



GSWS 315-4: CRITICAL DISABILITY STUDIES

PROFESSOR/INSTRUCTOR: Dr. Coleman Nye

EMAIL: anye@sfu.ca

OFFICE: AQ 5105A

OFFICE HOUR: TBA

COURSE TIME AND LOCATION: Fridays 12:30 – 16:20; WMC 3220

"Laugh and cry and tell stories. Sad stories about bodies stolen, bodies no longer here. Enraging stories about the false images, devastating lies, untold violence. Bold, brash stories about reclaiming our bodies and changing the world."

- Eli Clare, *Exile and Pride: Disability, Queerness, and Liberation*

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course will introduce students to key questions and debates in the interdisciplinary field of disability studies. Drawing from a range of texts and media, we will explore the social, political, and representational dimensions of disability.

Throughout, we will attend closely to the ways that the category and experience of disability differently intersects with formations of gender, race, sexuality, nationality, and class.

Some questions that we will explore include: How and why do minds and bodies get categorized as "normal" or "abnormal," and what is at stake in these definitions? What is the relation between our bodies and their environments – from the buildings we live in to the air we breathe? How do technologies—prosthetics, pharmaceuticals, and amniocentesis—force us to reconsider what it means to be human? How do people with disabilities negotiate sexual desires and identities? In what ways has mental and physical difference been disciplined through institutions such as asylums, prisons, and schools? And, how do performances of disability in art, activism, or biomedicine reinforce or reimagine cultural categories of ability?

EDUCATIONAL GOALS:

For more detailed information please see the GSWS website:

http://www.sfu.ca/gsws/undergraduate/courses/Educational_Goals.html

COURSE EVALUATION AND ASSIGNMENTS:

Attendance and Participation – 10%

Weekly Modules – 20% (2 points discussion, 1 point drawing over 10 weeks)

Accessibility Checklist – 15%

Audio Description Project - 30%

Final Project (2 Reflection Papers, 1 Research Paper, or Creative/Community Piece) – 25%

PREREQUISITES / COURSE NOTES:

Prerequisite: 15 units. Students with credit for GSWS 321 Special Topic under the title Critical Disability Studies may not take this course for further credit.

COURSE READINGS:**Required Texts:**

- Clem Martini and Olivier Martini, 2010, *Bitter Medicine: A Graphic Memoir of Mental Illness*
- A.J. Withers, 2012, *Disability Politics & Theory*
- Eli Clare, *Exile and Pride: Disability, Queerness, and Liberation* (2015 edition, Duke University Press)

Recommended Texts:

- Ellen Samuels, 2014, *Fantasies of Identification: Disability, Gender, Race.*
- Alison Kafer, 2013, *Feminist, Queer, Crip.*