CORE 205
Introduction to Disability Studies

Instructors:

Gregor Wolbring
gwolbring@ucalgary.ca

Office Hours

No office hours.

Please note that all course communications must occur through your @ucalgary email, and I will respond to emails sent via student's @ucalgary emails within 24 hours.

Time and Location:

Class CORE 205 01
CORE 205 L01 ████████████████ online synchronous through Zoom
CORE 205 T01 ███████████████ online synchronous through Zoom
Lectures: Synchronous through Zoom
Assignments: Asynchronous through D2L

Prerequisite/Co-Requisite:

None

Course Description:

The social, political, economic, ethics/bioethical, technological and advocacy issues impacting persons with disabilities and their families.

Overarching Theme

Content to be covered includes: This three-credit half course will provide an in-depth view of a) the meaning and scope of disability studies and its relationship to other fields serving and

dealing with 'disabled people' such as community rehabilitation; b) the history of disability studies; c) the international scene of disability studies existing today and d) present and future challenges and possibilities for disability studies.

Students will develop a framework for understanding the issues through a weekly series of discussions. Some of the topics for discussion include:

- Introduction to disability studies
- Eugenics
- The relationship of disability studies with other fields serving 'disabled people'
- The body image discourse in disability studies
- The discourse around what causes disablement
- Indigenous disabled people

- Impact of new and emerging science and technology on disabled people
- The global situation of disabled people
- Sport
- Violence and Abuse
- Artificial Intelligence/robotics
- Human Enhancement
- Kntersectionality
- EDI/burnout/allyship/incivility,
- Attitudinal accessibility, inaccessibility, barriers
- Education
- Law
- Sustainability

Global Objectives

- To offer an introductory overview of disability studies and its relationship to professional fields serving disabled people
- To introduce students to the international scene of disability studies existing today
- To expose students to present and future challenges and possibilities within the realm of disability studies including the issue of Indigenous disabled people and intersectionality
- To expose students to present and future challenges and possibilities for disabled people
- To expose students to the meaning of ableism, disablism, disability justice and ability judgment justice and the utility of these terms as a lens for academic and community research inquiry into the situation of disabled people but also as a lens to obtain a handle on professional practice related to disabled people.

Course Learning Outcomes

By the end of this course, students will be able through their meaningful participation

- Demonstrate an introductory understanding of the field of disability studies and its relationship to other fields serving disabled people;
- Through class participation (Zoom) consisting of dialogue with peers and instructors, demonstrate an application of this knowledge by critically analyzing and synthesizing the historical relevance with present practice and theory while considering where the future challenges and possibilities exists for disability studies and other fields serving disabled people;
- Listen to the voice of disabled people and of individuals and groups engaged in advocacy for people with disabilities;
- Through reading the material to understand some of the limitations of the academic disability studies discourse (e.g., Indigenous disabled people and intersectionality)
- Identify and discuss cutting edge issues in the lives of people with disabilities, and analyze critically practices in service settings for people with disabilities;
- Critically analyze issues from the perspectives of disabled persons/persons with disabilities and their families.

- Be at ease, respectful and competent to discuss disability studies related topics without fear of reprisal from others or fear of inadvertently offending someone;
- Identify the scholarly and practical problems with conventional understandings of disability as personal tragedy, a deficit, and a problem to fix or issue to manage;
- Draw connections between various social concerns and disability topics;
- Assess current controversial issues in the disability field and their broader relevance;
- Understand what Disability Studies is and how it helps us to rethink disability;
- Understand the utility of disability studies to their future career plans related to disabled people

Transferable Skill Development:

Many of the skills and abilities that you are developing in your coursework are transferable to the workforce, graduate and professional studies and other facets of life. Employers seek applicants with transferable skills because they can be an asset in the workplace, regardless of industry or sector. Transferable skills are core skills for your success in building your future career.

The work that you will do in CORE 205 will help you build the following transferable skills:

- **Collaboration**: Work respectfully with others from different backgrounds, cultures, and countries.
- **Verbal Communication**: Learn and share information by presenting, listening, and interacting with others.
- **Creativity and Innovation**: Find different and better ways to do things, being curious, thinking imaginatively.
- **Critical Thinking**: Actively and skillfully conceptualize, apply, analyze, synthesize, and/or evaluate information (data, facts, observable phenomena, and research findings) to make a reasoned judgement or draw a reasonable conclusion.
- **Digital Skills**: Use digital technologies like computers, social media, virtual meeting platforms, and the internet.
- **Information Literacy**: Find, understand, and use information presented through words, symbols, and images.
- **Problem solving**: Identify an issue, find and implement a solution, and assess whether the situation has improved.
- **Project Management:** Conceptualize, initiate, plan and execute a plan to achieve a predetermined goal (project) by effectively prioritizing activities and meeting deadlines.
- **Written Communication**: Share ideas and information by using words, images, and symbols.

Learning Resources

Links to the readings will be available on D2L at the beginning of the course. No textbook is required.

A Note regarding readings

A list of required readings will be outlined on D2L. All reading required or optional will be accessible through the University library or are open access. Required readings have been chosen carefully to inform you and enhance the lecture material. **Students are REQUIRED to complete assigned readings BEFORE each lecture.** Instructors will proceed in class on the assumption that students have read completely the assigned readings. Students should be aware that many of the readings they will be assigned may be of

an unfamiliar nature and style. <u>Students should allot sufficient time to allow for several reads of the assigned material.</u>

Learning Technology Requirements

Brightspace (by D2L) is located on the University of Calgary server and will be used extensively for communication with students. **It is the student's responsibility to ensure that they receive all posted communications and documents and that they receive emails sent by instructors or fellow students through D2L.** Only your @ucalgary.ca email address may be linked to D2L. Please ensure that you are regularly checking your @ucalgary.ca account.

To successfully engage in learning experiences at the University of Calgary, students taking online, remote and blended courses are required to have reliable access to the following technology:
- A computer with a supported operating system, as well as the latest security and malware updates;
- A current and updated web browser;
- Webcam (built-in or external);
- Microphone and speaker (built-in or external), or headset with microphone;
- Current antivirus and/or firewall software enabled;
- Broadband internet connection

Most current laptops will have a built-in webcam, speaker and microphone.

A laptop, desktop, tablet or mobile device is required for D2L access.
If you need help accessing or using D2L, please visit the Desire2Learn resource page for students: http://elearn.ucalgary.ca/d2l-student/

Evaluation

The University policy on grading and related matters is described in section F of the 2025-2026 Calendar.

In determining the overall grade in the course, the following weights will be used:

Assessment *	Weight (% of Grade)	Due Date and Time
Week 1 read the table of content and look through sections you find interesting. Wolbring, Gregor; Mahr, Dana; Lamoureux, Rochelle (2025) "Teaching about the intersectionality of disabled people using an intersectional pedagogy framework: a primer"; classified as a learning object (link in D2L to open access source). And answer the survey after that	3%.	

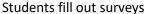|		
2) Weekly postings of at least three questions and three take home messages from the Monday lecture of a given week: (week 2-6, 8-10, 12-14)	11 assignments, each worth 2% = 22%	**INDIVIDUAL ASSIGNMENT** ▮▮▮▮
3) Six other (6) surveys	6 assignments, each worth 3% = 18%	▮▮▮▮
4) Mid Term Assignment Bias Free Framework	30%	▮▮▮▮
5) CRPD group Assignment	27%	▮▮▮▮

Assignments

1. **Individual Assignment: Weekly postings of three questions and three take-home messages from the Monday lecture**

Students post after each of the weekly Monday lectures 3 questions the lecture raised for them and 3 epiphanies/take home messages they had / things that were new to them at the end of the day

Due 11:59pm on day of the lecture

██

---

2. Individual Assignment: Surveys

Students fill out surveys

███████████████████████
███████████████
██████████████████████
███████████
███████████████████████
██████████████
████████████████
████████████
██████████████████
████████████████

Pass if done or fail if not done; content of your submission is not graded). I will use answers of the surveys in my class lecture without identifying names of respondents

3. Midterm Assignment Generating examples for each bias listed in the BIAS FREE Framework

BIAS FREE stands for Building an Integrative Analytical System for Recognizing and Eliminating inequities. The BIAS FREE Framework is an innovative tool for identifying and eliminating biases that derive from social hierarchies such as sexism, racism, ability based disablism, ageism, etc. in research, legislation, policies, programs, service delivery or practices. Students are asked to generate examples of the different types of biases.

████████████████

---

4. UN Convention on the rights of persons with disabilities (CRPD): Group assignment

An integral element of Disability Studies research is to be able to critically question the underlying societal beliefs and values of a community toward disabled people and how policies, supports, and services for disabled individuals are assessed, developed, and implemented.

This project is meant to assist students in building their research skills and critical thinking capabilities in relation to Disability Studies research according to CRDS values and beliefs.

Keeping in mind the action items outlined in the CRPD I want you to use the CRPD action items to critically analyse the issues covered in this class. (the topics of the class up to one week before the assignment is due). Some guidance questions: What impacts do the topics we covered in the class have on CRPD action items? What actions might be needed related to the topics covered in this class given the CRPD action items? And who has to do the actions? What do your answers mean for public policy, actions the government should take, the actions you might have to take as individuals (active citizen) but also as CRDS students and people who might work with and for disabled people in the future. What does this mean for being an ally of disabled people? It is expected that every statement of fact has a citation. There is a file in D2L highlighting all the action items of the CRPD. Make use of your weekly breakout room sessions to reflect on the content of the weekly course lecture through the lens of your final group assignment.

███████████████████

There is no Registrar-scheduled final exam for this course.

A student's final grade for the course is the sum of the separate assignments. It is not necessary to pass each assignment separately in order to pass the course.

A Note regarding Writing Assignments:

Writing skills are important to academic study in all disciplines. In keeping with the University of Calgary's emphasis on the importance of academic writing in student assignments (Section E.2 of 2025-26 Calendar), writing is emphasized, and the grading thereof in determining a student's mark in this course. The Bachelor of Community Rehabilitation program values excellence in writing. Competence in writing entails skills in crafting logical, clear, coherent, non-redundant sentences, paragraphs and broader arguments, as well as skills with the mechanics of writing (grammar, spelling, punctuation). Sources used to complete each assessment must be properly documented, unless otherwise noted by the instructor. The University of Calgary offers instructional services through the Students' Success Centre's Writing Support Services (http://www.ucalgary.ca/writingsupport/) for students seeking feedback on assignments or seeking to improve their general writing skills. Students are **strongly encouraged** to take advantage of these programs.

Grading Scheme:

Letter Grade	Description	Percentage
A+	Outstanding performance	96-100
A	Excellent performance	90-95.99
A-	Approaching excellent performance	85-89
B+	Exceeding good performance	80-84
B	Good performance	75-79
B-	Approaching good performance	70-74
C+	Exceeding satisfactory performance	65-69
C	Satisfactory performance	60-64
C-	Approaching satisfactory performance	57-59
D+	Marginal pass	54-56
D	Minimal pass	50-53
F	Does not meet course requirements	0-49

Missed Components of Term Work:

Extensions will NOT be granted on any assignment or quizzes in CORE 205. The only exceptions to this are those in keeping with the University Calendar (debilitating illness, religious conviction, or severe domestic affliction) that are received in writing and with supporting documentation. Students are responsible for providing advance notice and adhering to other guidelines on this matter, as outlined in the University Calendar *https://calendar.ucalgary.ca/pages/02ffccb6b1a541db880fe4223d122b5e*

For the surveys and the Weekly postings of three questions and three take home messages from the Monday lecture:

Extensions will not be granted: Students are expected to post their assignment at the stated deadline. Students failing to post at the stated deadline will receive a mark of zero for that week.

The only exceptions to this are those in keeping with the University Calendar (debilitating illness, religious conviction, or severe domestic affliction) that are received in writing and with supporting documentation. However, the student has to alert the instructor before the delay (by e-mail) or, in very exceptional circumstances, after the delay has happened. It is not the role of the instructor to inquire why a student missed a deadline. If students become aware at the time the instructor gives the end mark that they missed an assignment somewhere during the course, it cannot be fixed at the end of the course. Therefore, the student should make sure that they have sent in their assignments at any given week.

For the BIAS FREE Framework assignment

Extensions will not be granted: Students are expected to post their assignment at the stated deadline. For each day a student is late in posting their BIAS FREE Framework assignment, their mark will be deducted by 10%. If nothing is sent in by end of day ███████████████████ after the BIAS FREE was due, the mark for this assignment given is a 0. The only exceptions to this are those in keeping with the University Calendar (debilitating illness, religious conviction, or severe domestic affliction) that are received in writing and with supporting documentation and by alerting the instructor (by e-mail) before the delay or, in very exceptional circumstances, after the delay has happened. However, it is not the role of the instructor to inquire why a student missed a deadline. If a student become aware at the time the instructor gives the end mark that they missed the assignment, it cannot be fixed at the end of the course. Therefore, the student should make sure that they have sent in their assignment in time.

CRPD group project

Extensions will not be granted: The student groups are expected to post their assignment at the stated deadline. For each day a group is late in posting their group project, their mark will be deducted by 10%. If nothing is sent in by end of day ███████████████████ after the Group project was due, the mark for this assignment given is a 0. The only exceptions to this are those in keeping with the University Calendar (debilitating illness, religious conviction, or severe domestic affliction) that are received in writing and with supporting documentation and by alerting the instructor (by e-mail) before the delay or, in very exceptional circumstances, after the delay has happened.

Course Evaluations and Student Feedback

Student feedback will be sought at the end of the course through the new UCalgary Course Experience Survey and a qualitative student evaluation. Students are welcome to discuss the process and content of the course at any time with the instructor. Students may also address any concerns they may have with ███████████████████ Associate Dean ████████████████████████████████

Attendance

Regular attendance is advised in order to succeed in CORE 205. Students are expected to take notes during class and should not rely solely on material supplied by the instructors. Instructors may or may not post lectures notes to D2L, at their individual discretion. Virtual synchronous discussion and all content presented in class, including concepts and examples, can constitute substantial learning and can be considered for assessment.

Zoom is a video conferencing program that will allow us to meet at specific times for a 'live' video conference, so that we can have the opportunity to meet each other virtually and discuss relevant course topics as a learning community.

To help ensure Zoom sessions are private, do not share the Zoom link or password with others, or on any social media platforms. Zoom links and passwords are only intended for students registered in the course. Zoom recordings and materials presented in Zoom, including any teaching materials, must not be shared, distributed or published without the instructor's permission.

The use of video conferencing programs relies on participants to act ethically, honestly and with integrity; and in accordance with the principles of fairness, good faith, and respect (as the Code of Conduct). When entering Zoom or other video conferencing sessions, you play a role in helping create an effective, safe and respectful learning environment. Please be mindful of how your behaviour in these sessions may affect others. Participants are required to use names officially associated with their UCID (legal or preferred names listed in the Student Centre) when engaging in these activities. Instructors/moderators can remove those whose names do not appear on class rosters. Non-compliance may be investigated under relevant University of Calgary conduct policies. If participants have difficulties complying with this requirement, they should email the instructor of the class explaining why, so the instructor may consider whether to grant an exception, and on what terms. For more information on how to get the most out of your zoom sessions visit: https://elearn.ucalgary.ca/guidelines-for-zoom/.

If you are unable to attend a Zoom session, please contact your instructor to arrange an alternative activity (where available). Please be prepared, as best as you are able, to join class in a quiet space that will allow you to be fully present and engaged in Zoom sessions. Students will be advised by their instructor when they are expected to turn on their webcam (such as for group work, presentations, etc).

The instructor may record online Zoom class sessions for the purposes of supporting student learning in this class – such as making the recording available for review of the session or for students who miss a session. Students will be advised before the instructor initiates a recording of a Zoom session. These recordings will be used to support student learning only.

Conduct During Lectures and/or Seminars

The classroom should be respected as a safe place to share ideas without judgement - a community in which we can all learn from one another. Students are expected to frame their comments and questions to lecturers in respectful and appropriate language, always maintaining sensitivity towards the topic. Students, employees, and academic staff are also expected to demonstrate behaviour in class that promotes and maintains a positive and productive learning environment.

As members of the University community, students, employees and academic staff are expected to demonstrate conduct that is consistent with the University of Calgary Calendar, the Code of Conduct and Non-Academic Misconduct policy and procedures, which can be found at https://www.ucalgary.ca/student-services/student-conduct/policy

Use of Internet and Electronic Communication Devices in Class

The Bachelor of Community Rehabilitation program aims to create a supportive and respectful learning environment for all students. The use of laptop and mobile devices is acceptable when used in a manner appropriate to the course and classroom activities.

Students are responsible for being aware of the University's Internet and email use policy, which can be found at https://www.ucalgary.ca/legal-services/university-policies-procedures/acceptable-use-electronic-resources-and-information-policy.

Use of Artificial Intelligence Tools

Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI), and specifically foundational models that can create writing, computer code, and /or images using minimal human prompting includes not only GPT-4 (and its siblings ChatGPT and Bing), but many writing assistants that are built on this or similar AI technologies.

Can use Generative AI Tools

Students may use artificial intelligence tools, including generative AI, in CORE 205. However, students are ultimately accountable for the work they submit. **Students should be aware that the generative AI will very likely not generate the critical thinking answers expected given the nature of the assignments.** Students may choose to use generative artificial intelligence tools as they work through the assignments in this course; this use must be documented in an appendix for each assignment. The documentation should include what tool(s) were used, how they were used, and how the results from the AI were incorporated into the submitted work. Failure to cite the use of AI generated content in an assignment/assessment will be considered a breach of academic integrity and subject to Academic Misconduct procedures. Please see this library guide for how to cite the use of AI tools: https://libguides.ucalgary.ca/c.php?g=733971&p=5302331

Students *are not allowed* to upload class slides, assignment instructions, or other course materials to AI tools or platforms. These are the intellectual property of the course instructor (IP); uploading these to and AI platform may breech IP rules since some of these sites may use these as training/output data.

UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY POLICIES AND SUPPORTS

Copyright

All students are required to read the University of Calgary policy on Acceptable Use of Material Protected by Copyright (https://www.ucalgary.ca/legal-services/university-policies-procedures/acceptable-use-material-protected-copyright-policy) and requirements of the Copyright Act (https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/C-42/index.html) to ensure they are aware of the consequences of unauthorized sharing of course materials (including instructor notes, electronic versions of textbooks, etc.). Students who use material protected by copyright in violation of this policy may be disciplined under the Non-Academic Misconduct Policy https://www.ucalgary.ca/legal-services/university-policies-procedures/student-non-academic-misconduct-policy

Instructor Intellectual Property

Course materials created by instructors (including course outlines, presentations and posted notes, labs, case studies, assignments and exams) remain the intellectual property of the instructor. These materials may **NOT** be reproduced, redistributed or copied without the explicit consent of the professor. **The posting of course materials to third party websites such as note-sharing sites without permission is prohibited**. Sharing of extracts of these course materials with other students enrolled in the course *at the same time* may be allowed under fair dealing.

Academic Accommodations
It is the student's responsibility to request academic accommodations according to the University policies and procedures listed below. The Student Accommodations policy is available at https://ucalgary.ca/student-services/access/prospective-students/academic-accommodations. Students needing an accommodation based on disability or medical concerns should contact Student Accessibility Services (SAS) in accordance with the Procedure for Accommodations for Students with Disabilities (https://www.ucalgary.ca/legal-services/sites/default/files/teams/1/Policies-Accommodation-for-Students-with-Disabilities-Procedure.pdf).

Students who require an accommodation in relation to their coursework based on a Protected Ground other than Disability should communicate this need in writing to ███████████████ ███████████████, Associate Dean ██████████████████████████

Academic Misconduct
The University of Calgary is committed to the highest standards of academic integrity and honesty. The University of Calgary has created rules to govern all its members regarding the creation of knowledge and the demonstration of knowledge having been learned.

Academic Misconduct refers to student behaviour that compromises proper assessment of a student's academic activities and includes (but is not limited to): cheating, fabrication, falsification, plagiarism, unauthorized assistance, failure to comply with an instructor's expectations regarding conduct required of students completing academic assessments in their courses, and failure to comply with exam regulations applied by the Registrar. **It also includes using of third party websites/services to access past/current course material, essay/assignment writing services, or real-time assistance in completing assessments, seeking answers to assessment questions and similar, whether paid, bartered or unpaid.**

For information of the Student Academic Misconduct Policy and Procedures, please visit; https://www.ucalgary.ca/legal-services/university-policies-procedures/student-academic-misconduct-policy.

Additional information is available on the Academic Integrity website at: https://ucalgary.ca/student-services/student-success/learning/academic-integrity.

Recording of Lectures
Audio or video recording of lectures (or similar) by students is prohibited except where explicit permission has been received from the instructor.

Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act
Student information will be collected in accordance with typical (or usual) classroom practice. Students' assignments will be accessible only by the authorized course faculty. Private information related to the individual student is treated with the utmost regard by the faculty at the University of Calgary

Appeals
If there is a concern with the course, academic matter or a grade, first communicate with the instructor. If these concerns cannot be resolved, students can proceed with an academic appeal, as per Section I of the University Calendar. Students must follow the official reappraisal/appeal process and may contact the Student Ombuds' Office (http://www.ucalgary.ca/student-services/ombuds) for assistance with this and with any other academic concerns, including academic and non-academic misconduct. Students should be aware that concerns about graded term work may only be initiated **within 10 business days** of

first being notified of the grade.
https://calendar.ucalgary.ca/pages/e31a7115dca740ec83579e946d4a4193

Sexual and Gender-Based Violence Policy
The University recognizes that all members of the University Community should be able to learn, work, teach and live in an environment where they are free from harassment, discrimination, and violence. The University of Calgary's sexual violence policy guides us in how we respond to incidents of sexual violence, including supports available to those who have experienced or witnessed sexual violence, or those who are alleged to have committed sexual violence. It provides clear response procedures and timelines, defines complex concepts, and addresses incidents that occur off-campus in certain circumstances. Please see the policy available at https://www.ucalgary.ca/legal-services/university-policies-procedures/sexual-and-gender-based-violence-policy

Resources for Support of Student Learning, Success, Safety and Wellness
Student Success Centre   http://www.ucalgary.ca/ssc/
Student Wellness Centre   http://www.ucalgary.ca/wellnesscentre/
Student Advocacy and Wellness Hub (CSM)
          https://cumming.ucalgary.ca/mdprogram/current-students/student-advising-wellness
Distress Centre   http://www.distresscentre.com/
Library Resources   http://library.ucalgary.ca

Wellness and Mental Health Resources
The University of Calgary recognizes the pivotal role that student mental health plays in physical health, social connectedness and academic success, and aspires to create a caring and supportive campus community where individuals can freely talk about mental health and receive supports when needed. We encourage you to explore the excellent mental health resources available throughout the university community, such as counselling, self-help resources, peer support or skills-building available through the SU Wellness Centre (https://www.ucalgary.ca/wellnesscentre/services/mental-health-services) and the Campus Mental Health Strategy (https://www.ucalgary.ca/mentalhealth)

Student Ombuds' Office
The Student Ombuds' Office supports and provides a safe, neutral space for students. For more information, please visit www.ucalgary.ca/student-services/ombuds/ or email ombuds@ucalgary.ca

Student Union (SU) Information
The SU Vice-President Academic can be reached at (403) 220-3911 or suvpaca@ucalgary.ca; the SU representatives for the Cumming School of Medicine can be reached at medrep1@su.ucalgary.ca or medrep2@su.ucalgary.ca.

Student Success Centre
The Student Success Centre provides services and programs to ensure students can make the most of their time at the University of Calgary. Our advisors, learning support staff, and writing support staff assist students in enhancing their skills and achieving their academic goals. They provide tailored learning support and advising programs, as well as one-on-one services, free of charge to all undergraduate and graduate students. For more information visit: https://www.ucalgary.ca/student-services/student-success

Emergency Evacuation/Assembly Points

As part of the University of Calgary Emergency Evacuation plan, students, faculty, and staff should locate the closest Assembly Point in case of Fire Alarm. Safety signage is posted throughout the campus showing the locations and the possible route to these locations. All students, faculty, and staff are expected to promptly make their way to the nearest Assembly Point if the Fire Alarm is activated. No one is to return into campus facilities until an all clear is given to the warden in charge of the Assembly Area. For more information, see https://www.ucalgary.ca/risk/emergency-management/drills/assembly-points-and-evacuation-maps

Safewalk

Campus security will escort individuals, day or night, anywhere on campus (including McMahon Stadium, Health Sciences Centre, Student Family Housing, the Alberta Children's Hospital and the University LRT station). Call 403-220-5333 or visit http://www.ucalgary.ca/security/safewalk. Use any campus phone, emergency phone or the yellow phone located at most parking lot pay booths. Please ensure your personal safety by taking advantage of this service.