

**GWS 737 “Feminist Disability Studies”
UW Madison, Fall 2023
Thursdays 2:30-5:00 – Sterling 1335**

Instructor Information:

Dr. Sami Schalk
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Virtual or IRL Office Hours: Tuesdays 1:30-3:30pm in 3408 Sterling (please wear a mask) or on Zoom. Meetings outside of office hours by appointment only. Schedule meetings at <https://drschalk.youcanbook.me/>

Course description:

This seminar will explore both the emergence of and recent work within the field of feminist disability studies. As an interdisciplinary field, feminist disability studies uses the critical lenses of feminist theory and disability studies to interrogate bodyminds norms at the intersections of (dis)ability and gender as well as race and sexuality.

Learning Goals:

1. To understand the origins of and new developments in feminist disability studies
2. To understand disability studies as a method and theoretical framework for research
3. To apply feminist disability studies concepts and approaches to one’s own research topics

Required Materials:

- Nishida, Akemi. *Just Care: Messy Entanglements of Disability, Dependency and Desire*. Temple University Press, 2022.
- Piepzna-Samarasinha, Leah Lakshmi *The Future is Disabled: Prophecies, Love Notes and Mourning Songs*. Arsenal Pulp Press 2022. [This book is available as an e-book through the library]

Course Policies:

Universal Design and Disability Accommodations: I believe everyone has a right to a quality education and that classrooms can adapt to students’ needs. Everyone learns differently. If you have ideas on how you can best learn and express your learning in this class, if you have an undocumented disability, or if you have a change in disability status during the semester, I encourage you to meet with me as soon as possible to discuss a learning plan. If you have a documented disability, please come talk to me about your accommodation needs within the first two weeks of class. The University accommodation policy reads as follows:

The University of Wisconsin-Madison supports the right of all enrolled students to a full and equal educational opportunity. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Wisconsin State Statute (36.12), and UW-Madison policy (Faculty Document 1071) require that students with

disabilities be reasonably accommodated in instruction and campus life. Reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities is a shared faculty and student responsibility. Students are expected to inform faculty of their need for instructional accommodations by the end of the third week of the semester, or as soon as possible after a disability has been incurred or recognized. Faculty, will work either directly with the student [you] or in coordination with the McBurney Center to identify and provide reasonable instructional accommodations. Disability information, including instructional accommodations as part of a student's educational record, is confidential and protected under FERPA.

Questions about documenting your disability can be directed to the McBurney Disability Resource Center (mcburney@studentlife.wisc.edu, 608/263-2741).

Additional class accommodations: If you need additional non-disability related accommodations for class, please come to office hours or e-mail me to discuss them. This might include class accommodations, adaptations and adjustments due to childcare, chest-feeding or pregnancy, injury, traumatic events, sudden loss of income or housing, food insecurity, or any other major life events that may impact your ability to prepare for and/or come to class and learn. Each situation is different and I will do my best to support you to develop an alternative learning plan, however, there may be situations where the best solution is to drop the class or take an incomplete.

Diversity and Inclusion: This is a course invested in justice which moves beyond notions of diversity and inclusion to seek systemic change to end oppression and liberate all people. I acknowledge as an educator that the University of Wisconsin-Madison is a place that has long been—and continues to be—hostile to marginalized people, especially people of color, disabled people and queer and trans people.

The University statement on diversity and inclusion reads as follows:

Diversity is a source of strength, creativity, and innovation for UW-Madison. We value the contributions of each person and respect the profound ways their identity, culture, background, experience, status, abilities, and opinion enrich the university community. We commit ourselves to the pursuit of excellence in teaching, research, outreach, and diversity as inextricably linked goals.

The University of Wisconsin-Madison fulfills its public mission by creating a welcoming and inclusive community for people from every background – people who as students, faculty, and staff serve Wisconsin and the world. <https://diversity.wisc.edu/>

Academic Integrity: Students are expected to uphold University expectations for academic integrity by submitting only their own original works and ideas for all assignments in this course. Violations of academic integrity can result in a range of repercussions depending on the severity of the violation, from having to repeat the assignment to expulsion from the University. All academic integrity violations will be recorded and reported to the Office of Student Conduct & Community Standards (OSCCS). For more on academic misconduct procedures at UW-Madison see: <https://students.wisc.edu/student-conduct/academic-integrity/>

Learning and Living in Pandemic Times: During the continued COVID-19 pandemic, we must prioritize our collective health and safety to keep ourselves, our campus, and our community

safe. As a university community, we must work together to prevent the spread of the virus and to promote the collective health and welfare of our campus and surrounding community. The official UW Statement reads: “Students should continually monitor themselves for COVID-19 symptoms and get tested for the virus if they have symptoms or have been in close contact with someone with COVID-19. Students should reach out to instructors as soon as possible if they become ill or need to isolate or quarantine, in order to make alternate plans for how to proceed with the course. Students are strongly encouraged to communicate with their instructor concerning their illness and the anticipated extent of their absence from the course (either in-person or remote). The instructor will work with the student to provide alternative ways to complete the course work.”

Further, I ask that we each be patient and understanding with each other and ourselves as we try to learn, teach, work, and survive during a global pandemic. This will not be a “normal” semester for any of us and I want us all to do our best while recognizing that our best is going to vary from person to person based on our resources, support networks, personal obligations, and health. I am prepared to move our class online when conditions require it. I ask that you please strive to take care of yourself and each other this semester by doing the following:

- Get the new booster shot as soon as possible
- Do not come to class if you are sick in any way
- Get tested for COVID-19 if you exhibit symptoms (on campus testing has been eliminated by the university. You can get tested at Walgreens and CVS by appointment)
- Let me and peers who interact with you know if you test positive

Assignments:

This course is graded on the UW-Madison grading system: A (93-100%), AB (88-92%), B (83-87%), BC (78-82%), C (70-77%), D (60-69%), F (below 60%). The assignments are weighted as follows:

Class Community Contributions	20%
Initiating Class Discussion	15%
Paper/Project Proposal	10%
Peer Review and/or Presentation	15%
Final Paper/Project	40%

Class Community Contributions

Class community contributions is a subjective evaluation of student engagement with the course including: participating in class discussions (including asking questions), engaging with your care pod, attending office hours, and being a lead note-taker for the collaborative notes document. Class community contribution is not about a particular quantity of comments, questions, or classes attended, but rather about the quality of your various engagement with the course material, the professor, and your peers. Significant lack of attendance will impact your class community contribution grade, but there is otherwise no attendance policy. If you have an emergency, crisis, or illness that will significantly impact your attendance and participation (missing more than 1 class in a row or more than 3 classes over the course of the semester), contact Dr. Schalk ASAP to set up an alternative learning plan. At the final, students will be

asked to write brief statements explaining the grade they believe they earned for class community contribution by detailing the types, quantity, and quality of their various contributions. Grading scale is as follows:

A – Exceptional: Consistently high quality contribution to the class community; a standout member of the class

AB – Strong: An mix of high quality contributions and good quality contributions to the class community

B – Very Good: Consistently good quality contributions to the class community

BC – Good: Inconsistent contributions to the class community

C – Decent: Limited or low quality contributions to the class community

D – Poor: Did not contribute to the class community

F – Very poor: Was actively disruptive to the class community

Class Community Contribution is 20 percent of the final grade.

Initiating Class Discussion

Each student will be responsible (with a partner or group) for initiating class discussion at some point in the semester. Leading class discussion should include a brief presentation (5-7 minutes) about the chosen reading for the week, including explanation of the argument, main concepts and methods, as well as your major takeaways (i.e. what did you find most useful, thought-provoking or challenging about the readings? What did you learn?). Discussion leaders should upload a digital handout to the Canvas discussion board for that class period at least 24 hours prior to class. The handout should include, at minimum, argument summary, definition of key concept(s), and 3-5 discussion questions. The presentation and handout are intended to help frame and initiate the discussion for the day. Students initiating are encouraged to take a leading role in the discussion that follows their presentation, but will not be graded on the quality of their peers' discussion. Initiating class discussion counts for 15 percent of the final grade.

Paper Proposal

All students are required to submit a 3-5 page proposal for their final paper or project.

For academic papers, the proposal must include:

- The paper's topic/focus
- The paper's method(s) & site of analysis
- An initial thesis argument
- An annotated bibliography of at least 5 academic sources to be used in the paper

For final projects, the proposal must include:

- A description of the proposed project
- An explanation of how the project will incorporate or enact theories and concepts in feminist disability studies
- An explanation of how the project contributes or relates to your future research and/or career plans
- A note indicating whether you prefer to do peer review of your project or a presentation

The paper proposal is worth 10% of the final grade.

Peer Review or Presentation

In the final weeks of the semester, we will engage in peer review of final paper drafts and presentations of final projects. All students writing papers are required to submit a full draft for peer review. Students doing final projects have the option to either submit a draft for peer review or do a presentation.

For peer review, students will be assigned a week to be reviewed and must submit a full draft by Friday at midnight the week before their assigned peer review date. Each week all students will be required to read and comment on some of the papers submitted for peer review. Students receiving peer review (that is, those not doing project presentations) will also be assigned to take the lead in running the peer review for one peer, providing more substantive feedback on that paper. Students doing presentations will participate in providing peer review, but will not lead a peer review. This is an exercise in giving and receiving feedback as well as in intellectual generosity and collegiality.

For students writing papers, 5% of the final grade is the submission of your paper draft and 10% is your participation in peer reviews.

For students doing presentations, 10% of the final grade is your presentation and 5% is your participation in peer review.

Note: If a student submits a draft which is already at A-level quality for peer review, they will not be required to revise the paper for final submission and will automatically receive an A on the final paper. Presentation projects are not eligible for exemption for final submission.

Final Paper or Project

Students will create a final paper or project informed by feminist disability studies as best fits their interests, discipline and focus of study. Options include:

- Traditional research paper (15-20 pages): A traditional research paper should apply a theory or concept from class in order to analyze media, art, policy, news story, archival material, etc. and make original arguments about the object of analysis using feminist disability studies theories and concepts from class as well as a significant number of additional academic sources from outside of class.
- Praxis paper (10-15 pages): A praxis paper demonstrates at length via illustrative example(s) (either lived/practiced or proposed) how a particular theory/concept in feminist disability studies could/should be practically applied to or enacted through a specific research method, teaching or career practice, or interpersonal behaviors/interactions and the benefits of value of such an application/enactment. This can be academic, professional, or activist focused, with a specific audience in mind you are showing how to apply this theory in a particular area. The voice/tone/style of the paper will vary depending on your intended audience.
- Creative project (varies by project): Creative projects are a substantive creative expression of or response to a particular theory or concept from class. Genres options include but are not limited to visual art, short film, performance art, short story, poetry, creative-critical essay, zine, social media campaign, or podcast. All creative projects will be accompanied by a 5-6 page artist statement explaining how the creative project is an

expression/enactment of a particular intersectional feminist theory or concept discussed during the semester through specific artistic choices. The artist statement should include formal academic references.

Final papers are worth 40 percent of the final grade.

Reading Schedule:

Week 1

Thursday, September 7, 2023: Introduction to the Course

- Hall, Alice “Introduction to Disability Studies” from Hall, Alice. *Literature and Disability*. Routledge, 2015, 19-29. [read prior to class]
- Piepzna-Samarasinha, Leah Lakshmi “Care Webs: Experiments in Creative Collective Access” from *Care Work* (2018) [read prior to class]

Week 2

Thursday, September 14, 2023: Introduction to the Field

- Wendell, Susan. “Toward a Feminist Theory of Disability,” in *The Disability Studies Reader*. 2nd edition. Ed Lennard Davis. Routledge, 2006, 243-256.
- Garland-Thomson, Rosemarie. "Integrating Disability, Transforming Feminist Theory." *NWSA Journal* 14.3 (2002): 1-32.
- Schalk, Sami and Jina B. Kim “Integrating race, transforming feminist disability studies” *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*, 46.1 (2020), 31-55.
- ***Sign-up for initiating class discussion***

Week 3

Thursday, September 21, 2023: Key Concepts in Feminist DS Part 1

- McRuer, Robert “Introduction: Compulsory Able-Bodiedness and Queer/Disabled Existence” from *Crip Theory*. NYU Press, 2006, 1-32.
- Kafer, Alison. “Introduction: Imagined Futures” from *Feminist, Queer, Crip*. Indiana University Press, 2013.
- Erelles, Nirmala. “Embodied Antinomies: Feminist Disability Studies Meets Third World Feminism,” in *Disability and Difference in Global Contexts: Enabling a Transformative Body Politic*. Palgrave Macmillan, 2011, 121-146.

Week 4

Thursday, September 28, 2023: Key Concepts in Feminist DS Part 2

- Kim, Eunjung. “Introduction: Folded Time and the Presence of Disability” from *Curative Violence: Rehabilitating Disability, Gender, and Sexuality in Modern Korea*. Duke University Press, 2017.
- Puar, Jasbir. “Preface: Hands up, Don’t Shoot!” from *The Right to Maim: Debility, Capacity, Disability*. Duke University Press, 2017, ix-xxiv.
- Samuels, Ellen. “Introduction: The Crisis of Identification” from *Fantasies of Identification: Disability, Gender, Race*. NYU Press, 2014.

Week 5

Thursday, October 5, 2023: Just Care

- Nishida, Akemi. *Just Care: Messy Entanglements of Disability, Dependency and Desire*. Temple University Press, 2022.

Week 6

Thursday, October 12, 2023: Crip Genealogies

- Tari Young-Jung Na and translated by Yoo-Suk Kim “Institutionalization, Gender/Sexuality Oppression, and Incarceration without Walls in South Korea: Toward a More Radical Politics of the Deinstitutionalization Movement” from *Crip Genealogies*, Duke UP 2023, 61-84
- Lezlie Frye “Toward a Feminist Genealogy of US Disability Rights: Mapping the Discursive Legacies and Labor of Black Liberation” from *Crip Genealogies*, Duke UP 2023, 85-102
- Sony Coráñez-Bolton “Filipina SuperCrip: On the Crip Poetics of Colonial Ablenationalism” from *Crip Genealogies*, Duke UP 2023, 277-296

Week 7

Thursday, October 19, 2023: FDS Approaches to Mental Disability

- Donaldson, Elizabeth. “The Corpus of the Madwoman: Toward a Feminist Disability Studies Theory of Embodiment and Mental Illness” *NWSA Journal* 14.3 (2002): 99-119
- Taylor, Ashley. "The Discourse of Pathology: Reproducing the Able Mind through Bodies of Color." *Hypatia* 30.1 (2015): 181-98.
- Price, Margaret. "The Bodymind Problem and the Possibilities of Pain." *Hypatia* 30.1 (2015): 268-84.

Week 8

Thursday, October 26, 2023: Class Cancelled for NWSA Conference

- No class—meet with care pods
- ***Final Paper/Project Proposals due***

Week 9

Thursday, November 2, 2023: AMA (about research, academic careers, writing) with Dr. Schalk

- Schalk, Sami “Metaphorically Speaking: Ableist Metaphors in Feminist Writing” *Disability Studies Quarterly* 33.4, 2013.
- Schalk, Sami “Introduction” from *Bodyminds Reimagined: (Dis)ability, Race & Gender in Black Women’s Speculative Fiction*, Duke UP 2018
- Schalk, Sami “Introduction: Black Health Matters” from *Black Disability Politics*, Duke UP 2022

Week 10

Thursday, November 9, 2023: New Directions in Feminist DS

- Minich, Julie “Introduction: Radical Health/Radical Unwellness” from *Radical Health: Unwellness, Care, and Latinx Expressive Culture*, Duke UP 2023
- Khúc, Mimi “Introduction” from *dear elia: Letters from the Asian American Abyss*, Forthcoming from Duke UP 2024
- Day, Ally “Introduction: Disability, HIV and the Political Economy of Stigma” from *The Political Economy of Stigma*, OSU Press, 2021

Week 11

Thursday, November 16, 2023: The Future is Disabled

- Piepzna-Samarasinha, Leah Lakshmi *The Future is Disabled: Prophecies, Love Notes and Mourning Songs*. Arsenal Pulp Press 2022.

Week 12

Thursday, November 23, 2023: Class Cancelled for Fall Break

- No class—meet with care pods
- **Drafts due for first group of peer review**

Week 13

Thursday, November 30, 2023: Peer Review and/or Presentations

- Peer Review & Presentations
- **Drafts due for second group of peer review**

Week 14

Thursday, December 7, 2023: Peer Review and/or Presentations

- Peer Review & Presentations

Finals due December 16 by midnight.