

Change to Graduate Program/Graduate Diploma Academic Requirements Proposal Form

Faculty of Health

The following information is required for all proposals involving a minor modification to graduate program/graduate diploma academic requirements. Provide evidence of consultation, where appropriate. To facilitate the review/approval process, please use the headings below (and omit the italicized explanations below each heading).

1. Graduate Program/Graduate Diploma:

MA & PhD in Critical Disability Studies

2. Effective Term/Calendar Year of Proposed Change(s):

Winter 2023

3. Proposed Change(s) and Rationale:

The description of and rationale for the proposed modification(s) should provide information with respect to each of the following points:

a. A description of the proposed modification(s) and rationale, including alignment with academic plans.

to amend the number of comprehensive requirements from three papers & an oral exam to two papers & an oral exam

b. An outline of the changes to requirements and the associated learning outcomes/objectives, including how the proposed requirements will support the achievement of graduate program/graduate diploma learning objectives.

Additionally, please append the graduate program's existing learning outcomes as a separate document.

The change is a response to continuing conversations at the CDS executive and with students as well as the 2020 -2021 CDS cyclical program review. CDS is committed to ensuring relevancy of the comprehensive requirement while addressing barriers to completion for doctoral students; this change will support timely graduation for PhD students. The change remains aligned with program learning outcomes and supports innovation in academic scholarship.

The CDS program remains aligned with several objectives related to York University's Academic Plan, Strategic Mandate Agreement, and with the Faculty of Health IRP. Objective 1.2: Growth and Diversification of our Graduate Students and Action/Strategy 1.2.1: Identify and implement strategies to attract diverse and highly qualified graduate students. Further, CDS works to enact the principles of disability justice in the program and across York University.

c. An overview of the consultation undertaken with relevant academic units and an assessment of the impact of the modifications on other programs/graduate diplomas.

Where and as appropriate, the proposal must include statements from the relevant graduate program/graduate diplomas confirming consultation/support.

The comprehensive requirement was discussed in the 2020-2021 Cyclical Program Review where students expressed a desire to reduce the number of papers from three to two. Consultations have been ongoing in the CDS executive council where we resolved to amend the comprehensive requirement. Students have also been active. In winter 2022 the current GPD nancy viva davis halifax invited all CDS doctoral students & supported students taking the conversation to their student association (CDSSA) where there was broad support for change and flexibility in terms of making the comprehensive requirement relevant to the broader horizons of student research.

d. A summary of any resource implications and how they are being addressed.

Attention should be paid to whether the proposed changes will be supported by a reallocation of existing resources or if new/additional resources are required. If new/additional resources are required, the proposal must include a statement from the relevant Dean(s)/Principal.

There are no adverse resource implications of the changes being made; students will now have a comprehensive committee of two faculty members rather than three.

e. A summary of how students currently enrolled in the graduate program/graduate diploma will be accommodated.

currently enrolled students will have the choice of proceeding under the comprehensive requirements when they entered (three papers) or to opt for completion under the revised guidelines (two papers).

4. Calendar Copy:

Using the following two-column format, provide a copy of the relevant graduate program/graduate diploma requirements as they will appear in the [FGS Academic Calendar](#).

Please note: Senate requires that **FULL** Calendar copy be provided. Please include the entire graduate program/graduate diploma section, not just text that is being revised. Please clearly and visibly indicate how graduate program/graduate diploma information has been changed using strikethrough (left column), bold, underlining, colours, etc. (right column).

Existing Graduate Program/Graduate Diploma Information (Change From):	Proposed Graduate Program/Graduate Diploma Information (Change To):
<p>Title</p> <p>Current text</p> <p>The MA and PhD degrees of the Graduate Program in Critical Disability Studies offer a comprehensive curriculum covering diverse scholarly perspectives. The program structure and environment encourages advanced research, new scholarship and provides opportunities to contribute to the field. Both programs enable a multidisciplinary group of students to explore disability in relation to social policy, social justice, human rights issues, and social, historical and cultural movements in Canada and internationally. In particular, the programs provide graduate students with the ability to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ critically understand existing policies and practices relating to disability, as well as Canadian and international laws and instruments governing human rights and protections for people with disabilities; ❖ present theories of human rights as a basis for understanding existing legal, economic and social rationales for inclusion in relation to systemic barriers and oppression; ❖ situate key debates in disability studies in both historical and contemporary contexts, including understanding how issues relating to disability are interpreted and advanced in both an academic setting and in public and private policy and programming; ❖ recognize the importance of racialization, poverty, gender, sexuality and class issues as they intersect with disability; ❖ foster critical studies of activism and activist histories; ❖ influence public policy at federal, provincial and local levels and contribute to movements for social justice and human rights; ❖ contribute to an evidence-based body of knowledge on people with disabilities at the international, national and 	<p>Title</p> <p>Current and new text</p> <p>The MA and PhD degrees of the Graduate Program in Critical Disability Studies offer a comprehensive curriculum covering diverse scholarly perspectives. The program structure and environment encourages advanced research, new scholarship and provides opportunities to contribute to the field. Both programs enable a multidisciplinary group of students to explore disability in relation to social policy, social justice, human rights issues, and social, historical and cultural movements in Canada and internationally. In particular, the programs provide graduate students with the ability to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ critically understand existing policies and practices relating to disability, as well as Canadian and international laws and instruments governing human rights and protections for people with disabilities; ❖ present theories of human rights as a basis for understanding existing legal, economic and social rationales for inclusion in relation to systemic barriers and oppression; ❖ situate key debates in disability studies in both historical and contemporary contexts, including understanding how issues relating to disability are interpreted and advanced in both an academic setting and in public and private policy and programming; ❖ recognize the importance of racialization, poverty, gender, sexuality and class issues as they intersect with disability; ❖ foster critical studies of activism and activist histories; ❖ influence public policy at federal, provincial and local levels and contribute to movements for social justice and human rights; ❖ contribute to an evidence-based body of knowledge on people with disabilities at the international, national and

local level in the health, education, social policy and legal sectors; and,

- ❖ apply qualitative and quantitative research skills to policy research and longitudinal studies.

The PhD program is geared towards students who wish to further develop their critical understanding of disability both as an independent issue and as an issue that raises fundamental questions relating to the meaning of equality, legal distinctions of classes of people, issues of difference as a social, historical and cultural category, applied human rights, the social and legal construction of inequality, and the implications of inclusion as opposed to add-on programs and services.

The MA program can be completed either on a part-time or full-time basis. The PhD program can be completed on a full-time basis.

Please consult the online application materials at <https://cds.gradstudies.yorku.ca/programs/>. Prospective applicants may contact the Graduate Program Office for Critical Disability Studies, 313 Stong College, gradcds@yorku.ca.

MASTER OF ARTS PROGRAM

ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

The program is open to graduates of recognized universities. Applicants must possess a completed honours bachelors degree (generally a four year degree) with a minimum B+ average or equivalent in the humanities, social science or a related applied program (no specific undergraduate major is required). The program will undertake a case-by-case determination of considering admission of “non-standard” applicants whose average is below the minimum standard of B+. This will be considered when an applicant states that they have been subject to discrimination related to their disability affecting their grades while completing their undergraduate degree.

Applicants must provide:

- ❖ a recent research paper or report to indicate ability in writing and conducting research;
- ❖ a statement of interest showing evidence of commitment to advanced work in studies in disability. The statement should include a discussion of the applicant’s background, interests, skills and career goals, with a proposed program of study;
- ❖ a c.v. and recommendation forms; and,
- ❖ for students whose first language is not English, a minimum Test of English as a Foreign Language score of 600 (paper based) or 250 (computer based) or a York English Language Test score of 1 is required.

Applicants are assessed on the basis of academic achievement and potential and/or demonstrated capacity or potential for advanced work in an applied area. The submitted research paper or report and the statement of interest will provide a basis for evaluating that potential.

DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

Candidates for the Master of Arts (Critical Disability Studies) degree must fulfill the following requirements.

local level in the health, education, social policy and legal sectors; and,

- ❖ apply qualitative and quantitative research skills to policy research and longitudinal studies.

The PhD program is geared towards students who wish to further develop their critical understanding of disability both as an independent issue and as an issue that raises fundamental questions relating to the meaning of equality, legal distinctions of classes of people, issues of difference as a social, historical and cultural category, applied human rights, the social and legal construction of inequality, and the implications of inclusion as opposed to add-on programs and services.

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DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

Candidates for the Master of Arts (Critical Disability Studies) degree must fulfill the following requirements.

Three course equivalents at the graduate level, including a major research paper as follows:

1. Core courses

- a) **Critical Disability Studies 5100 6.0: Disability Studies: An Overview;**
- b) **Critical Disability Studies 5110 3.0: Methodology;** and,

2. Three elective courses

3. Major Research Paper

Students in the MA must complete a major research paper that tests students against the educational objectives of being able to form a researchable question. The research paper address the question through an appropriate theoretical framework, review and synthesis of the literature, analysis of primary and secondary data sources and formation of a set of conclusions. It trains students in the formulation and writing of a specific research project, and gives them the experience of working independently under faculty supervision. Students develop a research topic given their interests in specific areas and are supervised by faculty members with related experience.

The major research paper is evaluated by the student's major research paper supervisor and advisor through written and oral presentations at which the student's ability to answer questions related to the major research paper is assessed. The major research paper is evaluated on the extent to which the student proposes researchable question, and their ability to address it through an appropriate theoretical framework, review and synthesis of the literature, analysis of primary

or secondary data sources and formation of a set of conclusions. The length of the paper is 50 pages with an upper limit of no more than 65 pages, excluding references.

PROGRAM ENTRY The MA program can be completed on a full- or part-time basis. Entry is fall term.

PROGRAM LENGTH The expected degree completion time for full-time master's students is 3 terms. For those students who complete degree requirements earlier than 3 terms, they must register and pay fees for a minimum of the equivalent of 3 terms of full-time study. All requirements for a master's degree must be fulfilled within 12 terms (4 years) of registration as a full-time or part-time master's student in accordance with Faculty of Graduate Studies' registration policies.

**DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY PROGRAM
ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS**

The program is open to qualified students who want to obtain advanced scholarly training in the interdisciplinary study of Critical Disability Studies and who have demonstrated academic excellence in a related field of study. To be considered for admission, candidates must:

Three course equivalents at the graduate level, including a major research paper as follows:

1. Core courses

- a) **Critical Disability Studies 5100 6.0: Disability Studies: An Overview;**
- b) **Critical Disability Studies 5110 3.0: Methodology;** and,

2. Three elective courses

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Students in the MA must complete a major research paper that tests students against the educational objectives of being able to form a researchable question. The research paper address the question through an appropriate theoretical framework, review and synthesis of the literature, analysis of primary and secondary data sources and formation of a set of conclusions. It trains students in the formulation and writing of a specific research project, and gives them the experience of working independently under faculty supervision. Students develop a research topic given their interests in specific areas and are supervised by faculty members with related experience.

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The program is open to qualified students who want to obtain advanced scholarly training in the interdisciplinary study of Critical Disability Studies and who have demonstrated academic excellence in a related field of study. To be considered for admission, candidates must:

- ❖ have completed a master's degree with a minimum A-average or equivalent; equivalence is demonstrated by five or more years of voluntary or paid work experience in a senior position in government, administrative position in an NGO, teaching or administrative position in a university, college or high school, within the area of social justice, human rights and disability;
- ❖ provide a statement of interest demonstrating commitment to advanced work in disability studies. The statement should include a discussion of the applicant's background, interests, skills and career goals, along with a proposed program of study and specific research interests;
- ❖ demonstrate ability in writing and research by submitting a recent research paper or report that the applicant has written for a course or in an employment context; and,
- ❖ provide a c.v., recommendation forms preferably from university faculty members. Equivalencies (letters from non-university faculty) are considered for applicants who have been out of school for more than five years.

For students whose first language is not English, a minimum Test of English as a Foreign Language score of 600 (paper based) or 250 (computer based) or York English Language Test score of Band 1 is required.

FIELDS IN THE PROGRAM

Within the broader scope of critical disability studies, faculty members offer research and teaching strengths in the following fields:

1. Human Rights and Social Justice. This field covers the key philosophical, historical and legal concepts surrounding the development and implementation of ideas and policies pertaining to human rights and social justice. It includes a broad understanding of international and national human rights standards as well as cross-cultural interpretations of what is meant by social justice and legal rights obligations. The meaning of human rights and social justice are considered within the context of their applicability to people with disabilities. This field also examines diversity pertaining to cross-cultural, class, gender, sexual orientation, race, ethnicity, age and poverty issues as they relate to disability. There is a focus on the ways in which diversity issues in the context of broad socioeconomic factors impact experiences of people with disabilities and how equity struggles within a diverse society inter-connect with one another.

2. Critical Theory. This field covers key critical concepts and texts both within disability studies as well as articulated by post-structuralism, Marxism, racial formation theory, queer theory, and feminist theories, among others, which have significantly influenced disability studies.

3. Social Policy. This field examines social policy development affecting disability and equity issues within a Canadian and international context in regard to their impact on national, regional and local policies affecting people with disabilities. The impact of grass roots organizing and activism are also included as an important area of study, looking at how disability advocacy has influenced the development of social policies at different times and places both historically and in contemporary society.

DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

- ❖ have completed a master's degree with a minimum A-average or equivalent; equivalence is demonstrated by five or more years of voluntary or paid work experience in a senior position in government, administrative position in an NGO, teaching or administrative position in a university, college or high school, within the area of social justice, human rights and disability;
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DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

The PhD program is a full-time program of advanced graduate study. It is expected that most students will complete the program in four years. However, students can change their status to be registered on a part-time basis unless otherwise approved for accommodation purposes.

All PhD candidates are required to develop a plan of study providing an integrated, coherent rationale for their studies as they relate to coursework, the comprehensive examination and the dissertation. The plan of study must demonstrate the use of critical theory in disability studies as well as an interdisciplinary approach that charts new areas in scholarship in this field. Upon admission, each student is assigned an advisor, based on student's field of interest as indicated in statement of interest and advisor's area of expertise, with whom the student meets to decide on the plan of study. The plan must be approved by both the student's advisor and the Graduate Program Director during the first term of study. By the end of the second term, the student must submit a finalized plan of study, which is a refinement of the first. Upon completion of their first year of study, students are required to choose a supervisor.

The PhD program has three major components: coursework, a comprehensive examination, and the dissertation.

1. Courses

Core Courses

Students are required to take one full core course, over two terms in the first year of study:

Critical Disability Studies 6100 6.0: Doctoral Seminar in Critical Disability Theory and Research.

Electives

In addition, students are required to complete any three half-courses from among the program's electives. Although approval from the Program Director is required, students are encouraged to take courses from other graduate programs to fulfill their elective requirements. No specialization is required, as students obtain general competencies from engagement in all three fields. It is expected that students complete their elective requirements over the first three terms of study.

❖ Note If, prior to admission, students have not taken a graduate level methodology course, **Critical Disability Studies 5110 3.0: Methodology** is required in addition to the three electives for a total of four electives.

2. Comprehensive Examination

The comprehensive examination is a pedagogical exercise that requires candidates to engage in written and oral focused academic inquiry on a topic or problem of interest that extends the bounds of coursework and moves toward the conceptual work of the dissertation.

~~This process consists of three 25-page papers, one of which covers the scope and history of the field, its central themes and debates, and the key theoretical and methodological issues and the other two which cover specialized areas within the field.~~

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The oral comprehensive examination is set at the completion of the three written papers. The examination committee includes the three faculty members who supervised the 3 papers as well as the Graduate Program Director. The oral component consists of a two-hour examination wherein the examiners discuss the students' comprehensive knowledge of the three areas of their papers.

The comprehensive examination is assessed using one of the following categories: pass, pass with conditions, or unsatisfactory. Candidates who receive an unsatisfactory rating on the examination have one opportunity to retake the comprehensive examination within six months of the date of the first examination. A second failure results in the withdrawal of the student from the program. Successful completion of the written and oral exam qualifies the candidate to begin the dissertation proposal.

3. Dissertation and Oral Examination

After successful completion of the comprehensive examination, students begin preparation of the dissertation. The dissertation, with a concentration in one of the fields, but with broad application of all three, makes an original contribution to scholarship in the field of Critical Disability Studies. The dissertation process has four stages:

- ❖ the establishment of a supervisory committee, comprised of three faculty members, at least two of whom must be members of the Critical Disability Studies graduate program. A third member may be appointed to the graduate program;
- ❖ the preparation of a dissertation proposal, which must be approved by the Graduate Program Director, the supervisory committee and the Faculty of Graduate Studies;
- ❖ the writing of a dissertation acceptable to the supervisory committee and formally approved as examinable by the members of that committee; and,
- ❖ the successful completion of an oral examination, centred on the dissertation and matters related to it, and presided over by an examining committee recommended by the Graduate Program Director for approval and appointment by the Faculty of Graduate Studies.

PROGRAM ENTRY

The PhD program can be completed on a full-time basis. Entry is fall term.

PROGRAM LENGTH

This is a 12 term (4 year) program. Faculty of Graduate Studies' regulations require all students to register for a minimum of 6 terms (2 years), and to complete all requirements within 18 terms (6 years). Terms in which a student registers for Elective Leave, Exceptional Circumstances Leave, Family Care Leave, or No Course Available are not included in these time limits. Continuous registration at York University must be maintained.

The comprehensive requirement is composed of two parts: written and oral. The written comprehensive requirement takes the form of its equivalent of two 25 page essays unless otherwise negotiated between the student and their supervisor. Each of the comprehensives is supervised by a faculty member appointed to the Critical Disability Studies Graduate Program. Each component - written and oral - will have an equal weighting, and a single integrated outcome will be provided (i.e. pass or fail). All comprehensive requirements will ordinarily be completed by the end of term seven. Students are encouraged to begin planning and preparing for their first comprehensive well before CDS program deadlines. Excluding exceptional circumstances, scheduling information will usually be provided to students and participating faculty at least 20 business days in advance of the written and oral exam.

Upon successful completion of the written portion there is an oral exam; its purpose is to demonstrate competence and to allow for questions, reflections & clarifications as needed. The oral comprehensive examination committee includes two supervisors who are responsible for evaluating the student. The oral comprehensive will be scheduled when the supervisors consider the written components to have passed & the student has exhibited competence in the minor and major fields.

The oral exam is a 90 minutes closed exam scheduled when the faculty supervisors have approved the written component. Prior to scheduling the oral exam the student will send copies of their approved papers to the Graduate Program Director, and both field supervisors.

The oral exam has as its focus the written components. In the exam the student presents a 10-15 minute overview of their comprehensive papers after which there are two rounds of questions. The oral examination evaluation is based upon the students demonstration of competence, awareness of current debates, gaps, and research in their major and minor fields.

The oral exam will be chaired by the GPD or representative (non-voting)

The comprehensive requirement is assessed by the supervisors using one of the following categories:

- pass
- fail

If there is a split vote the Graduate Program Director or designate will confer with faculty

supervisors and cast the deciding vote. Should the student fail they will be given one opportunity to retake the oral exam within three months; areas for improvement will be clearly laid out by the committee. A second failure will result in removal from the program.

The oral comprehensive examination is set at the completion of the three written papers. The examination committee includes the three faculty members who supervised the 3 papers as well as the Graduate Program Director. The oral component consists of a two-hour examination wherein the examiners discuss the students' comprehensive knowledge of the three areas of their papers.

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Please submit completed forms and required supporting documentation by email to Pina Guzzo-Foliaro, Administrative Secretary Research – pdimaria@yorku.ca

PhD in Critical Disability Studies	
Program Learning Outcomes	Means for Developing and Assessing the Outcome
1. Contribute to new ways of thinking about disability, through and beyond human rights and social justice, critical theory, and social policy frameworks.	<p>Students develop, practice, and demonstrate mastery of the outcome in CDIS 6100 6.0: Doctoral Seminar in Critical Disability Theory and Research through the following activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students develop the outcome by reading one book a week and writing an in-depth comparative analysis of their readings by analyzing the frameworks. • Students practice the outcome by surveying the literature and writing a three-field annotated bibliography (each covering one field: critical theory, human rights and social justice, and social policy). • Students demonstrate mastery of the outcome in their essay that identifies a gap in the literature. Students must reflect on their readings and their field bibliographies to identify a gap and possible reasons for this gap and how it may be addressed. <p>Supervisor relationship, comprehensive committee, and their three-person dissertation committee will also support students in developing the ability to contribute to new ways of thinking. Students will further demonstrate mastery of the outcome in their comprehensive papers, oral examination, and dissertation.</p>
2. Situate their research in relevant disciplines and domains within and beyond Disability Studies.	<p>Students develop the outcome in their electives (in-house or across other faculties) and practice it as they develop their comprehensive list and dissertation proposal. Students demonstrate mastery of the outcome in their comprehensive papers, oral examination, and during their dissertation defense.</p>
3. Contribute to debates on the politics of research methodology and to the development of critical and inclusive research methods	<p>Students develop the outcome in their dissertation proposal and their ethics review package. Students practice it during their dissertation research. Students are then tested on mastering the outcome during their dissertation defense. Dissertation committee will engage in discussions with students on research methodology.</p>

<p>4. Innovate and build on ways of thinking about disability that strengthen communities and intervene in social inequality.</p>	<p>Students develop the outcome through core course(s) and electives (in-house or across other faculties). In CDIS 6100 6.0: Doctoral Seminar in Critical Disability Theory and Research, students read one book a week on foundational and emerging/cutting edge disability studies text and deliver an in-depth analysis of their readings. Depending on their elective selections, students acquire new ways of thinking in at least two perspectives.</p> <p>Supervisory guidance further supports students in developing new ways of thinking. Students practice the outcome through their annual progress reports (e.g. conferences participation and publications) and demonstrate mastery in their comprehensive papers, oral examination, dissertation, and final defense.</p>
<p>5. Identify complex problems and develop appropriate research question by connecting with and/or learning from stakeholder communities.</p>	<p>In CDIS 6100 6.0: Doctoral Seminar in Critical Disability Theory and Research, students develop and practice their collaborative relationships. Supervisory guidance and their annual progress reports (e.g. policy reports, curriculum development, public campaign, etc.) further support students in developing and practicing the outcome.</p> <p>Students demonstrate mastery of the outcome in their dissertation proposal and final dissertation defense. At the defense students are assessed on connecting with communities, workplaces and/or public.</p>