



**Disability Studies 2201G (570)
Rethinking Disability
Fall/Winter 2025-2026**

Instructor: Dr. Melanie Stone
Email: mstone33@uwo.ca

Course Information

Calendar Description:

Disability Studies challenges the historical, medical and mainstream views of disability and mental illness as personal tragedies or solely problems to be fixed. We explore diverse approaches to imagining disability, changes over time, and associated symbolic and material outcomes.

Prerequisite(s): [Disability Studies 1010A/B](#).

Antirequisite(s):

Extra Information: 2 lecture hours, 1 tutorial hour.

Course Weight: 0.50

Breadth: Category A

Subject Code: DISABST

Notice: Unless you have either the requisites for this course, or special permission from your Dean to enrol in it, you may be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. This decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.

Rethinking Disability

Disability Studies 2201G

Version Date: December 1, 2025

Instructor Information

Melanie Stone, PhD mstone33@uwo.ca
Office Location: See Brightspace
Office Hours: See Brightspace

Lecture Information

Time: See Brightspace
Location: See Brightspace
Mode of Instruction: In-Person

Course Information

Prerequisite: Disability Studies 1010 A/B
Antirequisite:

3 hours (or equivalent) of weekly lecture content, 0.5 course (King's) Part of the DS Minor and DS Major Module: <http://www.kings.uwo.ca/disability-studies/>

Unless you have either the requisites for this course or written special permission from your Dean to enroll in it, you may be removed from this course, and it will be deleted from your record. This decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.

[Calendar Copy] Disability Studies challenges the historical, medical and mainstream views of disability and mental illness as personal tragedies or solely problems to be fixed. We explore diverse approaches to imagining disability, changes over time, and associated symbolic and material outcomes.

Course Description

How do we imagine disability? What societal factors shape our understanding?

The way we talk about disability in Disability Studies often differs from the ways mainstream societies imagine non-normative bodies and minds. This course begins with two assumptions: first, that the category of disability is socially constructed through thought, language and media; and second, that social constructions of disability shape our everyday lives. In this course, we explore historical and contemporary constructions of disability, and the role of dominant ideas about disability in shaping the treatment of disabled people throughout modern history. We trace evolutions in thinking about physical, cognitive, emotional and behavioural diversity, and discuss how changing popular understandings of disability have shaped social practices related to disability. Major topics include institutionalization, medicalization, inclusion and representation.

The class employs cases and research to expose students to shifts in the understanding and management of disability over time. We explore various aspects of the disability experience, including the historical and cultural legitimation of differential, exclusionary, and discriminatory treatment of people with disabilities in policy, professional practice and popular culture. We also explore a parallel history of disability activism and scholarship, in which people who live with disability and their allies have fought against marginalizing mainstream approaches. Students will think critically about the value and limits of Disability Studies perspectives, such as tensions between scholarly Disability Studies approaches and perspectives grounded in lived experiences with disability. Additionally, we will work towards developing an understanding of our personal relationship to the social category of disability, and to the field of Disability Studies.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of this course, students should be able to:

1. Discuss disability and related topics in a confident and respectful manner.
2. Discuss the evolution of ideas about disability and related social practices in contemporary society and recent history.
3. Explain what Disability Studies is and how it helps us to rethink disability.
4. Differentiate and compare mainstream and Disability Studies perspectives on a range of key topics.
5. Apply Disability Studies perspectives to topics beyond those discussed in this course.
6. Assess and communicate the nature of their own relationship to the social category of disability and to the field of Disability Studies.

Course Outline

01-06 Week 1: Welcome to DS 2201
01-13 Week 2: Defining Disability
01-20 Week 3: Bodies in Context
01-27 Week 4: Ongoing Fights for Justice & Rights
02-03 Week 5: Bodies <week>
02-10 Week 6: Situating Ourselves
02-17 Week 7: Reading Week
02-24 Week 8: Midterm Test
03-03 Week 9: Ableism
03-10 Week 10: Barriers & Access
03-17 Week 11: Identity & Culture
03-24 Week 12: What is an Ally? Examining allyship care and work
03-31 Week 13: Disability Studies in Review
04-07 Week 14: Exam Review

Course Requirements & Evaluation Scheme

Classroom Engagement	15 %
Reflection 1 – Early Learning Reflection	10 %
Midterm Evaluation	25 %
Reflection 2 – Action Based Reflection	20 %
Final Written Assignment	30 %
Total	100 %

Required Texts

1. Ladau, E. (2021). *Demystifying Disability: What to know, what to say, and how to be an ally*. Ten Speed Press.
This book is available through the Western Bookstore or other online booksellers for \$22.00 can be loaned for free from Western Libraries. Secondhand copies may also be available.
2. Links to additional readings and other required materials are posted on Brightspace.

Assignment Details

Classroom Participation & Engagement (20%)

Participation is an important aspect of this course. Regular attendance and participation in in-class discussion is expected. To earn top marks for classroom engagement, complete assigned readings before class and come prepared to discuss. Diverse forms of participation are valued, and there will be opportunities for active participation during and outside of class. If you anticipate or experience challenges with classroom engagement, please communicate with Dr. Stone to discuss potential accommodations.

Reflection 1 (10 %) – Students will reflect on their own assumptions related to disability to examine positionality and write a personal reflection on course learnings and shifts that have taken place between DS1010 and DS2201, reflecting on course readings, concepts. The goal is to recognize positionality and to engage with how our personal biases and expectations intersect with disability scholarship. Details of this assignment including a rubric will be placed on OWL Brightspace. This is a 1200 word reflection.

Due: Tuesday February 10th 2026.

Collaborative Midterm Evaluation (20%)

The midterm test is designed to provide an opportunity for cooperative and collaborative learning. During class time on February 24th students will work in small groups to discuss, debate and compile information to answer test questions. The test format is open book, meaning you will be allowed to use your notes and readings during this time. Please prepare accordingly. After class, you will have until 11:55 pm on Friday, February 27th to submit your individual answers to the test questions on Brightspace. While the in-class work is collaborative, however your tests are individual. All the answers you submit should be written in your own words.

Important Note: This is an exam, not an assignment. Accommodations for deadline flexibility do not apply to the midterm. Late submissions will not be accepted. Academic consideration requests for absence from or submission of the midterm evaluation require formal approval from ACSD or the ADO.

Reflection 2 (20 %) – Disability Studies in Action

Students will engage in a small-scale, real-world action related to accessibility and inclusion. This could involve, creating a resource guide, creating a podcast or video about a community barrier, preparing a letter to an MPP, MP or City Councillor recommending an inclusive change, facilitating a short awareness activity, designing a “micro” presentation or zine to teach someone about disability studies and disability justice, etc... Students will complete the action and then write an 1500-word reflection about the experience. This assignment is to connect theory to practice by critically analyzing how accessibility and inclusion play out in everyday contexts and to recognize the role of individual and collective action in disability studies.

Due: Tuesday April 7th 2026

Final Exam (30%) – Scheduled during the Winter Exam Period

Course Policies & University Procedures

Device Policy

Students are welcomed and encouraged to make appropriate use of technology during class time. Please be aware that inappropriate use of technology during class time may be distracting to you, to other students and to the professor, and will not be tolerated. Examples of appropriate use of technology during class include using a device to take notes or to reference readings or other materials relevant to class. Using the internet to find information related to class discussion is also encouraged, provided it does not hinder your engagement in the class. Examples of inappropriate use of technology during class include using social media and accessing content that is not directly related to class discussions. Please excuse yourself from the room if you need to check email, message, text, make or take phone calls.

Safer Space Policy

Effective learning can only happen when everyone feels safe in our shared space. Each member of the classroom community is asked to be mindful of language and actions that may be perceived or experienced as disrespectful or discriminatory. Students are encouraged to communicate their own, and to be cognisant of others', needs and preferences. Please alert the professor at any time if you are feeling unsafe in the classroom.

Communication Policy

Students are encouraged to make use of the professor's office hours to clarify concepts or to engage in discussion about course material beyond what is covered during class time. You may also communicate with peers about course materials and evaluations. Before you contact the professor with questions about assignments, please ensure you have carefully read all provided instructions, including relevant sections of the course outline and course website.

If you contact the professor by email, you can usually expect a response within 1-2 business days (Monday-Friday). Please do not expect a response over the weekend. At busy times of the semester, it may take longer to get a response.

Support & Accommodations

I am happy to support any formal accommodations recommended by Accessibility, Counselling & Student Development (ACSD, <https://www.kings.uwo.ca/current-students/student-affairs/acsd-student-supports/>) or the Academic Dean's Office (ADO, <https://www.kings.uwo.ca/current-students/courses-enrolment/exams-and-tests/academic-consideration-requests/>). Please communicate with Dr. Stone early and often so that we can collaborate to ensure your full and equitable participation in this course.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) & Academic Integrity

Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following Website:

http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com (<http://www.turnitin.com>). Please note that Turnitin analysis now includes AI detection.

Within this course AI tools such as Chat GPT are permitted exclusively for information-gathering and preliminary research purposes (i.e., development of an essay outline). If AI tools are used, students must acknowledge use and state how the tool was used. Unauthorized use of AI will be subject to academic discipline.

KING'S UNIVERSITY COLLEGE
GENERAL COURSE POLICIES
2025-2026

1. Academic Accommodations, Consideration for Absences

Academic Accommodation (Accessibility)

Accessibility Services works to ensure that academic programs are accessible to all students, and supports students who may have a condition related to, but not limited to, vision, hearing, mobility, different ways of learning, mental health, chronic illnesses, chronic pain, autism spectrum disorder, ADD/ADHD, and temporary conditions (beyond short-term academic consideration). Accessibility Services provides recommendations for accommodation based on medical documentation or psychological and cognitive assessment. The accommodation policy can be found here [Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities](#). Information on Accessibility Services at King's can be found [here](#).

Academic Consideration for Student Absence

If a student is unable to meet a course requirement due to substantial but temporary extenuating circumstances (medical or compassionate), they should follow the procedures below.

In some cases, where instructors have built flexibility into their assessments, this flexibility will already address consideration needs.

Requests for academic consideration should be directed to the Academic Advising Office of your faculty/college of registration. Requests must be made as soon as possible and no later than 48 hours after the missed assessment.

As a rule, documentation is required for academic consideration. For academic consideration requests on medical grounds, the Student Medical Certificate is available at https://www.kings.uwo.ca/kings/assets/File/currentStudents/courses_enrollment/exams_and_tests/SMC-Feb-2025.pdf.

Students are permitted one academic consideration request without supporting documentation per term per course.

Instructors may designate one assessment per half-course weight as requiring formal supporting documentation. Please refer to the course outline for each course.

For further information, please see:

https://uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/academic_consideration_Sep24.pdf

Friday Make-Up Exams may only be written with the instructor's consent.

Absences from Final Examinations

If you miss the Final Exam, contact the Academic Advising Office of your faculty/college of registration as soon as you are able to do so. They will assess your eligibility to write the Special Examination (the name given by the University to a makeup Final Exam).

You may also be eligible to write the Special Exam if you are in a “Multiple Exam Situation” (e.g., more than 2 exams in 23-hour period, or more than 3 exams in a 47-hour period).

If a student fails to write a scheduled Special Examination, the date of the next Special Examination (if granted) normally will be the scheduled date for the final exam the next time this course is offered. The maximum course load for that term will be reduced by the credit of the course(s) for which the final examination has been deferred. See the Academic Calendar for details (under [Special Examinations](#)).

Religious Accommodation

Students should consult the University's list of recognized religious holidays, and should give notice in writing to the instructor and Academic Advising Office if a course requirement will be affected by a religious holiday/observance. Notice must be given as early as possible, and no later than two weeks prior to an examination, and one week prior to a midterm test date. It is the responsibility of such students to inform themselves concerning the work done in classes from which they are absent and to take appropriate action.

2. Support Services

Accessibility, Counselling and Student Development at King’s University College:

<https://www.kings.uwo.ca/current-students/student-services/>

Students experiencing emotional or mental health distress can access services at King’s University College: <http://www.kings.uwo.ca/current-students/campus-services/student-support-services/personal-counselling/>

Good2talk is a good online and phone 24/7 resource for students and is available in English, Mandarin, and French: <https://good2talk.ca>, 1-866-925-5454

MentalHealth@Western provides a complete list of options about how to obtain help:

https://www.uwo.ca/health/mental_wellbeing/

Academic Support Services at King’s University College:

<https://www.kings.uwo.ca/current-students/academic-resources/>

GBSV Support:

King’s is committed to reducing incidents of gender-based and sexual violence and providing compassionate support to anyone who has gone through these traumatic events. If you have

experienced sexual or gender-based violence (either recently or in the past), you will find information about support services for survivors, including emergency contacts at:

<https://www.kings.uwo.ca/about-kings/safe-campus/gender-and-sexual-violence/>

You can reach someone supports at Kings by emailing Care@kings.uwo.ca or calling 519-930-4640 to reach a social worker who can offer help.

You can also reach Western's Gender-Based Violence & Survivor Support Case Manager by [email](#) or by calling 519-661-3568.

Further supports can be found on this website: <https://www.kings.uwo.ca/about-kings/safe-campus/gender-and-sexual-violence/>

See also https://www.uwo.ca/health/student_support/survivor_support/get-help.html

University Students' Council offers many valuable support services for students, including the health insurance plan: <http://westernusc.ca/services/>

3. Statement on Use of Electronic Devices

Use of Electronic Devices: Unless explicitly stated otherwise, you are not allowed to have a cell phone, or any other electronic device, with you during tests or examinations. Unauthorized possession of such a device during a test or examination constitutes an academic offence.

Use of Laptops, Tablets, and Smartphones in the Classroom: King's University College at Western University acknowledges the integration of new technologies and learning methods into the curriculum. The use of electronic devices such as laptop computers, tablets, or smartphones can contribute to student engagement and effective learning. At the same time, King's recognizes that instructors and students share jointly the responsibility to establish and maintain a respectful classroom environment conducive to learning.

The use of electronic devices by students during lectures, seminars, labs, etc., shall be for matters related to the course at hand only. Students found to be using electronic devices for purposes not directly related to the class may be subject to sanctions under the Student Code of Conduct; see <https://www.kings.uwo.ca/current-students/student-affairs/code-of-student-conduct1/>

Inappropriate use of electronics (e.g., laptops, tablets, smartphones) during lectures, seminars, labs, etc., creates a significant disruption. As a consequence, instructors may choose to limit the use of electronic devices in these settings. In addition, in order to provide a safe classroom environment, students attending in-person class sessions are strongly advised to operate laptops with batteries rather than power cords.

4. Statement on Academic Offences

King's is committed to academic integrity. Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, is posted at

http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf

It is expected that students will submit work that is truly their own, completed without external assistance (human or artificial) except as explicitly permitted by the course instructor. Check with your instructor on what tools, including generative AI (ChatGPT, translation tools, grammar-checking tools) are permitted in the course. Because a tool is permitted in one course, that does not mean it is permitted in other courses.

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system; see https://elearningtoolkit.uwo.ca/tools/Originality_Reports - TurnItIn.html.

Computer-marked multiple-choice tests and/or exams may be subject to submission for similarity review by software that will check for unusual coincidences in answer patterns that may indicate cheating.

5. Copyright of Course Material

Lectures and course materials, including PowerPoint presentations, tests, outlines, and similar materials are protected by copyright. Faculty members are the exclusive owner of copyright in those materials they create. Students may take notes and make copies for their own use. Students may not allow others to reproduce or distribute lecture notes and course materials publicly (whether or not a fee is charged) without the express written consent of a faculty member. Unauthorized sharing of class content is subject to academic discipline.

Similarly, students own copyright in their own original papers and exam essays. If a faculty member wishes to post a student's answers or papers on the course website, they should ask for the student's written permission.

6. Use of Recordings

Participants in this course are not permitted to record the sessions, except where recording is an approved accommodation and/or the participant has the prior written permission of the instructor. Unauthorized recording and/or sharing of class content is subject to academic discipline.

7. Policy on Attendance

Any student who, in the opinion of the instructor, is absent too frequently from class or laboratory periods in any course, will be reported to the Dean of the Faculty offering the course, after due warning has been given. On the recommendation of the department concerned, and with the permission of the Dean of that Faculty, the student will be debarred from taking the regular examination in the course.