

Core Courses

CDIS 5100 6.0: Disability Studies: An Overview (for MA students only)

This course provides a broad overview of definitions and paradigms of impairment and disability: medical, psychological, sociopolitical and theoretical perspectives; functionalist, role theory, interactionism, disability and human rights issue, and recent developments in feminist and postmodern approaches to disability. Attention is given to the historical and cultural development of concepts and categories of disability; disability theory and policy at provincial, national and international levels; and implications of theory and practice for the lives of persons with disabilities.

CDIS 5110 3.0: Methodology

This course explores current debates and issues on the implementation of disability research, including emphasis on emancipatory research and participant action research. Areas for discussion include an introduction to doing disability research, qualitative and quantitative research methodologies, involving persons with disabilities in policy and planning, assessment procedures, the dissemination of research findings and accessibility of information.

CDIS 6001 0.0: MA Major Research Paper

No course credit. **Pre-requisite:** Students *must* have completed all course work assigned in CDIS 5100 6.0, CDIS 5110 3.0, CDIS 5120 3.0 and two 3-credit elective courses at graduate level including one being offered by our program.

CDIS 6100 6.0: Doctoral Seminar in Critical Disability Theory and Research (for PhD students only)

This course will provide a broad overview of key texts in the field of disability studies, as well as an in-depth analysis of competing and complementary views about how “disability” is defined. Areas to be studied include social movement theory and how this theory is reflected in the context of disability activism; tension and collaboration between academics and grass roots activists; gaps in disability studies; marginalization between and among people with disabilities; the notion of a disability community or communities; disability and the law; race, class, gender, and poverty; disability culture and literature; and social policy and the political economy of disability. The seminar also covers disability issues in the developing world and in Europe, including a comparative study of national and international laws pertaining to disability rights protection and the connections between disability rights and human rights, locally, regionally and internationally.

Cross-Listed Courses for Graduate Program in Critical Disability Studies

CDIS 5045 3.0 /HLTH 5450 3.0 Health Equity and Mental Health Policy

This course involves an analysis of mental health policy starting with early conceptualizations and approaches to mental health care, to more recent government initiatives and societal approaches in Canada, with a comparison to other international contexts.

CDIS 5095 3.0/HLTH 5490 3.0 Intersectionality, Disability and Health

Intersectionality and other Black and Indigenous feminist frameworks are becoming increasingly essential for understanding health inequities. Meanwhile, Critical Black Studies interventions in the humanities have opened new methodological and theoretical approaches to gender and gender identity, sexuality, (dis)ability, trauma, structural violence, settler colonial studies, and environmental studies, by tracing embodied histories of anti-Black racism. This course traces the profound shifts and challenges that Intersectionality theorists and practitioners have brought to Health Studies and Disability Studies.

The first part of the course engages in a close reading of the original texts in intersectionality, through tracing Black feminist interventions in critical legal studies and critical race studies. The second part of the course analyzes grey and academic publications in order to assess the ways in which intersectionality has been taken up in health equity literature, in health policy interventions, and in equity-focused clinical, social, and community practice. In the third part of the course, we will trace ways in which Black intersectional scholarship has transformed disability studies, gender and sexuality studies, and environmental studies in the past decade.

Elective Courses

Note: Not all elective courses will be offered every year

CDIS 5020 3.0: Social Justice in the Labour Force

This course examines issues of social justice for people with disabilities focusing on issues of un/employment, workplace accommodation and inclusion, and employment

policy and practice in relation to persons with disabilities. Areas of discussion include: enabling and disabling workplace environments; disability employment programmes in Canada and internationally; employment rights; and the social construction of productivity and the valuation of work.

CDIS 5025 3.0 History of Health Care Ethics from Ancient Times to the Present

This course analyzes the diversity and controversies surrounding health care ethics over more than two thousand years of debates and experiences by practitioners and lay-people. Makes connections between past practices and present developments upon which to guide future decision-makers.

(Integrated with HH/HLST 4020 3.0)

CDIS 5030 3.0: Pedagogy and Empowerment

This course examines the assumptions, history and practices of segregation in the school, and looks beyond these debates to models of democratic and inclusive education. Areas of discussion include: the social construction of 'special needs', the experience of segregated education, education policy in Canada and internationally.

(Cross-listed to GS/EDUC 5711 3.0)

CDIS 5035 3.0: Mad People's History

This course will examine diverse experiences and perspectives in history of madness, primarily since the 18th century in Britain and North America, though reference to other parts of the world will also be included. Issues to be covered will include: what is madness and who makes this determination; who is it that has been called mad and why; how have concepts defining madness evolved over time; above all else, how have people labeled mad or mentally ill interpreted their own experiences? Throughout this course, the influence of gender, race, class, ability and sexual orientation will be discussed to provide an understanding of how these factors have influenced mad people's history.

CDIS 5040 3.0: Experience, Identity and Social Theory

Explores experience, identity, and the politics of race, gender/sexuality, disability, and class. Highlights questions of ontology and epistemology within strands of critical race, feminist, and Marxist theory; and examines recent contributions of transnational, queer, and autonomist theory to disability studies. We will explore possibilities for an anti-racist, queer- and trans-inclusive disability politics capable of challenging the political economic status quo.

CDIS 5050 3.0: Disability in Cultural Context

This course focuses on (1) the cultural construction of disability as a discursive

category, (2) disability in cross-cultural perspective, and on (3) disability and the globalization of culture. Areas for discussion include: disability and media representation; disability, identity and community; cross-cultural perspectives on competence and the body; the embodiment of identity; the disability culture movement.

CDIS 5055 3.0: Knowledge Production

This course builds on students' understanding of knowledge production and methods associated with the research paradigms. It examines the politics of knowledge production, including how institutions and other social structures influence research question and what knowledge is deemed legitimate.

CDIS 5060 3.0: Disability in an Age of Information Technology

This course examines concepts and experience of disability in relation to recent innovations in information technology and communicative innovation. Emphasis will be placed on relationships between technological innovation and societal definition of disability; the dissemination of information; the potential of new technology for empowerment/disablement, and on issues of technological research ethics.

CDIS 5065 3.0: Health Systems, Issues and Inequities in Comparative Perspective

This course uses a comparative political economy perspective to understand change in Canadian and global health policy issues. Students will first be introduced to health policy issues by comparing Canada's system with others. Subsequent sessions will investigate health issues including the role of international organizations, globalization and privatization, caregiving, environmental health and genetics, health reform, health care and "place", social determinants of health, role of nonprofits, and the impact of transmissible diseases. Emphasis will be placed on analyzing these issues as they impact class, race/ethnicity and gender.

(Integrated with HH/HLST 4110 3.0)

CDIS 5070 3.0: Geography of Disability

This course examines the embodied experience and social construction of disability in relation to the production and development of built space. Issues to be addressed include: a historical analysis of the social space of disability; the environment of community care and independent living; urban/rural experiences of disability; policy and concepts of urban planning; transportation and accessibility regulation.

(Cross-listed to GS/GEOG 5260 3.0)

CDIS 5075 3.0: Disability and the Mass Media

This course focuses on issues related to disability and mass media representations,

including news, entertainment TV/film, advertising, imagery, social media, and the Internet. It explores the relationship between critical disability studies and media studies and the huge array of media representations of disability. The course will use textual analysis methodology as a way for students to research, analyze and write about the meaning of mediated disability representation in North American culture.

CDIS 5080 3.0: Language, Literature and Disability

This course explores representations, fantasies, and fictions of physical and cognitive difference as they have appeared in works of literature throughout history. Through critical discussion of major literary works, discussion will focus on the ways in which our perceptions of the body and our definitions of disability have underpinned our concepts of humanness; our cultural perceptions of what bodies should be or do.

CDIS 5085 3.0: Indigeneity and Disability: Intersections of Health and Human Rights

This course explores the intersections, parallels and tensions between the experiences of indigenous peoples and people with disabilities, within Canada and in the broader global context. By using a human rights and social justice framework to examine the key concepts, policies and histories that impact and connect these groups, students will learn to critically engage both theory and lived experiences in order to address issues of oppression and self-determination. Topics for discussion include differing cultural interpretations of indigeneity and disability, diverse understandings of health; shared histories of oppression and institutionalization, critical and indigenous research methods and advocacy, the UN human rights framework for indigenous people and people with disabilities, and strategies for moving forward.

CDIS 5090 3.0: Public Policy and Disabilities

This course focuses on the concept of social exclusion and its relationship to the experience of persons with disabilities in Canada. It will consider the extent to which persons with disabilities are provided with a) access to societal and community resources; b) voice in policy development and implementation; and c) opportunities for participation in common cultural activities.

(Integrated with HH/HLST 4130 3.0)

CDIS 5120 3.0: Critical Disability Law (as of Fall 2022)

This course explores disability as a legal category with implications for the human rights of persons with disabilities. Areas for discussion include the history of disability legislation in Canada and internationally; the disability rights movement; the social

and legal construction of competence and inequality; social discourse of law and policy; and recent human rights cases.

CDIS 6120 3.0: Social Inclusion: Theory and Practice in Education and Social Policy

This course examines conventional notions of education, the place of difference within the system, pedagogical theory, access to places of learning, testing for capacity and measuring success from a human rights perspective and put into a social justice framework. Using an international lens, the rhetoric of integration, inclusion, unjustifiable hardship and educational disablement are analyzed in Australia, the UK, North America, India and elsewhere. Students will learn how to examine the physical and pedagogical accessibility of schools as well as look at how the complicated issues related to inclusion are framed in law and in policy. This course critically examines the international discourses of special education, inclusion and integration to expose disabling knowledge which serves to regulate and limit the educational and social options for students with disabilities.

CDIS 6130 3.0: International Development in Disability and Human Rights

This course examines international development, human rights and disability rights. Different cultural interpretations and experiences of the definition of disability will be considered, including a comparative examination of specific disability policies, or the absence thereof, in different parts of the developing world. Topics also include local and regional disability advocacy work; the impact of civil and imperialist conflict on people with disabilities; refugees and disability support; and the role of non-governmental organizations and the influence of international organizations such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund on disability rights in the developing world.

CDIS 6140 3.0: Health and Disability

This course considers the theoretical distinctions between two dominant discourses: disability as an individual pathology and as a social pathology. Students will review biomedical and functional accounts of disability in comparison to social perspectives. The course will investigate the social construction of disability and illness, and the relationship between the two. Students will further investigate how systems of inequality produce illness and disablement. The conflation of disability with ill health is rooted in a narrow definition of health based on the presence of disease or infirmity, the use of medical practitioners as gatekeepers to disability benefits and an inability to acknowledge the multiple ways in which disabilities are often created by societal

norms that inflexibly accommodate multiple needs. Students will develop an understanding of disability as a form of social disadvantage that is nested within larger systems of inequality.

CDIS 6150 3.0: Critical Interpretations of Disability History

This course will examine the historical experiences of people with disabilities from medieval European history to twentieth century North American society. Topics to be examined include: pre-industrial interpretations of physical and mental disability; the impact of the industrial revolution on disability as a social category and lived experience; segregation, trans-institutionalization and community living; rehabilitation programs and their critics in the twentieth century; diversity, discrimination and activism within the disability community; the modern development of critical literature on the history of people with disabilities.

(Cross-listed to GS/HIST 5538 3.0)