

ANTHROPOLOGY 9230A
Department of Anthropology
Disability and Health in Local and Global Worlds
COURSE OUTLINE
Fall 2025

Date: July 18, 2025

Instructor and course information:

Instructor: Pamela Block Pamela Block

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Office hours: TBD

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Method of delivery: Blended SSC 3227

Credit value: 0.5

Antirequisites: None.

Prerequisites: None

Course Description:

This is a course about intersections. Disability cuts across age, gender, class, caste, occupation, religion- or does it? By some measures, people with disabilities are the largest minority group in the world today. In this course, we critically examine both the experiences of people with experiences with disability or chronic health conditions as well as the politics and processes of writing about such experiences through an anthropological lens. Indeed, questions of representation are perhaps at the core of this course. Is there such a thing as an international or universal disability experience? What does it mean to be disabled or have a chronic health condition in different social, economic, and political contexts in today's world?

In the beginning of the course, we will develop an anthropological foundation from which to talk about local and global contexts as well as disability. We will consider issues of local development, globalization, and transnationalism (Note: of specific relevance to MER students). We will ask whether disability is a universal category, and we will consider how experiences of health, illness, disability, and debility vary over temporal and spatial contexts. We will engage in "concept work" by analyzing the relationships between disability and impairment and we will critically evaluate the different models employed to think about disability. In doing so, we will rethink (perhaps) previously taken for granted understandings of disability and health and we will also engage with broader questions about international development, human rights, the boundaries of the nation, the family and other kinship affiliations, and identity and community formation (Note: Of specific relevance to

MER students). How is occupying and decolonizing health and disability both a productive analytic and a lens for thinking about pressing questions and concerns in today's world?

A full course schedule including a week-by-week breakdown of topics and assigned readings will be available on the course's OWL Brightspace site before the first day of class.

Course Materials:

No textbook. Required readings will be available through the Course Readings tool on the course site

Evaluation:

Grades will be based on the following:

Collective Access Engagement	25%
Discussion Leadership	25%
Essay	25%
Group Project	25%

Collective Access Engagement – 25%

In this course we are all "in it" together. It is our shared responsibility to ensure that everyone has access to information and needed supports to be successful this course. This may mean describing images, making sure videos are captioned, taking notes collectively, etc. Collective access needs vary from course to course, so I will let you know of any specific access guidelines that we need for this course. This site discusses some examples of [collective access](#). I would suggest briefly describing any photos you post and make sure any videos you post (including ones you personally make) are captioned. Auto-Captioning is very easy to do on [Zoom](#) and [YouTube](#). If you have access needs or concerns feel free to contact me, and I will be happy to meet to discuss how to best support your success in this course.

Students will form small discussion groups that will develop a thematic focus will meet/connect on average 1-hour per week. This is the hybrid element of the course so this can involve either in person or asynchronous online discussions or a combination of both. Each group will create a group journal summarizing your group processes and weekly discussions and critically reflect on how these processes have led to the development of the group assignment.

Students will be expected to actively engage in class discussions through the following:

Discussion questions (DQs) should be essay-type questions that don't have a simple yes or no answer, like something you would see in an essay exam. It must be directly related to the week's readings.

Weekly Reflections (WRs) are reflections can be anything that connects the week's readings to something from your experiences out in the world. They might be drawn from literature, film, social media, news articles, blogs or personal experiences.

Discussion Leadership 25%

Students will rotate responsibility for selecting readings or films (with instructor approval) and leading a class during the term. By Sunday 11:55pm, prior to their week leading class, Leaders will post any materials they have prepared as an online lesson and they will lead the class discussion.

Essay – 25%

During this course, you will be expected to turn in a paper of 1500-1750 words on a topic of your choosing as long as it is relevant to and cites class learning objectives, readings, and discussions. Go to OWL Assignments Tab for due dates. Accommodations or extensions to these deadlines may be provided on a case-by-case basis upon formal request, possibly in consultation with students' academic advisor.

Group Assignment: Create a Lesson – 25%

Discussion groups will develop a thematic focus and will develop virtual lessons using communication modalities your choice (video, painting and artist statement, poster, slide presentation, graphic narrative etc.) on a topic of your choosing that you feel could have been covered in the course but wasn't. Video/audio submissions must include a transcript.

Academic Rights and Responsibilities

Institutional Statements and Policies

All students should familiarize themselves with Western's current [Academic Rights and Responsibilities](#) policies in the Academic Calendar. Such items include accommodations for students with disabilities, religious holidays, academic considerations, academic appeals, plagiarism and scholastic offences, and code of student conduct.

Statement on the Use of Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI)

Within this course, students are permitted to use AI tools (with appropriate citation) exclusively for information gathering and preliminary research purposes. These tools are intended to enhance the learning experience by providing access to diverse information sources. However, it is essential that students critically evaluate the obtained information, exercise independent thinking, and engage in original research to synthesize and develop their own ideas, arguments, and perspectives. The use of AI tools can serve as a starting point for exploring a topic, with students expected to uphold academic integrity by appropriately attributing all sources of information and avoiding plagiarism. Assignments should reflect the student's own thoughts and independent written work. Students should also generate their own figures (e.g., graphs, diagrams) rather than using AI generated ones. By adhering to these guidelines, students contribute to a responsible and effective learning environment that promotes critical thinking, independent inquiry and allows them to produce original written contributions. The same principles also apply to the use of translation software to support the writing of essays and other written assessments.

Statement on Academic Offences

Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, in the [Scholastic Offenses policy](#).

All required written work 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. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between Western University and [Turnitin.com](#).

Computer-marked multiple-choice texts 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.

Statement on Plagiarism

Students must write their assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea from another author or AI, they must acknowledge this both by using quotation marks where appropriate and by proper referencing. It is also a scholastic offence to submit the same work for credit in more than one course. **Plagiarism is a major scholastic offence.** See [Academic Rights and Responsibilities](#) for more details on the penalties for plagiarism. All students are expected to uphold academic integrity by appropriately attributing all sources of information and avoiding plagiarism. Writing assignments should reflect the student's own thoughts and independent written work. All assignments will be evaluated using TurnItIn in the Assignments portal (video/audio submissions must include a transcript). **All assignments are required to have a TurnItIn score below 15%. assignments with higher than a 15% score will be returned ungraded.**

Support Services

For student support services please see the [Office of the Registrar](#) and [Student Support Services](#).

Statement on Gender-Based and Sexual Violence

Western is committed to reducing incidents of gender-based and 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 on the [GBSV survivor support webpage](#).

To connect with a case manager or set up an appointment, please contact support@uwo.ca.

Accessible Education: Students with disabilities work with the Accessible Education office which provides recommendations for accommodation based on medical documentation or psychological and cognitive testing. Please see [Accessible Education](#) for information.

Accommodation for Religious Holidays: Students should review the policy for [Accommodation for Religious Holidays](#). Where a student will be unable to write examinations and term tests due to a conflicting religious holiday, they should inform their instructors as soon as possible but not later than two weeks prior to writing the examination/term test. In the case of conflict with a midterm test, students should inform their instructor as soon as possible but not later than one week prior to the midterm.

~ End ~