

Women and Gender Studies 234: Feminist Disability Studies

Professor Brady James Forrest
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Second Main Session, July 7-August 8
Monday-Thursday, 3:15-5:10pm
ICC 234

Course Description

This course aims to introduce students to the interdisciplinary field of Feminist Disability Studies through autobiographies and contemporary writings in the field. The main objective of the course is to offer students the opportunity to learn and enhance critical approaches to the world around them while gaining a better understanding and proficiency in feminist studies, disability studies, critical race studies, and queer theory. In reading theoretical texts alongside a wide range of primary sources students will be able to better understand and engage with current debates within the field of Feminist Disability Studies as well as rethink current mainstream civil rights and public policy issues. The class aims to interrogate the way power and privilege are structurally created and reinforced as well as how they impact the lived experiences of minoritized people.

Learning Goals

Students will:

1. Be able to identify the larger fields of women and gender studies, queer theory, critical race theory, and disability studies that inform and constitute feminist disability studies.
2. Improve critical reading skills across different genres and forms.
3. Improve writing skills through sustained in class writing and workshops
4. Learn about and better understand minoritized communities while engaging in critical discussions with peers.

Office hours and Emails

My office hours are in ICC 456 on _____ at ___:___pm and by appointment. Office hours are a chance for you to get help on assignments or readings; go over materials covered in class; and ask any class related questions. Office hours are generally student directed. I *strongly* encourage you to take advantage of office hours.

I tend to not check emails after 8pm or over the weekend. Before emailing please be sure to **double check the syllabus**. I encourage you to ask simple questions over email. If a question requires more than a few sentences response then it is probably best to just come to office hours or use that email to schedule a time to meet with me.

Course Requirements

Course Completion: Failing to complete and turn in any one of the course requirements will result in a failing or incomplete grade for the course, incompletes are only given for extenuating circumstances. In the event that our course moves to a Double A grading policy all students will receive at least an A- pending course completion.

Attendance: You are allowed two unexcused absences. Each additional absence lowers your final attendance grade by $\frac{1}{3}$ of a letter grade. An absence is considered excused only after you've spoken to me about the cause for your absence and I have excused it. You will never need to produce a doctor's note to excuse an absence.

Active Participation: This is a discussion based seminar style class so active participation is expected. In class we will cover and clarify the reading, introduce new material, and have discussions about the materials and assignments so your participation is crucial to your success. Everyone learns differently and has different approaches to a classroom setting and it is our collective responsibility to ensure that everyone can engage with the class not only in ways that are comfortable but in ways that push our comfort zone so we can grow as young scholars. If you must miss a class session, it's your responsibility to learn what happened in class and to obtain any of the materials distributed that day. Your presence, the frequency of your participation, the quality of your comments and questions, and any in class work all factor into your participation grade. You should expect to spend four to six hours a week outside of class completing readings, viewings, and other assignments and events. I made this syllabus assuming that you will be reading roughly 20 pages an hour.

Free Writes: We will begin each class with a 10 minute free write on the material of the day. Your free writes are due the Friday of each week. Each week's worth of free writes is worth 5%. You free write might include:

1. A couple words about how you felt while you were reading or viewing the material for the day.
2. List three key terms that you see as central to the materials for the day. Define each in your own worlds.
3. A pair of quotations from the text that are important to the reading and/or that were especially engaging or thought provoking to you with a brief explanation (a sentence or two) of why you chose them.

Response Paper: You will write two 4 page response papers that summarizes and attends to the content for the week. The response is your time to identify tensions within the materials to offer a reading of primary source material using the secondary source materials. Each response paper must engage with 1 primary source and 2 secondary sources. Each paper is worth 25%.

Grade Rubric: The following is a general rubric for how I evaluate **all graded** assignments.

- An A—Exquisite work that is nuanced and takes risks. Makes a clear, supported argument that goes beyond the obvious to make unexpected connections. Challenges the reader to see the topic differently. Obviously required great effort and thought on the part of the student. “A” grades are earned, not freely given.
- A B—Well-written and/or argued work that demonstrates a clear understanding of the material and thoughtful analysis. May struggle with one of the following: organization/structure, supporting evidence, and generalizations. Demonstrates potential for growth and significant effort.
- A C—Fulfills the basic requirements of a given assignment, but does not exceed them. Makes an argument, supported by evidence, but not a particularly nuanced one. Writing is adequate but not elegant. Bare minimum of effort.
- A D—Fails to meet the full requirements of the assignment (including page length). Makes an unconvincing and/or unsupported argument. Draws on generalizations and opinions.
- An F—Unacceptable, incoherent, or otherwise incomplete.

Grade Breakdown

Free Write	25%
Response Paper	50%
Participation	25%

Final Grade Rubric

A+ 97-100%	B+ 87-89%	C+ 77-79%	D+ 67-69%	F <59%
A 93-96%	B 83-86%	C 73-76%	D 63-66%	
A- 90-92	B- 80-82	C-70-72%	D- 60-62%	

Course Schedule

Note: This schedule is subject to change during the course of the semester.

Week 1

Monday, July 7, 2025

Syllabus Day

Tuesday, July 8, 2025

Crip Camp, James Lebrecht, Nicole Newnham

Wednesday, July 9, 2025

NYT: "Becoming Disabled," Rosemarie Garland-Thomson

Thursday, July 10, 2025

"Towards a Feminist Theory of Disability," Susan Wendell

Week 2

Monday, July 14, 2025

An Unquiet Mind, Kay Redfield Jamison

Tuesday, July 15, 2025

"Feminist Disability Studies" Rosemarie Garland Thomson

Wednesday, July 16, 2025

"A Mad Fight," Bradley Lewis

Thursday, July 17, 2025

An Unquiet Mind, Kay Redfield Jamison

Due: Response Paper 2

Week 3

Monday, July 21, 2025

The Cancer Journal, Audre Lorde

Tuesday, July 22, 2025

"Age, Race, Class and Sex: Women Redefining Difference," Audre Lorde

Wednesday, July 23, 2025

"Uses of the Erotic," Audre Lorde

Thursday, July 24, 2025

The Cancer Journal, Audre Lorde

Week 4

Monday, July 28, 2025

Sight Unseen, Georgina Kleege

Tuesday, July 29, 2025

“Feeling Her Way,” Sarah E. Chinn

Wednesday, July 30, 2025

Sight Unseen, Georgina Kleege

Thursday, July 31, 2025

Sight Unseen, Georgina Kleege

Week 5

Monday, August 4, 2025

Patrice, Ted Passon

Tuesday, August 5, 2025

“The Bodymind Problem and the Possibility of Pain,” Margaret Price

Wednesday, August 6, 2025

Patrice, Ted Passon

Thursday, August 7, 2025

Class Reflection

Due: Response Paper 2

Additional Course Information

Classroom Community: The subjects covered in this class are diverse and may cause a wide range of reactions from you or your peers. As young scholars it is our responsibility to respect people’s emotional and intellectual reactions to material, create and maintain a space for rigorous proactive discussion on the material, and learn from one another. We should strive to be curious and generous.

Some of the texts presented in this course are explicit in their treatment of sex, of bodies, of violence. If you are not inclined to work with explicit material I encourage you to find a course that is a better fit.

Academic Integrity: Not crediting your sources properly is a serious matter. If you plagiarize, you will (at the very least) fail the course. See the Georgetown Honor System website for

guidelines about what constitutes plagiarism and how to avoid it:
<http://gervaseprograms.georgetown.edu/honor/system/53377.html>.

Any and all use of Large Language Model programs (commonly called “AI”) is plagiarism. AI is often inaccurate and will fabricate language to approximate real thought. It is not thinking, it is a very advanced group of monkeys using typewriters at unimaginable speeds. You have no clue how AI arrives at anything it produces because it can’t think and its “learning” is effectively a black box. Companies have engaged in highly unethical conduct to train their models that violate intellectual property and basic rules governing “free use.” These companies often fed written or artistic work into their models without the consent of those who created it. As it currently exists AI rapidly consumes natural resources, including water, at a time where unchecked climate change is causing unparalleled disasters around the world. Using AI cuts off opportunities for you to practice and improve critical thinking skills which is something AI can never replace.

Note that in all matters I expect you to observe the Georgetown honor pledge: *To be honest in every academic endeavor, and to conduct myself honorably, as a responsible member of the Georgetown community as we live and work together.*

Access: Everyone learns best differently and our bodily needs are not all the same. You do not need permission to leave the class to ensure your bodily needs are met. If you have any access needs please let me know as soon as possible so I can ensure your success. I am not always able to give trigger/content warnings given the wide breadth of potentially triggering content the class covers. If there is something I should know that would ensure you are able to engage with any given class or topic please let me know. If anything changes during the semester that impacts your ability to engage and learn please let me know if you are comfortable doing so.

Accommodations: If you have a documented disability and need accommodations please let me know as soon as possible so you can receive adequate accommodations. If you have an undocumented disability that you think may impact your ability to fully engage with the course but are unaware of how to get documentation or are wary or opposed to documentation please also let me know. More information can be found at the Academic Resource Center (<https://academicsupport.georgetown.edu/disability>) or (<http://guarc.georgetown.edu/disability/accommodations>).

DC Abortion Guide: Abortion is still legal in DC. If you or someone that you know needs access to abortion or contraception care, this [guide](#) provides an overview of services (and their cost) available in the district. This guide does not provide legal or medical advice. The purpose of this guide is to provide information about abortion and resources for accessing abortion care for all birthing people and their allies in the Georgetown community.

Due Dates: All assignments and readings are due on the date listed in the syllabus. Late discussion posts are not accepted except under extenuating circumstances and with approval. All other written assignments have a 3 day grace period after the due date. If you find yourself in need of more time beyond that please email me before the original due date and provide a new realistic due date for yourself. You do not need to explain why you need the extension. Your health and your personal life are yours to manage, and you should never feel obligated to divulge details of either to rationalize an extension.

Sexual Health: If you are in need of medical/health services DC has a number of organizations that offer free or less expensive care. Whiteman Walker is one DC organization that services members of the queer and trans communities across a range of health needs. You can learn more about what they provide on their website: <https://www.whitman-walker.org/about/>.

Title IX: Please know that while I am a faculty member who is committed to supporting survivors of sexual misconduct, including relationship violence and sexual assault, please keep in mind that **I am a mandated reporter** which means that university policy requires me to report any disclosures about sexual misconduct to the Title IX Coordinator, whose role is to coordinate the University's response to sexual misconduct. Georgetown has a number of fully confidential professional resources who can provide support and assistance to survivors of sexual assault and other forms of sexual misconduct.

More information about campus resources and reporting sexual misconduct can be found at <https://titleix.georgetown.edu/>.

Writing Center: Writing can be difficult but approaching it as a process rather than a single event will make it easier and more rewarding. I encourage you to visit the Writing Center (217 Lauinger) and talk with one of the Center's trained tutors. While you will always be solely responsible for class writing you submit in this class and while the Center's tutors won't do your work for you, tutors can talk you through any stage of your writing process, from brainstorming a thesis and organizing your thoughts to revising, editing and proofreading. To set up an appointment, visit <http://writingcenter.georgetown.edu>.

Written work: All written work should be 12-point Times New Roman font, double-spaced, with 1 inch margins, and follow Chicago Style Citations. It must bear your name, course number, and date and have a title (no cover page needed).