



**Disability Studies 2023A
(570) Disability Sports &
Recreation Fall/Winter
2026-2027**

Instructor: Dr. Carla Filomena Silva
(She/Her)
Email: csilva42@uwo.ca

Course Information

Calendar Description:

Explore the dynamic sports and recreation venues where people with and without disability are involved in working towards diverse forms of participation and inclusion. These are crucial spheres of self-expression, sociability, integration and contribution. Recreational and elite sports, youth and adult programs are covered.

Prerequisite(s):

Antirequisite(s):

Extra Information: 3 hours in-person class

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.

Disability Sport and Recreation
DISABST 2023A (570) — Fall/Winter 2026–2027
King's University College



Cover image: Richard Whitehead, a British double leg amputee runner, competing at Rio 2016. (Image by Pexels, via Pixabay.)

Land Acknowledgement

Acknowledging that King's is on the traditional territories of the Anishinaabek, Haudenosaunee, Lūnaapéewak, and Chonnonton Nations, on lands connected with the London Township and Sombra Treaties of 1796 and the Dish with One Spoon Covenant Wampum, we commit to advancing reconciliation. We hope to build relationships with, and respect for the knowledges of, the diverse Indigenous Peoples who are stewards of the land and contributors to our learning. We acknowledge how precious these lands and waters are, and how precious are the creatures that live upon them.

Course Information

Instructor	Dr. Carla Silva (she/her)
Email	csilva42@uwo.ca

Course Weight	0.50
Breadth	Category A
Subject Code	DISABST
Course Duration	Sept 9 – Dec 9, 2026
Format	In-person (3 hrs/week) with an asynchronous component
Independent Study Time	3–5 hours/week outside class
Office Hours	To be determined

Emailing me: Please include **DISABST 2023 + the subject of your email** (e.g., "test," "deadlines") in your subject line and address me as Professor (Prof.) or Doctor (Dr.) Silva.

Course Description

This course explores the intersection of disability, sport, and recreation through a critical disability studies lens. Drawing on sociology, anthropology, the humanities, philosophy, and history, we will question normative and taken-for-granted understandings of disability and movement — in both competitive and recreational contexts — and examine how these understandings shape who gets to move, play, and compete, and on what terms.

Together, we will investigate diverse disability sport and recreation contexts, critique established practices and policies and interrogate how existing structures include or exclude. Rather than treating disability as an individual deficit to be managed, this course positions disability as a site of social, cultural, and political meaning-making; with direct implications for how sport and recreation spaces are designed, governed, and experienced.

This work is not only conceptual. Through collaborative dialogue and applied projects, you will practice referring thoughtfully and respectfully to people with disabilities, learning to respond to individuals rather than to generalized categories or assumptions. You will also be asked to turn a critical eye inward, noticing your own reactions and assumptions as they arise and revisiting them as your understanding deepens over the term.

By the end of the course, you will have developed the conceptual and practical tools to critically evaluate sport and recreation structures, engage respectfully across difference, reflect on and revise your own assumptions, and design, deliver, or advocate for programming that reduces or removes barriers to participation. You will be equipped to act as an informed, reflective, and empowering practitioner, advocate, or ally within movement-based professional fields.

Transfer Goals

What you'll be able to do independently, in the real world, long after this course ends:

1. Use your learning to evaluate and challenge exclusionary norms and practices in diverse movement cultures, rather than accepting existing knowledge and structures as neutral or fixed.
 2. Engage thoughtfully with people with disabilities across personal and professional contexts, staying open-minded and adapting your communication to the individual rather than relying on generalized categories of disability.
 3. Notice and question your own assumptions and reactions to dis/ability and movement — both in the moment and over time, as you encounter new contexts, communities, and information — distinguishing informed reasoning from unexamined bias.
 4. Design, deliver, and/or advocate for sport and recreation programming that promotes genuine inclusion and empowerment, rather than defaulting to standard (and often ableist) approaches.
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Essential Questions

Genuine, open-ended provocations we'll return to and think through more deeply as the term progresses — not resolved once and set aside.

- **Q1.** Who gets to decide what is "inclusion" — and inclusion into what?
 - **Q2.** Is empowerment something one person or institution can give to another — or is it something else entirely?
 - **Q3.** How do "normal" and "exceptional" bodies get defined in sport and recreation — and what implications derive from those definitions?
 - **Q4.** When I notice my own reaction to disability or movement, how do I know whether I'm seeing clearly or seeing through bias?
 - **Q5.** What does it mean to be an effective ally or advocate — and who gets to decide if we're doing it well?
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Learning Outcomes

By the end of this course, you will be able to:

Outcome

Explain and discuss key aspects of the history, evolution and present of diverse disability sport and recreation settings (e.g., Paralympic Movement, Deaflympics, Invictus Games), using accurate terminology and course concepts.

Outcome

- Use critical thinking to explain how classification and eligibility systems (e.g., in the Paralympics, LO2 Deaflympics, or Special Olympics) shape ideas about which bodies are seen as "normal" and which are seen as "exceptional."
- LO3 Critically assess a real sport, recreation, or physical education policy or program, and identify whose interests it serves and who it may include or exclude.
- (Re)Design a sport, recreation, or physical education program or advocacy proposal that addresses LO4 real barriers to participation, clearly explaining how and why it can be an empowering setting for participants who experience disability.
- LO5 Communicate about disability and movement using respectful, person-centred language, and justify your terminology choices both in and beyond this course.
- LO6 Recognize and articulate your own assumptions or reactions when you encounter disability sport and recreation contexts, and reflect on whether these arise from careful thinking and informed knowledge or from unexamined bias.
- LO7 Evaluate what makes allyship or advocacy genuinely effective in a specific disability sport or recreation context, using course readings and real-world scenarios.
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Modes of Instruction

This is an in-person course with an asynchronous component. Before each weekly class, you'll work through the lesson on Brightspace (e.g. readings, short tasks). In the 3-hour in-person session, you'll actively participate individually and collaboratively. Each class wraps up with a **low-stakes quiz** designed to check your understanding, critical thinking, and reflection.

Course Materials

All course materials are posted on **OWL Brightspace**. There are no other required materials and no cost for materials in this course.

Course Technology

You'll need a reliable computer and internet connection, especially for the asynchronous work.

Please join our class Padlet: padlet.com/DIS2026/student/zMBOI8UiRWMOdJZj . Use your first and last name so classmates can find you. We'll use this as a class-only space to share our work with one another.

Modes of Evaluation

Assessment	Date(s)	Weight
In-Class Quizzes (<i>weekly — best 7 of 9 count toward your final grade</i>)	Weekly (2.5 each)	22.5
Team Workshop — Design & Delivery	Dates announced per team	5%
Team Workshop — Individual Reflection	Dates announced per team	7.5%
Final In-Class Test	Nov 16	25%
Final Project Plan (Individual or in pairs) — Submission 1	Nov 22, 11:59 am	3%
Final Project Plan (Individual or in pairs) — Submission 2	Nov 24, 11:59 am	12%
Case Study Project (Individual or in pairs) — Submission 1 (<i>optional</i>)	Nov 28, 11:59 pm	5%
Case Study Project (Individual or in pairs) Submission 2 (15) (20) Single submission	Dec 2, 11:59 pm	15% or 20%
Total		100%

Detailed instructions for each assignment will be shared with plenty of notice ahead of each due date.

Attendance, Absences & Late Submissions

Your presence and participation matter to this course, and the policies below are here to keep things fair and predictable for everyone.

- **Attendance is compulsory.** If something comes up and you can't attend, or you'll be late, please let me know as soon as you're able. Please note that under the Policy on Attendance in King's General Course Policies (below), students with insufficient attendance may be debarred from taking the regular examination in the course.
- **In-class quizzes:** Only your best 7 of 9 quiz grades count toward your final grade, so there's built-in flexibility for the occasional off week. Because of this flexibility, **make-up quizzes aren't offered** — if you miss a quiz, that quiz is recorded as 0, but as long as you don't miss more than 2, those grades won't influence much your final grade.
- **Team workshop (design/delivery and individual reflection):** If you need academic consideration for this assignment, formal supporting documentation is required.
- **Final Project Plan:** Since this assignment is discussed and self- and peer-assessed in class on November 23rd, please submit it by **November 22nd at 11:59 pm** at the latest.

- **Case Study Project:** If you're not able to meet the deadline, you're welcome to skip the academic consideration paperwork and simply accept the (fairly light) daily late penalty instead — no need to email me an explanation or ask permission. Without academic consideration, a **penalty of 0.5 points per day** (including weekends) applies, to a maximum of 5 days. For example, on a final grade of 20, work submitted 5 days late would lose 2.5 points, for a final grade of 17.5. After 5 days, the assignment will be marked 0.
- **A sample of 10% of assignments (4,5 projects) will be randomly assigned to be defended orally, in a short online meeting with me.** Any work that is suspected of having used AI inappropriately will also need to be defended orally. If you believe that your grade in this assignment would benefit from this opportunity, you can volunteer for this oral defense. These meetings will take place online, from the 7-9 December.
- **Note that there is no Final Exam in this course.**

Academic Integrity and the Use of Generative AI

Throughout the course, we'll take time to discuss what academic integrity means, why it matters, and the challenges that generative AI raises — not just for academic integrity, but for our societies and planet more broadly.

- Generative AI tools (such as ChatGPT) are **permitted for some tasks and not others**, depending on the assignment. We'll discuss the rules — and the reasoning behind them — for each assignment as we go.
- If you use an AI tool in a graded assignment, make sure to comply with the course regulations, and please **acknowledge it and briefly describe how you used it**.
- Unauthorized use of AI tools will be treated as an academic integrity matter and is subject to academic discipline. As a minimum, the penalty will be a grade of 0 for that assignment.

Weekly Course Outline

A note on workload: This course is designed to help you learn deeply and succeed, which means it asks for committed weekly engagement — plan on roughly **3–5 hours per week**, outside the in person-session. Setting up a distraction-free study environment matters here, so consider blocking these hours into your weekly calendar right at the start of term.

Week	Topic	Readings/ Activities	Due Dates
0.Sept 9-13	Intro	Brightspace	
		General information	Before class on the 14th
		Module 1 for readings before class	

Week	Topic	Readings/ Activities	Due Dates
	Introduction to Disability and Sport		
1.Sept 14–20	Course commandments; committing to academic integrity; positionality and personal bias; disability models of understanding	Brightspace, Module 1	Mock Quiz (Just for training)
	Disability, Sport and Recreation: Intertwined History and Potential Pitfalls		
2.Sept 21–27	History of Adapted Physical Activity; the social construction of disability in a society of normalization; what counts as movement? And the "Disability Sport Paradox"	Brightspace, Module 2	Quiz 1
	Introduction to the Paralympics and Paralympic Sport		
3. Sept 28–Oct 4	History; classification	Brightspace, Module 3	Quiz 2
	Key Issues in Paralympic Sport		
4.Oct 5–11	Pitfalls and opportunities	Brightspace, Module 4	Quiz 3
Oct 12–18	Reading Week — no class	—	—
	Deaflympics		
5.Oct 19–25	History; classification; critical issues	Brightspace, Module 5	Quiz 4
	Disability, Physical Education and Sport in School		
6.Oct 26–Nov 1	Inclusion, integration, and other critical issues; Team Workshop 1	Brightspace, Module 6	Quiz 5
	Practical Approaches to "Inclusivizing" Sport and Recreation Contexts		
7.Nov 2–8	Conceptual and practical tools; Team Workshop 2	Brightspace, Module 7	Quiz 6

Week	Topic	Readings/ Activities	Due Dates
8. Nov 9–15	Sport and Intellectual Impairment (The case of Special Olympics)		
	History; classification; critical issues; Team Workshop 3	Brightspace, Module 8	Quiz 7
9. Nov 16–22	In-Class Test (cumulative — all content to date)		Final In-Class Test: Nov 16
		Brightspace, Module 9	Final Project Plan, Submission 1: Nov 22, 11:59 pm
10. Nov 23–29	Meaningful disability sport and recreation — challenges and barriers		Quiz 8
	Final Project: Plan Discussion, Support, and Feedback Team Workshop 4	Brightspace, Module 10	Final Project Plan, Submission 2: Nov 24, 11:59 pm
11. Nov 30–Dec 6	Course Plenary and Closing: What Now? What Will We Do?	Brightspace, Module 11	Quiz 9
			Case Study, Submission 1 (optional): Nov 28, 11:59 pm
12. Dec 7–9	Online Individual Discussions of Final Project For selected or self-appointed students)	—	Case Study, Submission 2: Dec 2, 11:59 am
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**KING'S UNIVERSITY COLLEGE
GENERAL COURSE POLICIES
2026-27**

1. Academic Accommodations (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](#).

2. Academic Consideration for Student Absences

Students must be approved to write a makeup exam or for an extension of the assignment deadline. If you need to miss an exam or the deadline for the assignment, please follow these instructions.

There are two ways to seek academic consideration:

(i) Academic consideration based on medical or compassionate grounds

If a student is unable to meet a course requirement due to substantial but temporary extenuating circumstances (medical or compassionate grounds), they should contact the Academic Advising Office. As a rule, documentation is required for academic consideration.

For academic consideration requests on medical grounds, the Student Medical Certificate (SMC) is the appropriate documentation. The SMC is available at <https://registrar.uwo.ca/academics/pdfs/student-medical-certificate.pdf>

- King's students: The Academic Advising Office website is located in DLH 104. The Academic Advising website is <https://mykings.ca/intranet/app/#/academics/academic-advising>.
- If your home faculty is Huron or at Western, please submit your documentation to your faculty's academic counselling office.
- Requests must be made as soon as possible and no later than 48 hours after the missed assessment.

You may submit requests for academic consideration through the **Student Absence Portal**, linked on this website: <https://mykings.ca/intranet/app/#/academics/academic-advising/academic-consideration-requests-and-student-absence-portal>

(ii) Academic consideration through an undocumented absence

Students are permitted one academic consideration request without supporting documentation per term per half-course (0.5) weight.

- Note that instructors may designate one assessment per half-course weight as requiring formal supporting documentation. Please refer to the course outline to confirm this assessment.
- If instructors have built flexibility into their assessments, this flexibility will already address consideration needs. (For example, if students need to submit X of Y assignments, this flexibility already provides consideration.)
- Undocumented absences can not be used as the basis for academic consideration for December or April exams.

For further information on the academic consideration policy, please see https://uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/academic_consideration_Sep24.pdf

c) Absences from Final Exams

If you miss the Final Exam, **contact your Academic Advising Office** 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 (i.e., you are scheduled to write 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](#)).

d) Religious Accommodations

Students should consult the University’s list of recognized religious holidays, and should give notice in writing to the instructor and their 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.

3. Support Services

Accessibility, Counselling and Student Development at King’s University College:
<https://mykings.ca/intranet/app/#/student-supports-and-services/accessibility-services>

Students experiencing emotional or mental health distress can access services at King’s University College: <https://kings.uwo.ca/campus-life/student-supports/>

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

Western’s Mental Health Services site provides a complete list of options on how to obtain help: <https://www.uwo.ca/health/mental-health/index.html>

Academic Support Services at King's University College: <https://kings.uwo.ca/academics/academic-supports/>

4. Statement on Gender-Based Sexual Violence

King's and Western are committed to reducing incidents of gender-based sexual violence (GBSV) and providing compassionate support to anyone who is going through or has gone through these traumatic events. If you are experiencing or have experienced GBSV (either recently or in the past), you will find information about support services for survivors, including emergency contacts at the following website: [Mental Health and Wellness at King's](#).

You can reach supports at King's 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 (health@uwo.ca) or by calling 519-661-3568. Additional support services can be found <https://www.uwo.ca/health/gbsv/support/index.html>

5. 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://kings.uwo.ca/sites/2025/assets/files/campus/Kings_Code_of_Student_Conduct.pdf

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.

6. 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 https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_offences.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 you instructor to check which tools, including generative AI (ChatGPT, translation tools, grammar-checking tools) are permitted in each course.** Note that although some courses may permit the use of such tools, it does not mean use of such tools 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.

7. 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.

8. 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.

9. 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.