

**YORK UNIVERSITY**  
**Critical Disability Studies Graduate Program**  
**Faculty of Graduate Studies**

***Critical Disability Studies 5020 3.0: Social Justice in the Labour Force***

**Term:** Winter 2017 (January to April)

**Professor:** Thomas Klassen

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**Office hours:** Wednesday and Fridays 10:30 to 11:30 and by appointment

**Websites:** [York University Profile](#) and [Personal Website](#)

**Date, time and location:** Wednesday 11:30 – 14:20 in Vari Hall 1156

## Course Description

This course examines aspects social justice for disabled people in regards to the labour market and workplace including employment rights. The purpose of this course is to provide a critical assessment about the extent to which social justice struggles have influenced employment policies and work experiences for people with disabilities. The course will focus on public policy, that is, the role of the state, in the labour market and the workplace in regard to people with disabilities.

Areas of analysis include: enabling and disabling workplace environments; disability employment accommodation theory and practice; the influence of activism and economic factors on policy-making; occupational health and safety; employment rights; the social construction of productivity and the valuation of work. Most of the course will focus on Canada, but some analysis of developments in the United States is also undertaken.

Cases studies will be examined to highlight the specific issues. More broadly gender, race, ethnicity, and class will also be discussed in relation to social justice, disability and the labour force.

This course will be primarily seminar discussion with some lectures. Students will be part of a group case study in which they will probe one instance of discrimination in employment. Students will have the opportunity to analyze one area of interest in depth as part of the research paper for the course.

## Course Resources

An electronic collection of resources has been prepared for this course. Most materials can be accessed directly from the web or via the York Libraries collection. Some materials will be made available by the instructor.

## Evaluation

<b>Title of Evaluation</b>	<b>Date due</b>	<b>Worth (%)</b>
Seminar leadership (oral presentation of readings) and participation	Ongoing	25
Case study (group project)	Weeks 3 to 10 (presentations in weeks 10 and 11)	25
Research essay proposal	February 15	10
Research paper	April 5	40

The last day to withdraw from this course without receiving a grade is March 10, 2017.

### Notes to evaluation scheme

1. Late assignments will not be accepted. Assignments may only be submitted in hard copy during office hours or class time.
2. Assignments must be written in grammatically correct English. Students must have assignments edited prior to submission.
3. For seminar leadership (oral presentation of readings) there will be an anonymous peer evaluation process to assist students to improve presentation skills.
4. It is strongly recommended that e-mail and other messaging services not be accessed during class time.
5. Plagiarism, or the submission of work which you did not write, is an extremely serious academic offense and may lead to formal charges of academic dishonesty, depending on the extent of plagiarism. Please see the [academic integrity tutorial section](#) on the Faculty Graduate Studies website.
6. Please note that additional required readings will be assigned based on the interests of students in the course.

## Grading

Only a letter of grade will be given for assignments (no percentage grades will be provided). The grading scheme for the course is shown below.

Letter Grades	Performance	Descriptions pertaining to the CDS program
A+	Exceptional	Excellence in writing, research, reading and originality.
A	Excellent	Work that shows a superior command of the subject, clearly Written, creatively researched.
A-	High	Work that shows a superior command of the material but limited in breath or depth of research and/or presentation.
B+	Highly Satisfactory	Research and writing skills may be flawed in some visible and correctable way. Absence of Critical perspective.
B	Satisfactory	Work that meets minimum expectations of a graduate student in research, writing, and reading skills. Absence of Critical perspective.
C	Conditional	Unsatisfactory work: flawed in methodology or critical assumption, incoherently organized, poorly written, or superficially researched. Absence of critical perspective.
F	Failure	Work that is far below what is required. Does not address the assignment adequately. <b>Work that is plagiarized.</b> Absence of critical perspective.

## WEEKLY SCHEDULE

### 1. January 11 - Introduction: Labour Markets, Work, Social Justice and People with Disabilities

Overview of course: key themes, assignments, and related

### 2. January 18 – Canadian Dimensions of Labour Market and Workplace Policy

Watch the following [YouTube video](#)

Galer, Dustin. 2014. "A Place to Work Like Any Other? Sheltered Workshops in Canada, 1970-1985." *Canadian Journal of Disability Studies*. Vol. 3, No. 3.

August, Rick. 2009. [Paved with Good Intentions: The Failure of Passive Disability Policy in Canada](#). Ottawa. Caledon Institute [PDF]

Russell, Marta. 2002. ["What disability civil rights cannot do: Employment and political economy."](#) *Disability & Society*, 17:2: 117-135. [PDF]

### 3. January 25 - Capitalism and Employment

Mladenov, Teodor. 2015. "Neoliberalism, postsocialism, disability," *Disability & Society*. 30:3, 445-459. Online at York University Library

Stiglitz, Joseph E. 2002. "Employment, social justice and societal well-being," *International Labour Review*, 141:1-2: 9-29. Online at York University Library.

Taylor, Sunny. 2004. ["The right not to work: Power and disability."](#) *Monthly Review*, 55:10.

[Business and Disability website](#)

### 4. February 1 – Rights and the Canadian Workplace (part 1) Lynk, Michael. 2008. *Disability and the Duty to Accommodate in the Canadian Workplace: Leading Principles and Recent Cases*. Available at the following [link](#)

[Bona Fide Occupational Requirements and Bona Fide Justifications under the Canadian Human Rights Act: The Implications of Meiorin and Grismer](#). 2010. Report by the Canadian Human Rights Commission. Available online

[Sample paper available online](#)

## 5. February 8 – Additional Perspectives on Employment and Disability

Santuzzi, Alecia M. and Pamela R. Waltz. 2016. Disability in the Workplace A Unique and Variable Identity. *Journal of Management*. 42: 5, 1111–1135. Online at York University Library

Turcotte, Martin. 2014. [“Persons with disabilities and employment,”](#) *Insights on Canadian Society*. Ottawa: Statistics Canada. Catalogue no. 75-006-X [PDF]

## 6. February 15 – Rights and the Canadian Workplace (part 2)

Malhotra, Ravi A. 2003. “The duty to accommodate unionized workers with disabilities in Canada and the United States: A counter-hegemonic approach.” *Journal of Law and Equality* 2:1:92-155. Online at York University Library.

[Become familiar with reports of the Council of Canadians with Disabilities in regard to employment.](#)

Ontario Human Rights Commission. 2009. [Policy and guidelines on disability and the duty to accommodate.](#) Toronto [PDF]

## 7. February 22 – Reading week – no class meeting

## 8. March 1 - Integration and Accommodations for Workers with Disabilities in the United States

Gay, Helen. 2004. [“Social integration and employees with a disability: Their view,”](#) *Disability Studies Quarterly* 24:1. Also available at the York University Library.

Schwochau, Susan and Peter Blanck. 2003. “Does the ADA disable the disabled? More comments,” *Industrial Relations*, 42: 1: 67–77. Online at York University Library.

One more reading to be assigned based on interests of the students in the course.

## 9. March 8 - Workers with Disabilities in Canada the Developing World

El-Lahib, Yahya Samantha Wehbi. 2011. “Immigration and disability: Ableism in the policies of the Canadian state,” *International Social Work*. 55:1 95–108. Online at York University Library.

Additional articles will be added based on the research interests of students

## **10. March 15 – Case Study: Disability, Age and Employment**

Riach, Kathleen and Wendy Loretto. 2009. ["Identity work and the 'unemployed' worker: age, disability and the lived experience of the older unemployed,"](#) *Work Employment Society*. 23: 102-119.

Klassen, Thomas. 2010. ["The Elimination of Contractual Mandatory Retirement at Age 65 in Canada: Unfinished and Still Contentious,"](#) *Canadian Conference on Elder Law 2010*. Toronto.

McKinnon, John. 2010. ["Age-Based Discrimination in Ontario's Workers' Compensation Laws,"](#) *Canadian Conference on Elder Law 2010*. Toronto.

Documentary video: [\*Living Forever: The Longevity Revolution\*](#)

## **11. March 22 - Case Study: Presentation and Debate (1)**

In addition to the presentation and debate, each team will recommend one article/reading that all members of the class are to review

## **12. March 29 – Case Study: Presentation and Debate (2)**

In addition to the presentation and debate, each team will recommend one article/reading that all members of the class are to review

## **13. April 5 – The Future of Disability at Work**

Barnes, Colin and Geof Mercer. 2005. "Disability, work, and welfare: Challenging the social exclusion of disabled people," *Work, Employment and Society*, 19:3: 527–545. Online at York University Library.

Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. 2010. [\*Sickness, Disability and Work: Breaking the Barriers - CANADA: Opportunities for Collaboration\*](#). Paris, OECD.

# RESEARCH ESSAY PROPOSAL GUIDELINES

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The proposal may be conceived as a map that provides direction for the research and writing of the research essay. The more detailed and developed the map, the less difficult it should be to write the essay.

You may select any topic of interest related to the major themes of the course, but need to consult with the course director before beginning to write the proposal. The readings for our course may provide you with suggestions or ideas, as well as sources. Aim to have a focussed topic, problem, issue, controversy, debate or dilemma that is central to your proposal. Avoid vague and general topics. For your proposal you should also indicate why what you have selected to explore is interesting and important.

It is essential that the proposal be based on some (initial) research you have conducted. The proposal will require library and web-based research and you must include bibliography that includes the works consulted so far. It will not be acceptable to have only on-line documents in your bibliography.

There is no one format that will be most appropriate for the proposal. The length of the proposal should be no less than five pages, in addition to the bibliography.

## RESEARCH ESSAY GUIDELINES

The research essay must be professional in all aspects. As such, it must have a cover page, title, table of contents, five or six sections (such as introduction, etc.), bibliography and, if you wish, appendices. You are encouraged to use a few visual aids – graphs, charts, photos, diagrams and tables – that must be clearly labelled and referenced. The essay should be a holistic work that demonstrates considerable research and reflection, as well as strong writing skills.

The essay must be at least 20 pages in length using double-spacing and 12 point font. Grades will be deducted for grammatical errors. You must have the paper read (edited) by others before submitting it. Please attach your proposal to the essay, and the annotated bibliography.

**GROUP CASE STUDY**  
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Students will join small groups to collaboratively work on a case study; namely, a human rights complaint on the grounds of discrimination in employment due to disability. For this case study, each group will complete a Human Rights Tribunal of Ontario application. As part of the application the group will utilize a situation that has occurred (to a member of the group, or a drawn from the literature/media). In completing the application, the group will make reference to key readings from the course and the scholarly literature.

Each group of students will also act as a respondent to an application. This will involve reading an application and then drafting a reply. Both groups will have the opportunity to meet twice during class times to discuss the complaint and response. During the last weeks of the course, both groups will present their respective cases to colleagues in the class who will act as Tribunal members.

The objective of the case study is three-fold:

- i) to illustrate the complexity of human rights at the workplace
- ii) allow students to apply the readings to a specific example;
- iii) permit students to engage in discussion and debate.

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**Course: Critical Disability Studies 5020 3.0: Social Justice in the Labour Force PEER  
EVALUATION FOR ORAL PRESENTATIONS OF READINGS**

Presenter: \_\_\_\_\_

Topic/Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

	<i>poor</i>		<i>average</i>		<i>excellent</i>
Knowledge of the topic	1	2	3	4	5
Presentation technique/style	1	2	3	4	5
Innovation/creativity	1	2	3	4	5

Comments/Feedback