsibility to ensure that everyone has access to information and needed supports to be successful this course. This may mean describing images, making sure videos are captioned, taking notes collectively, etc. Collective access needs vary from course to course, so I will let you know of any specific access guidelines that we need for this course. This site discusses some examples of [collective access](#). I would suggest briefly

describing any photos you post and make sure any videos you post (including ones you personally make) are captioned. Auto-Captioning is very easy to do on [Zoom](#) and [YouTube](#). If you have access needs or concerns feel free to contact me, and I will be happy to meet to discuss how to best support your success in this course.

Accommodation, Illness Reporting and Academic Considerations

You may pursue academic consideration for deadlines. Please read the details and instructions on "[What is Academic Consideration](#)". However, if you are in communication with Dr. Block before the extended submission windows close, usually she will grant extensions without your needing to go through a formal process. *Note that for final assignments at the end of term this may not be possible.*

Accessible Education

Students with disabilities work with Accessible Education (formerly SSD) which provides recommendations for accommodation based on medical documentation or psychological and cognitive testing. More information can be found on the [Accessible Education site](#), as well as the accommodation policy in the [Academic Calendar](#).

Religious Accommodation

Students should consult the University's list of recognized religious holidays, and should give reasonable notice in writing, prior to the holiday, to the Instructor and an Academic Counsellor if their course requirements will be affected by a religious observance. Additional information is given in the [Western Multicultural Calendar](#).

Statement on Plagiarism and Use of AI:

Students must write their assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea from another author or AI, they must acknowledge their debt both by using quotation marks where appropriate and by proper referencing or disclosure. It is also a scholastic offence to submit the same work for credit in more than one course. **Plagiarism is a major scholastic offence.** See link below for more details on the penalties for plagiarism. All assignments will be evaluated using TurnItIn in the Assignments portal (video/audio submissions must include a transcript). **All assignments are required to have a TurnItIn score below 15%. Assignments with higher than a 15% score will be returned ungraded.**

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