

**York University**  
Faculty of Health  
School of Health Policy and Management

**CDIS 5095/HLTH 5490**  
**Intersectionality, Disability and Health**  
**Winter 2021**

### Seminar times/Location

Schedule: Thursday, 4-7 pm (Online- [lien Zoom on eClass](#))

Term: Winter 2021 Term (January to April 2021)

Professor: Agnès Berthelot-Raffard

Office: Virtual ([lien Zoom on eClass](#))

Hours: by appointment on Thursday before the seminar.

Email: [aberthel@yorku.ca](mailto:aberthel@yorku.ca)

### EQUITY AND TEACHING:

As the COVID-19 pandemic unfolds and evolves, students and instructors are adapting to learning online. We recognize that the pandemic and the measures to control and treat it impact students in different ways. We are committed to and focused on providing our students a learning environment that is engaging, supportive, flexible and has academic integrity. We encourage you to share your feedback as early as possible about your learning experience so that we can have a deeper understanding of the challenges you may be facing, and work towards finding solutions to the extent possible. Talk to your Course Director (CD) or the Graduate Program Director (GPD) within the School of Health Policy and Management, Dr. Rachel Gorman ([gorman@yorku.ca](mailto:gorman@yorku.ca)) about access to technology and supports, academic accommodation, technology-enabled delivery of course material, assessments/evaluation instruments or any other academic challenges you are experiencing. For more detail about how the pandemic is impacting students see the report “COVID-19 Impacts on Student Learning and Equity” from the [Centre for Human Rights, Equity and Inclusion](#). For other updates on COVID-19 and York see [YU-Better Together Website](#).

### COURSE DESCRIPTION

As a Black feminist theory, intersectionality is becoming increasingly essential in social sciences and humanities. Meanwhile, Black and Indigenous studies have opened new methodological and

theoretical approaches for a better understanding of structural violence, systemic racism, structural injustices grounded in colonialism, imperialism and slavery. These theories help us develop a broad understanding of gender and gender identity, sexuality, (dis)ability, and trauma. Indeed, intersectionality traces embodied histories of anti-Black racism and colonialism. In this way, intersectionality has become a key to understanding health inequities. In particular, intersectionality highlights those dismissed in the health care system and by social-service providers.

This course traces the profound shifts and challenges intersectionality theorists and practitioners have brought to health studies and critical disability studies as well as in equity-focused clinical, social, and community practices. The first part of the seminar engages the students to understand intersectionality, and its critiques through a close reading of the original texts on this theory. By analyzing Black feminist theories and praxis, students will understand the historical and epistemological foundations of intersectionality. The second part of this seminar explores how intersectional feminist scholars are transforming disability studies. The third part focuses on the ways in which intersectionality has been adopted in health equity literature, health policy interventions and research.

## METHODS OF TEACHING

The course is a seminar. Except for the introductory seminar, the instructor only lectures minimally. All other classes will consist of approximately 20-minute students' presentations. Students are responsible for introducing both synthesis and analysis by extracting central themes and identifying key questions raised by the texts. Following these presentations, our time will be devoted to a structured discussion of themes raised by the readings. This teaching method means that the success of this course will depend upon students' preparedness and willingness to participate.

## EVALUATION METHODS

The evaluation will be based on the following work:

### **Oral presentation on a text (or a selection of texts) (35%)**

An **oral presentation** to be chosen from the themes indicated below. Students must indicate their choice of selected texts in the first seminar. To facilitate an informed choice, students will be provided with elements of each theme at the first meeting. This evaluation method is based on the student's active participation and ongoing work. It must be noted that each student may be expected to give more than one presentation during the course. Students are expected to choose a theme from the list provided in the calendar below and give an oral presentation. This presentation limited to **20 minutes** will highlight issues emerging from the course readings. The oral presentation is intended to be both synthesis and analysis comprising an exposition of the

ideas and theses defended by the authors. The student will ensure that questions arising from the readings are raised to facilitate class discussion.

The oral presentation counts for **35% of the final grade**. The professor will comment on both the presentation and the commentary. She will orient the discussion toward the most pertinent points.

**Two days before each class**, each student who is assigned to do one presentation must submit to the professor an overview paper of no more than two pages (500 words max). This paper should address the following:

1. What are the main ideas being discussed in the article?
2. What are the key points and issues identified in the readings
3. What are the authors' assumptions?
4. How do the readings address equity issues or/and health policy?

For each reading over the term identify, do not simply summarize the reading. We all will have read them! Each presentation should underline (1) a point or idea that the student thinks is especially important for understanding and improving health equity. (2) an issue that the student would like further elaboration upon during the class.

**PLEASE NOTE:** Based on the number of students registered for the course, they may be expected to give more than one presentation. In this case, an average of the marks will be used to calculate the final grade.

## **Final papers (45 %)**

A written **research paper** will first take the form of a **detailed outline (10%)**. The second stage will consist of a research paper on one of the subjects discussed in class.

First, students will be asked to define their own research question and provide a detailed outline (including the thesis, a brief plan, a selected bibliography no later than February 18th).

1. Select an issue for your papers. If you have difficulty selecting a topic, approach the professor for assistance.
2. Conduct a literature search of relevant policy documents, reports, or academic and professional journals pertaining to the topic that you have identified. Identify at least 10-15 relevant sources.

**By April, 21 at the latest**, students must submit a 12-page **paper** on their chosen subject (**35%**)

## **Class Participation (20 %):**

This is a seminar course, which means classes are discussion-based. Active participation from everyone is an essential part of CDIS 5095/HLTH 5490. Participation will be assessed based on

students' attendance (**5%**) and participation in classroom discussion (**5%**). For this assessment, the Professor will pay attention to the quality of their participation and the general level of preparedness (**10%**) as revealed by participation. If needed, the instructor will reserve the right to call upon students during the seminar.

**PLEASE NOTE:** Students will be provided with more precise criteria for each of these evaluations in due course. These criteria will be announced in the classroom and on the virtual campus.

## LANGUAGE OF EXPRESSION

Students' presentation, commentary and class participation are in English. Nevertheless, students are free to complete all written assignments for this course in either English or French.

## REQUIRED READINGS

All readings are available in PDF or e-book format at [York University Library Website](#) or are free at the URLs listed in the weekly schedule.

## WEEKLY SCHEDULE AND READINGS

### S1 January 14: Introduction to the course

- Introduction to the course by the instructor.

## Part I: Understanding the historical and conceptual foundations of Intersectionality.

### S2 January 21: Intersectionality: Historical and Intellectual Foundations

- Combahee River Collective, (1977, April) *Combahee River Collective Statement*.]
- Kimberle Crenshaw (1991), Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence against Women of Colour, *Stanford Law Review*, 43(6), Jul., 1991, 1241-1299.
- Vivian May (2012), Intellectual Genealogies, Intersectionality, and Anna Julia Cooper, in K.M Vaz & G.L. Lemons, *Feminist Solidarity at the Crossroads. Intersectional Women's Studies for Transracial Alliance*, New-York, Routledge, 59-71.

### **S3: January 28. Conceptual and theoretical foundations**

- Iris Marion Young (1990), *Justice and the Politics of Difference*. [Chapter 2: Five faces of Oppression], Princeton, p.39-65.  
[URL :[Racial Equity Tools Website](#)]

- Patricia Hill Collins (1993), Towards a New Vision: Race, Class and Gender as Categories of Analysis and Connection, *Race, Sex and Class*, Fall 1993, 1(1): 25-45.
- Patricia Hill Collins (2000), *Black Feminist Thought*, Routledge, 2009. [Chapter 12: Towards a Politics of Empowerment], 291-309.

#### **S4: February 4. Intersectionality and its critiques**

- Kathy Davis (2008), Intersectionality as buzzword: A sociology of science perspective on what makes a feminist theory successful, *Feminist Theory*, vol 9 (1):67-85.
- Patricia Hill Collins (2015), Intersectionality's definitional Dilemmas, *Annual Review of Sociology*, 41:1-20.
- Sara Salem (2018), Intersectionality and its discontents: Intersectionality as travelling theory, *European Journal of Women's Studies*, 2018, 25(4):403-418.

## **Part II- Intersectionality and Dis/ability studies**

#### **S5: February 18: Critical Disability studies (CDS)**

- Christopher Bell (2006), Introducing White Disability Studies: A Modest Proposal, in Davis Leonard J. *Disabilities Studies Reader*, Routledge, 275-282.
- Jane Campbell (2008) Fight for a slice, of for a bigger cake? Sixth Annual Disability Lecture at St-John College, Cambridge, 29 April, University of Cambridge. [PDF]
- Rosemarie Garland-Thompson (2005), Feminist Disability Studies, *Signs*, 30(2), Winter 2005, 1557-1587.

#### **S6: February 25: Integrating Race/ethnicity in CDS**

- Nirmala Erevelles (2014), Thinking with Disabilities Studies, *Disability Studies Quarterly*, 34:2, 2014. [Available in open access: [Disability Studies Quarterly Website](#)]
- Sami Schalk & Jina B. Kim (2020), Integrating Race: Transforming Feminist Disability Studies, *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*, 46(1):31-55.
- Deborah Stienstra (2012), Race/Ethnicity and Disability Studies, in Nick Watson et al. *Routledge Handbook of Disability Studies*, Taylor et Francis, 376-389.

#### **S7: March 4: Intersectionality: A Framework for Dis/Crit theories**

- Anna Stubblefield (2009), The Entanglement of Race and Cognitive Dis/ability, *Metaphilosophy*, 40 (3/4), 531-551.
- Mona Bailey & I. A Mobley (2019), Work in the Intersections: A Black Feminist Disability Framework, *Gender & Society*, 33(1): 19-40.

- Nirmala Erevelles & Andrea Minnear, Unspeakable offence: Untangling Race and Disability in Discourses of Intersectionality, *Journal of Literary & Cultural Disability Studies*, 4(2), 2010:27-45.

### **S8: March 11: Health, Illness and Mental Health Stigma**

- Anna Mollow (2006), « When Black Women Start Going on Prozac... » The Politics of Race, Gender, and Emotional Distress in Meri-Nana-Ama Danquah's *Willow Weep for me*. In Davis Leonard J. *Disabilities Studies Reader*, Routledge, 283-299.
- Karl Atkin (2007), Health, Illness, Disability and Black Minorities: A Speculative Critique of Present-Day Discourse, *Disability, Handicap & Society*, 6:1,37-47.
- Marina Morrow and al. (2020) Intersectionality as an analytic framework for understanding the experiences of mental health stigma among racialized men, *International Journal of Mental Health and Addiction*, 18, 1304-1317.

## **PART III- Intersectionality and Health Equity**

### **S9: March 18: Social Determinants of Health and Intersectionality**

- Olena Hankivsky & Ashlee Christoffersen (2008), Intersectionality and the determinants of Health: a Canadian perspective, *Critical Public Health*, 18(3), September 2008: 228-283.
- Nancy Lopez and Vivian L. Godstein (2017), Health inequities, Social Determinants, and Intersectionality in K. Bogard, V.Mc Bride Murry, C. Alexander (eds), *Perspective on Health Equity and Social Determinants of Health*, National Academy of Medicine, pp. 9-30. [URL: <https://nam.edu/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/Perspectives-on-Health-Equity-and-Social-Determinants-of-Health.pdf>]
- Public Health Agency of Canada (2020), Social Determinants and Inequities in Health For Black Canadians, a snapshot [URL: [Published by the National Academy of Medicine](#)]

### **S10: March 25: Understanding Health Disparities: transforming Policy and Practices**

- Kaur Dhamoon & Olena Hankivsky (2011), Why the Theory and Practice of Intersectionality Matter to Health Research and Policy, in O. Hankivsky (ed.) *Health Inequalities in Canada: Intersectional Frameworks and Practices*, Vancouver, Canada, UBC Press, pp. 16-52.
- M.R. Natacha Foo Kune, Agnes Kwong, Ellen B. Taylor (2019), Racial Disparities in University Counseling Centers, in M. T. Williams, D.C. Rosen, J.W Kanter (eds.), *Eliminating Race-Based Mental Health Disparities, Promoting Equity and Culturally Responsive Care across Setting*, Context Press, 291-305.
- Shawn C.T. Jones, Enrique W. Neblett, The Impact of Racism on the Mental Health of People of Color, in M. T. Williams, D.C. Rosen, J.W Kanter (eds.), *Eliminating Race-Based*

*Mental Health Disparities, Promoting Equity and Culturally Responsive Care across Setting*, Context Press, 79–98.

### **S11: April 1: Intersectionality in Women’s Health research**

- Olena Hanvisky, Colleen Reid, Renée Cormier, and al. (2010), Exploring the promises of intersectionality for advancing women’s health research, *International Journal for Equity in Health*, 2010, 9 (5)
- Josephine Etowa, Juliana Wiens, Wanda Thomas Bernard and Barbara Clow (2007), Determinants of Black Women’s Health in Rural and Remote Communities, *Canadian Journal of Nursing Research*, 39(3), 56-76.
- Lynn Weber (2006), Reconstructing the Landscape of Health Disparities Research. Promoting Dialogue and Collaboration Between Feminist Intersectional and Biomedical Paradigms, in A.J Schulz & L. Mullings (eds.), *Gender, Race, Class and Health. The intersectional Approaches*, San Francisco, Jossey-Bass, 21-59.

### **S12: April 8: Practices in Health Equity Research: methodological dimensions**

- Olena Hankivsky, Daniel Grace, and all (2014), An intersectionality-based policy analysis framework: critical reflections on a methodology for advancing equity, *International Journal for Equity in Health*, 13 (1),119.
- Greta R. Bauer (2014), Incorporating Intersectionality Theory into Population Health research methodology: Challenge and the potential to advance Health Equity, *Social Science & Medicine*, 110, 10-17.
- Anuj Kapilashrami, Sarah Hill and Nasar Meer (2015), What can Health Inequalities Researchers learn from an Intersectionality Perspective? Understanding Social Dynamics with an Inter-Categorical approach? *Social Theory & Health*, 13 (¾), 288-307.

## **COURSE POLICIES**

1. Assignments should be double-spaced in 12-point Times New Roman font and adhere to the style guide of your choice (e.g. APA, MLA, Chicago).
2. Cite all relevant references from the course syllabus with page numbers.
3. **Submit assignments via e-mail** by midnight on the due date. I will provide electronic comments by e-mail.

### **PLEASE NOTE:**

If you have a medical, academic accommodation or other compelling reason for not submitting an assignment on time, I must be notified PRIOR to the date the assignment is due. If this is not done, then the 2 percentage points a day penalty applies without exceptions.

The professor will not accept assignments weeks late without prior notification. If you are having significant personal issues, attend the Graduate Student Wellness and Consultation services.

### *Late Penalty*

**The assignments received later than the due date will be penalized 2% for every day late** (including weekends). Exceptions to the lateness penalty for valid reasons such as illness, compassionate grounds, etc., may be entertained by the course instructor but will require supporting documentation (e.g., a doctor's or allied health professional's letter).

For guidelines around grading practices, missed assignments and late work, see the Student Survival Guide & Handbook (Turn to pages 19-20, 27, and 33 for policies on our Grading System, Course Extensions, Academic Honesty, and Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities.) Contact the Critical Disability Studies Graduate Office on these administrative options at [gradcds@yorku.ca](mailto:gradcds@yorku.ca).

## NOTE ON LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

Your instructor will foster a supportive, inclusive learning environment that will encourage both individual and collective growth. Nevertheless, it is also your responsibility to do your best to create an anti-oppressive collegial environment.