

Disability Theologies from Interreligious Perspectives

RELS 3436 / CAST 3125 / CORE 3781

This course engages the Catholic Intellectual Traditions (CIT) in conversation with the study of religion, comparative theology, and the interdisciplinary field of critical disability studies. From CIT, the course engages Biblical texts, Catholic Social Teaching (CST), and Christian theological discourses concerning disability, including the discipline of disability theology (a contextual and liberation theology). CIT is critically and constructively compared with other religious traditions—Jewish, Islamic, Indigenous, Hindu, Buddhist—and their intellectual, spiritual, and theological discourses. All these traditions and their comparisons are likewise studied through the lens of critical disability studies and disability justice movements. The goal is for students to leave with an appreciation for how Catholic theology in comparison can provide critical insights into the field of disability studies and how critical disability studies may challenge some aspects of the Catholic theological tradition, sharpening its conclusions for the better.

Axel M. Oaks Takacs

MW

9:30–10:45AM

Room: Fahy 102



The content of the syllabus is available as individual pages in the first module on Canvas.

It is designed to be universally accessible.

Canvas

This class relies heavily on the learning management system, Canvas. All of your daily readings, assignments, submissions, and due dates will be found on Canvas.

Readings that are not found in the required books will be made available as PDFs on Canvas, as well as links to videos and podcasts.

The course will be Modules-driven, that is, your daily assigned materials will be found on the Modules page within their respective modules. Think of Modules like a "Unit" of the course.

The only assignments that are <u>not</u> found within Modules are the Creative Art Assignment, the Comparative, Thesis-Driven Essay, and the Final Project.



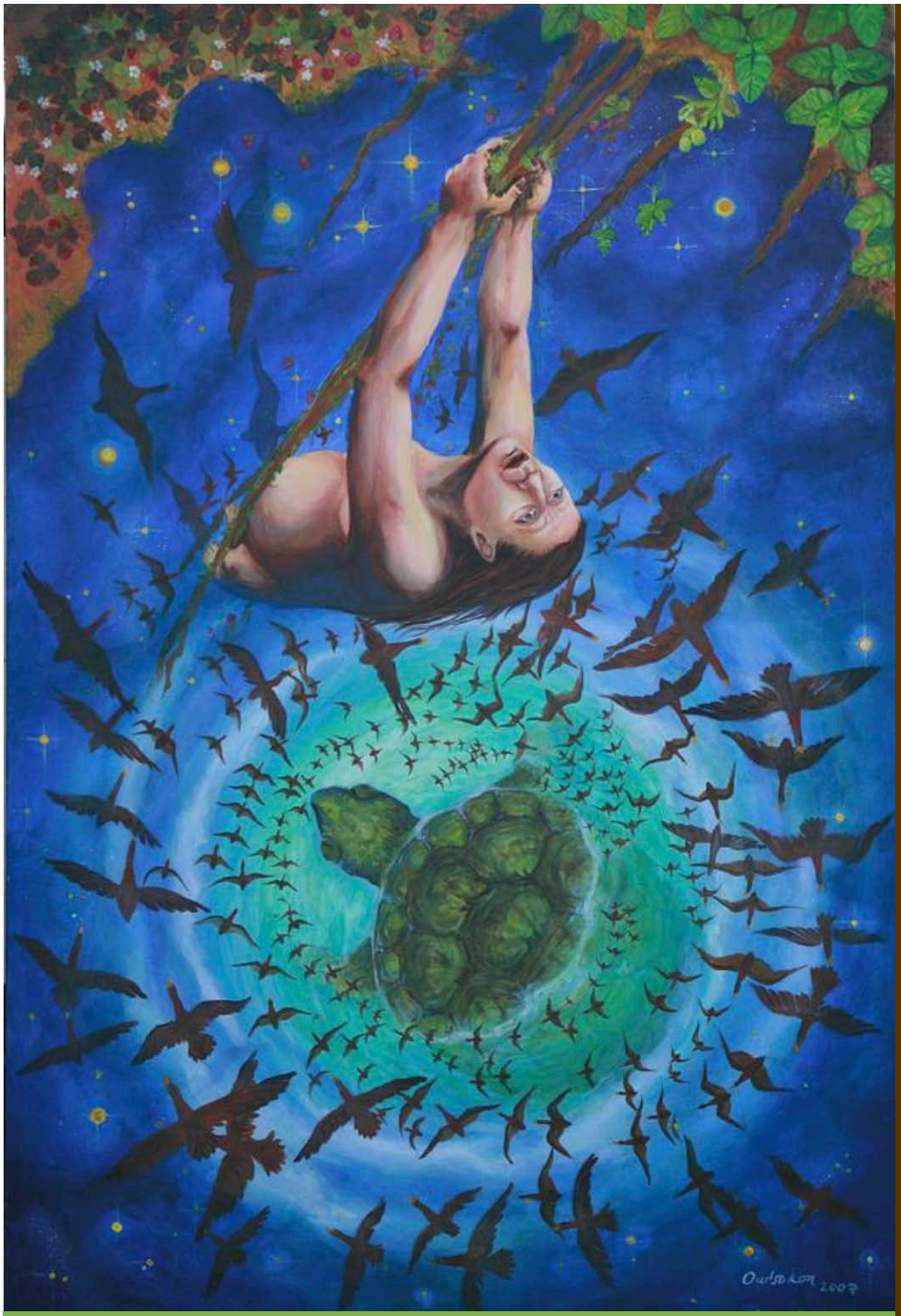
Mai, by Malvika Raj, a portrait of Savitribai Phule, one of the pioneers of modern education in India. Raj is a Dalit, Indian artist whose art is shaped by her experiences with caste-based discrimination in India. She employs traditional techniques to express themes relating to Dalit identity and the Buddhist religion

about this land

Seton Hall is located on Lenapehoking, the unceded and ancestral lands of the Munsee Lenape, indigenous peoples of Turtle Island, what is now called the USA (NJ).

about the professor

dr takacs is a scholar of classical & post-classical islamic intellectual & poetic traditions, interreligious studies, and a catholic comparative theologian



by Owisokon Lahache,
a practicing Iroquois artist (Mohawk, Turtle Clan)

How do I contact dr takacs?

email
takacsax@shu.edu

office
Fahy Hall 328

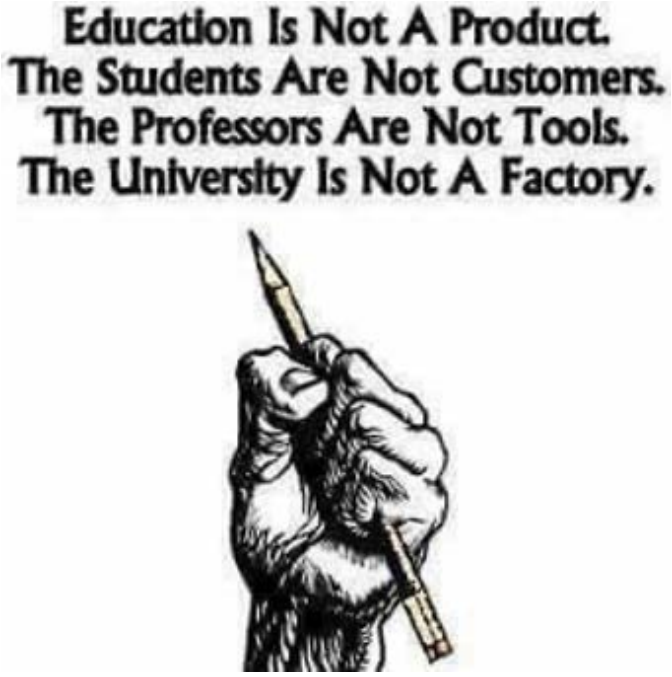
office hours

Monday
through
Friday

by appointment

see booking calendar for all availability

http://tinyurl.com/MeetWithTakacs





Literacy, Intelligence, and Proficiency

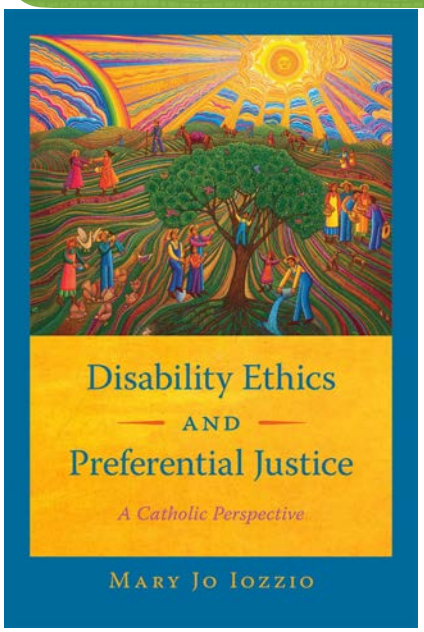
This class cultivates interreligious literacy, intelligence, and proficiency (see Christine Hong, *Decolonial Futures* [2021]). We will not "master" or "become competent" in disability justice, disability studies, religion, or theology.

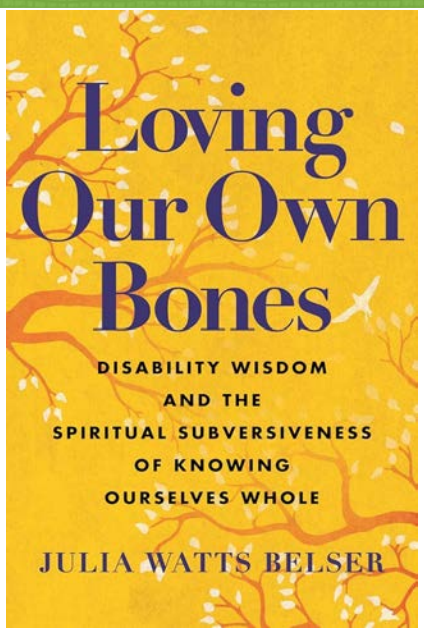
Interreligious Literacy provides students with the basic building blocks for understanding inter- and intra-religious **diversity**. It enables us to identify and explain various religious and interreligious histories, contexts, traditions, theologies, practices, ethics, and values. It **comprehends the present in light of the past**.

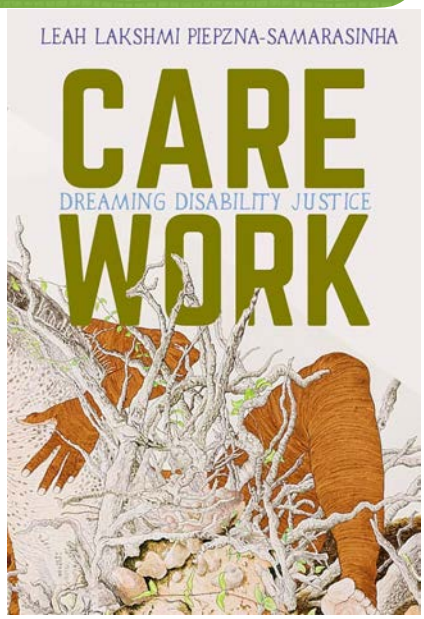
Interreligious intelligence is the intellectual, social, and imaginative capacity to apply interreligious literacy to various contexts in one's future. It enables us to employ interreligious knowledge in making judgments about the best course of action in any given diverse context. It is not neutral but grounded in **justice-oriented critical thinking** that seeks to construct a world in which religious pluralism and diversity is affirmed. It **imagines a future yet unknown**.

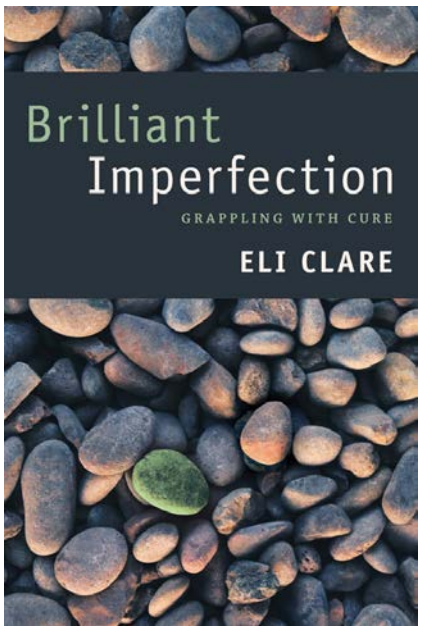
Interreligious proficiency is the practice of executing those judgments in the real world. Students develop **habits of mind**, **inquiry**, and **action** that shape how they relate to self and others in the context of a religiously diverse world. It is the **embodied practice** of interreligious intelligence and **constructs a future to be known.**

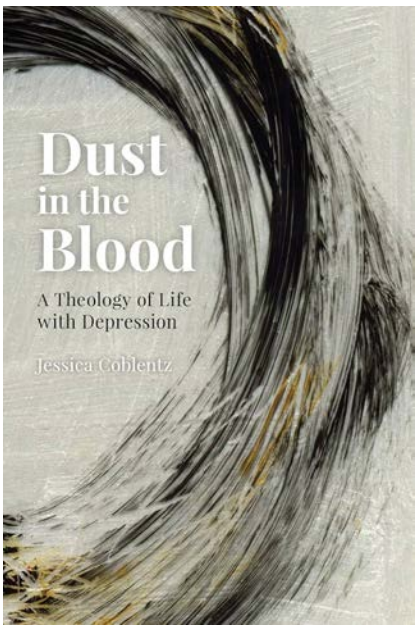
required books

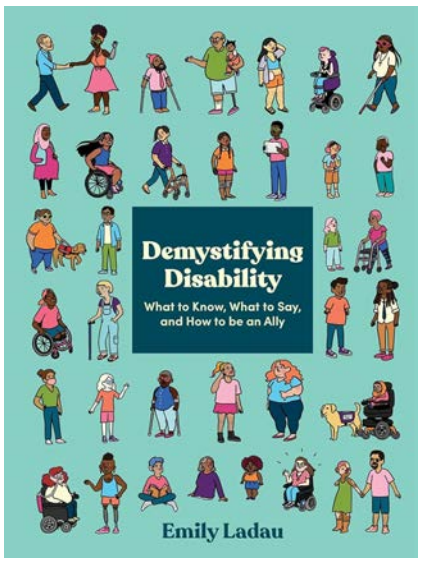








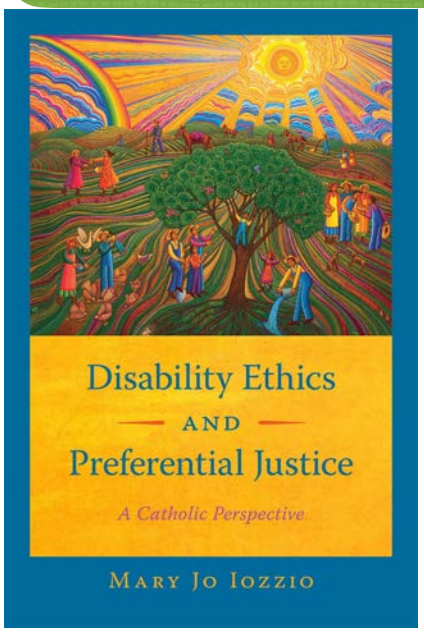


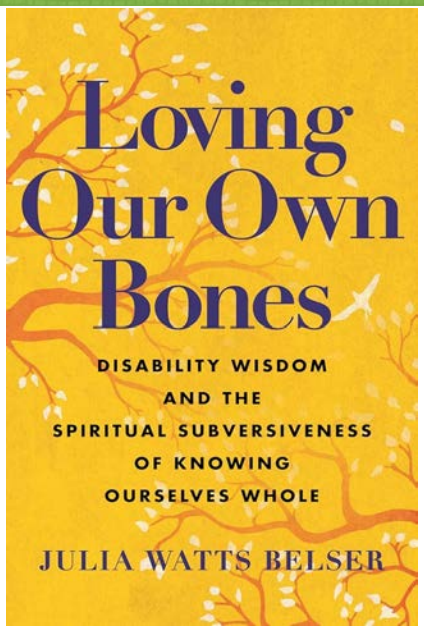


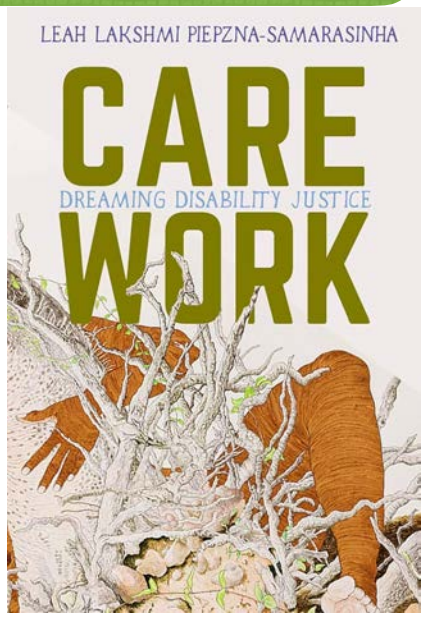
- *Disability Ethics and Preferential Justice: A Catholic Perspective*, by Mary Jo Iozzio (Georgetown University Press, 2023)
- *Loving Our Own Bones: Disability Wisdom and the Spiritual Subversiveness of Knowing Ourselves Whole*, by Julia Watts Belser (Beacon Press, 2023)
- *Care Work: Dreaming Disability Justice*, by Leah Lakshmi Piepzna-Samarasinha (Arsenal Pulp Press, 2018)
- *Brilliant Imperfection: Grappling with Cure*, by Eli Clare (Duke University Press, 2017)
- *Dust in the Blood: A Theology of Life with Depression*, by Jessica Coblentz (Liturgical Press, 2022)
- *Demystifying Disability*, by Emily Landau (Ten Speed Press, 2021)

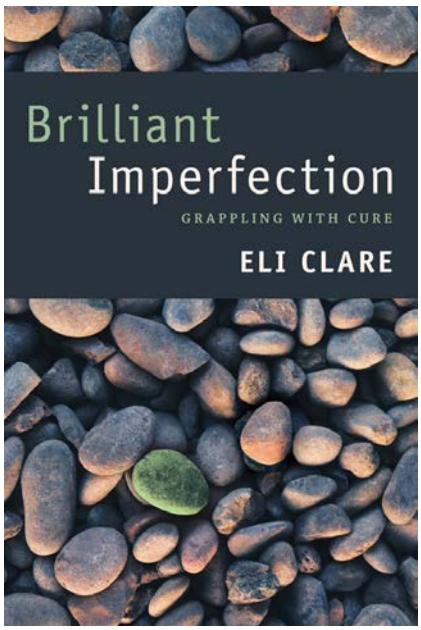
Other readings, videos, or podcasts will be made available as PDFs, links, or some other digital format on Canvas.

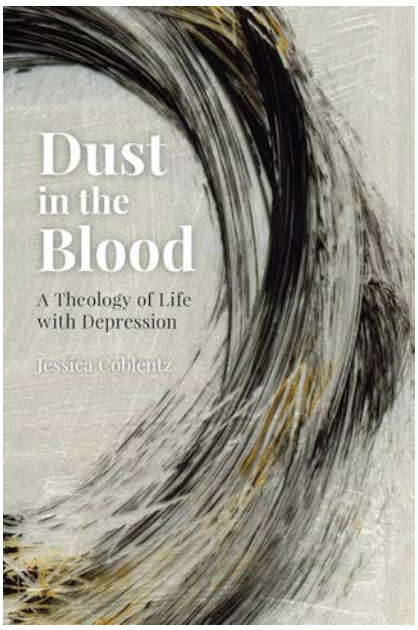
required books

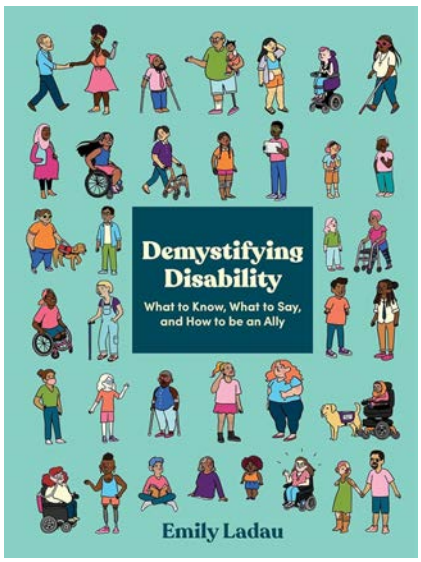












Purchasing all these books NEW from Amazon will cost about $110.
Purchasing all these books USED from Amazon will cost between $50-80.

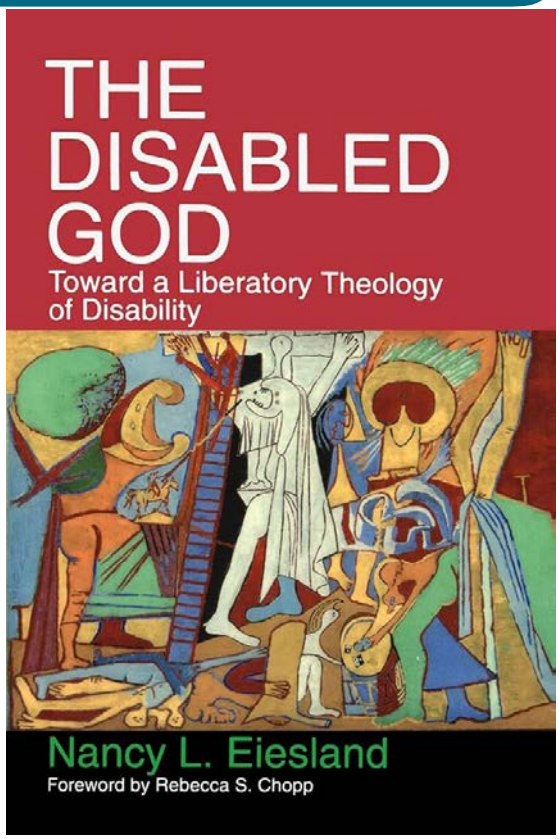
We will be reading these books cover-to-cover or *nearly* cover-to-cover and this is why you need to have in your possession a physical copy of these books in class.

I encourage you to explore **www.campusbooks.com**, which allows you to buy or rent these for cheap. You can also find these books via our library's **EZ Borrow** or **Interlibrary Loan** (ask me how!).

Finally, if for some reason the cost is prohibitive, then please contact me ASAP and we will figure something out. Financial hardship should not be a reason for not having access to these books.

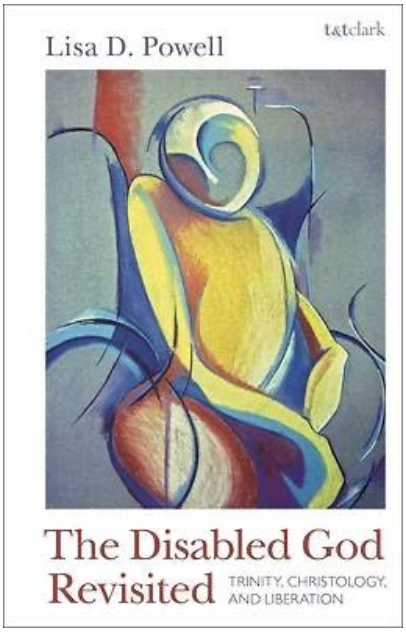
What are we doing?

- Syllabus Quiz, Pre-Class and Post-Class assessment (5%)
- In-Class Attendance, Participation, Engagement (15%)
- Pre-Class Discussion Posts (15%)
- Creative Art Assignment (15%)
- Comparative, Thesis-Driven Essay (25%)
- Final Project (25%)



What are the goals?

- Become familiar with critical disability studies
- Understand and compare models of disability
- Examine and Comprehend Jewish and Christian Disability Theologies in comparison and how they shaped Catholic Social Teaching regarding disability ethics and Catholic disability theology
- Examine and Comprehend Other Religious Approaches to Disability in Comparison
- Recognize and understand how disability is a justice issue. Like any structure of oppression, ableism shapes attitudes, beliefs, norms, and systems that disproportionately impacts disabled members of society
- Apply Disability Theologies from Interreligious Perspectives to your own professional goals or disciplinary major







What are the objectives?

- Students will be able to recognize and become proficient in key terms and ideas from critical disability studies, including concepts such as ableism, accessibility and inclusion, impairment, neurodiversity, intersectionality, universal design, disability justice, and crip theory. Students will be able to apply these ideas across various course materials.
- Students will be able to explain the differences between medical models and social models of disability and demonstrate how their application shapes attitudes, structures, and practices
- Students will explore Christian and Jewish disability theologies and be able to explain how they complement, overlap, contradict, and/or challenge views from disability studies and disability justice movements.
- Students will be able to explain the Biblical sources of Catholic Social Teaching and Catholic Disability Theology
- Students will encounter and be able to explain various Indigenous, Islamic, Hindu, Buddhist, and secular approaches to disability and be able to compare them with each other and with Christian and Jewish approaches in the larger context of the Catholic Intellectual Tradition.
- Through comparative theology, students will draw from other religious approaches to disability in order to determine how they may intensify, rectify, recover, reinterpret, be appropriated by, reaffirm, and/or critically challenge the Catholic Intellectual Tradition in pursuit of disability justice
- Students will explore disability theology and justice through the lens of contextual and liberation theologies. They will be able to explain how ableism is a social/structural sin in the context of Catholic social teaching and compare it with analogous concepts in other religious and secular traditions and movements
- Students will be able to express, employ, and apply the interdisciplinary knowledge from this class to concrete cases from their chosen professional field of interest and career path





Humanities courses are not merely about names, places, and dates, they are about **critical thinking and the conceptualization of ideas**. Most importantly, humanities courses train an individual to **entertain an idea other than one's own**. They exercise the **imagination** in an attempt to enter into the ways in which **various human cultures** from different times and places have understood **what it means to be human**. Additionally, humanities classes explore questions of **power, inequality, inequity, justice, truth, beauty, goodness, and human flourishing**.

philosophy, religion, history, literature, theology, arts, anthropology, culture, gender, languages, justice, truth, beauty, imagination, ethics

late policy

if you want feedback, then assignments need to be submitted w/in 48 hours of due date. No penalty up to 10 days late, after which highest possible grade is 70%

be a luddite

cell phones prohibited
laptops prohibited
take notes by hand
hold a physical book
gaze into the eyes of your neighbor
technology will always be with us, let's take a break from it in this classroom (aside from digital images, video, podcasts, digital readings, etc.)

DSS

If you have a documented disability you may be eligible for reasonable accommodations in compliance with University policy, the Americans with Disabilities Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, and/or the New Jersey Law against Discrimination. To request accommodations or assistance, please self-identify with the Office for Disability Support Services (DSS), Duffy Hall, Room 67 at the beginning of the semester. For more information or to register for services, contact DSS at (973) 313-6003 or by e-mail at DSS@shu.edu.

just don't cheat

Cheating of any kind, but plagiarism in particular, destroys trust, disrespects the learning process, and mocks genuine intellectual engagement. The Department of Religion considers all cheating and plagiarism serious breaches of academic integrity, including use of ChatGPT and other AI text-generation systems.

If you cheat, you will be required to resubmit the work for 70% credit. In addition, you will write a 4-page reflective essay explaining why you cheated, what you could have done instead, and what strategies you will employ in the future to choose not to cheat.

Do you feel the need to cheat?



email me instead and let's work together to figure out why!



AI

For a Student Who Used AI to Write [or Read] a Paper
by Joseph Fasano

Now I let it fall back in the grasses.

I hear you. I know this life is hard now.

I know your days are
precious on this earth.

But what are you trying to be free of?

The living? The miraculous task of it?

Love is for the ones who love the work.

—

AI is prohibited in any and all aspects of this course—from reading to writing to creative art and other assignments and assessments.

grading scale

A	93-100	C	< 78
A-	< 93	C-	< 73
B+	< 90	D+	< 70
B	< 88	D	< 67
B-	< 83	F	< 60
C+	< 80		

health & wellness

Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) offers a wide range of therapeutic services designed to foster the psychological health and well-being of our students in order help them to thrive, develop, and achieve academic and personal success.

Students seeking services may call us at (973) 761-9500 to schedule an appointment during regular business hours, M-F, 8:45 a.m.-4:45 p.m.

CAPS is located on the second floor of Mooney Hall, Room 27. Mooney Hall is not an accessible building. We offer telehealth and/or can make arrangements to meet with you in an accessible and private location on campus.

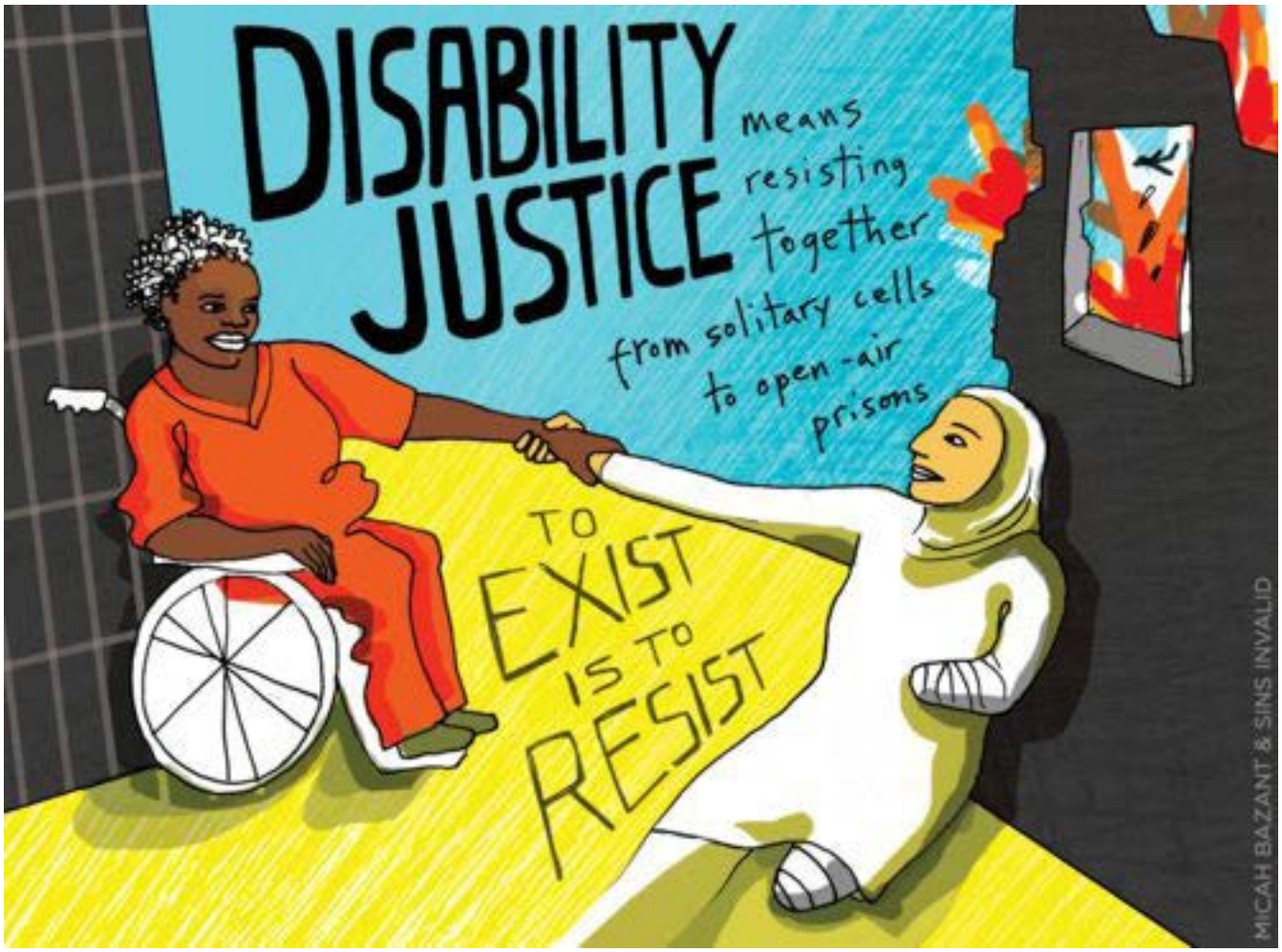
Students with an urgent need to speak with a counselor may contact the **SHU 24/7 Mental Health Crisis Hotline at 973-275-Help (4357).** This service is available 24 hours a day/7 days a week.

After Hours:
After Hours and on weekends, students experiencing a psychological **emergency** should call **CAPS at 973-761-9500** or the **SHU 24/7 Mental Health Crisis Hotline at 973-275-Help (4357)** to speak with a trained mental health counselor.

communication

My preferred communication method is via Canvas's messaging/email system. I will respond to students' messages sent M-F within 24 hours. I will respond to students' messages sent on the weekends within 48 hours. I will send occasional email updates regarding upcoming course assignments and materials.

You may also email me at takacsax@shu.edu, however you **must include the full course a with letters, e.g., RELS 3436 or Disability Theologies, in the subject or body of the email; if you do not, there will be significant delay in responding.**



Artwork by
Sins Invalid and Micah Bazant

UNDOCUALLY

DIVERSE
INCLUSIVE
ACCEPTING
WELCOMING
SAFE SPACE
FOR EVERYONE



"Another World IS Possible," by Ricardo Levins Morales

Whatever your race, (ir)religion, sexual orientation, ethnicity, gender identity or expression, trauma-informed knowledge and experience, neurology, country of origin, native language, immigration status, English-speaking capacities, socioeconomic status, dis/abilities—you, your views, your knowledge, and your experiences are valued and affirmed.

-alternative assignments and assessments are always possible-



inclusive learning environment

“Don’t talk about money, religion, sex, or politics.”

In humanities classes we often talk about all these things, in addition to race, gender, ethnicity, disability, and sexuality, in various ways. That being the case, in this course all viewpoints are welcomed from all students, no matter your race, religion, sexual orientation, disability, ethnicity, gender, country of origin, native language, immigration status, political party, or socioeconomic status.

Difference: However, as we’ll learn, our reception, perception, and conception of the world are all shaped by our experiences, histories, and identities. How a Muslim, heterosexual woman of color experiences and interprets the world in New Jersey is different from how a Christian, queer, disabled Asian man experiences and interprets the world in Toronto, both of whom are different from how an atheist, heterosexual white man experiences and interprets the world in Lima, Peru.

Sameness: And yet, **we are all human**.

An inclusive learning environment does not only mean being open to challenges from other viewpoints, being receptive to critique, and being civil in our discussion; it also means recognizing that some positions may more negatively impact one community over another in a disproportionate way.

A good first step is always to challenge ideas and positions rather than persons. However, it also means recognizing that some ideas and positions are inextricably bound to the embodied experiences of persons.

Discussion, debate, and conversation are messy; but we’ll all deal with its messiness together, humbly and with compassionate understanding.

We must recognize that no one is perfect and we all make mistakes that may offend someone when discussing religion, politics, and culture—even your professor!

But as a learning community, this is a space for growing and not for shaming or shutting people down.

inclusive learning environment

Adapted from Columbia Center for Teaching and Learning

- Allow everyone a chance to speak
- Listen respectfully and actively
- Criticize ideas, not individuals
- Commit to learning, not debating
- Avoid blame, speculation, inflammatory language
- Avoid assumptions about others, especially based on their perceived social group
- Be careful about putting other participants on the spot. *Do not demand that others speak for a group that you perceive them to represent*.

- Some sample statements:
    - It seems like what you're saying is…
    - "I wonder if…
    - "I think that…"
    - "How did you come to that position…"
    - "Given your position, it follows that…Is that what you intended?"
    - "I don't get it. Can you help me understand what you're saying…"

- Be comfortable with silence, quiet reflection
- Do not interrupt or engage in private conversations while others are speaking
- Raise your hand
- What is shared in the classroom or small-group discussion is confidential. Trust is key. Keep confidential any personal information that comes up in the conversation.

Listening

- Listen carefully and respectfully, without interrupting.
- Be aware that tone and body language are powerful communicators. Show respectful listening by facing and looking at the speaker, making eye contact, staying quiet, nodding, etc.

inclusive learning environment

Speaking

- Share briefly from your own experiences.
- Use "I" statements to state your views.
- Build on others' comments. Acknowledge them, even if you disagree.
- Be careful not to generalize about people and/or experiences.

Be Courageous

- If you think something is missing from the conversation, do not wait for someone else to say it; say it yourself.
- If you find another's statement to be problematic, do speak up.
- Try not to silence yourself out of concern for what others will think about what you say.



"Giving Birth in a Prison Cell" (2022, oil on canvas), by MALAK MATTAR

Assignment and Assessment Details

Monday and Wednesday Attendance, Participation, and Engagement (15%)

Attendance: 29 points
Participation and Engagement: 7 points
Total: 36 points (weighted at 15% of your final course grade)

This class meets 29 times. If you show up to all the classes, you get 29/29 attendance points. Every class you miss, you lose a point. **Excused absences require documentation or a conversation with the professor (ALWAYS)**.

Excused absences:

- sickness or surgery
- mental health issues
- disability accommodation
- religious observances
- pregnancy-related events
- childcare responsibilities
- family emergencies (caregiving, funerals, etc.)
- volunteering to register voters or volunteering for a political campaign or ballot issue initiative (you are **allowed one absence** on this account)
- voting in local, state, or national elections, or volunteering to assist others to vote

READ CAREFULLY

If you attend all classes but do not participate at all, you would earn a 29/29 and a 0/7, for a total of 29/36 = 80.5%, or a B-
(weighted at 15% of your final course grade).

This class also requires active engagement and participation. The more you participate, the closer to that 7/7 participation points you will get.

How to do this?

1. **Come to class with three questions or comments from the assigned readings, podcast, and/or videos.** Just write down THREE points about the reading that intrigued you, puzzled you, illuminated you, confused you, etc. **DO THIS! I will ask you to share often.**
2. When we break into **small-group discussion**, **participate**.
3. Work on your **active listening skills** (eye contact and/or nodding and/or writing to take notes and/or doodling on a paper and/or fidgets—NOT emailing, NOT social media-ing, NOT texting, NOT dm-ing, etc.)
4. **IMPORTANT:** Students attending class **without the book** from which the assigned reading was taken will be considered **ABSENT**.
5. Raise your hand and ask a question whenever you want about anything. This is open season on “what the hell does this mean” and “I’ve always wondered why” type of questions and “one time, I saw the future in a dream” and “I had a near-death experience” comments.

Syllabus Quiz, Pre-Class and Post-Class Assessment (5%)

You will have to complete a Syllabus Quiz, which is a set of questions the answers to which are all found in the syllabus on Canvas or in this document. You have access to the syllabus while completing the quiz.

You will also have to take a complete/incomplete Pre-Class Assessment and Post-Class assessment. Each question within those assessments does not have a correct or incorrect answer. These assessments are intended to see how your knowledge of the material has changed from before to after the class.

Pre-Class Discussion Posts (15%)

Before every class, each student must submit a discussion post on Canvas that responds to three prompts. You must engage, with citation, the required reading at least once. 4 points = 1 point / question + 1 point for citing. **If you submit these after the due date/time, you will earn 3/4. If you submit them during or after the class meetings, you will earn only 2/4 points.**

Replying to another student's post is not required; however, for extra credit you may do so (1 extra point per substantive reply, that is, not just, "Really good point! I also wrote about that!").

Lowest 3 posts will be dropped

What are two questions or comments you have from the readings or other assigned material?

What do you consider two of the most important points from the readings or other assigned material and why?

Personally, what piece of information do you find the most challenging or insightful? Or, what piece of information made you rethink a previous assumption on the topic? What piece of information shaped how you relate to your own faith, worldview, values, assumptions, or beliefs related to the topic?



Artwork by Lydia X.Z. Brown (they/them)

Creative Art Assignment: Thematic Reflection (15%)

This assignments requires you to select a a **theme, reading,** or **other assigned material** and creatively engage it through your own imagination.

Disability Justice and Disability Theology is imaginative, it is poetic. It imagines a future as yet unknown; it imagines the impossible. This creative assignment encourages you to exercise your imagination on any topic we have covered. You are likewise encouraged to incorporate your own experiences into the artwork.

I urge you to **connect** your **creative engagement** to your own **personal story, identity, or experiences around religion, culture, family, spirituality**, and/or **disability**. You may use any media. **You will display this creative piece on a webpage you create with Adobe Express**.

Any media?

Yes, any media: photography, drawing, poem, comic strip, abstract art, Instagram Reel/TikTok video, short story, collage, and so forth.

Assessment ("but, I'm not artistic")

You will not be graded on your artistic ability (aside from an assessment as to whether you actually spent some time *trying*—that is, don't submit a circle, or a square, or a scribble). **IT MUST BE YOUR OWN WORK**.

You will be **graded on the 250-to-500-word reflection/analysis of your creative work of art**. You must include what reading/podcast/video/ theme you are responding to, and then draw from it to explain your work of art. You must **cite, with quotation marks, twice from two different materials**.



"Nothing about us without us is for us"
Ricardo Levins Morales adaptation of South African Disability Rights and Youth Activist Slogan

Submit Adobe Express URL via Canvas

Comparative, Thesis-Driven Essay (25%)

This assignment requires you to write a **thesis-driven** essay **comparing** two different approaches to disability. They may either be

(1) two different religious traditions in comparison, one of which must be the Catholic or broadly Christian theological approach,
OR
(2) a Catholic or broadly Christian theological approach in comparison with a secular approach to disability justice (i.e., the approaches of *Brilliant Imperfection: Grappling with Cure* or of *Care Work: Dreaming Disability Justice*, or another approach we cover in class that is not explicitly religious/theological.

The essay must advance a thesis that connects the two approaches under comparison. In both options, the Catholic Intellectual Tradition (a Catholic or broadly Christian theological approach) will serve as one of the comparative subjects. The thesis can demonstrate how one approach **intensifies**, **rectifies**, **recovers**, **reinterprets**, **reaffirms**, **complements**, or critically **challenges** and **subverts** some aspect of the other approach, or how the **two together complement each other creatively and constructively.**

Word Count: 1250-2000 words

Citations: Cite at least five times (total), but from two different assigned materials (3+2, 2+4, 1+3+1, 1+2+1+1, etc,)



https://x.com/uboadisappears/status/1370425108855201792/photo/1

Structure: Essays must have an introduction with a thesis statement, a body (minimum four paragraphs), and a concluding paragraph. The essay must offer at least three evidence-/text-based arguments in support of their thesis.

Topic Selection / Thesis Idea Due: TBD
I will respond with feedback within 5 days.

First Draft Due: TBD
I will respond with feedback within 7 days.

Final Draft Due: TBD

Alternative to a writing assignment is possible. Let's discuss what you have in mind!

No outside or additional research beyond the assigned materials in class is permitted.

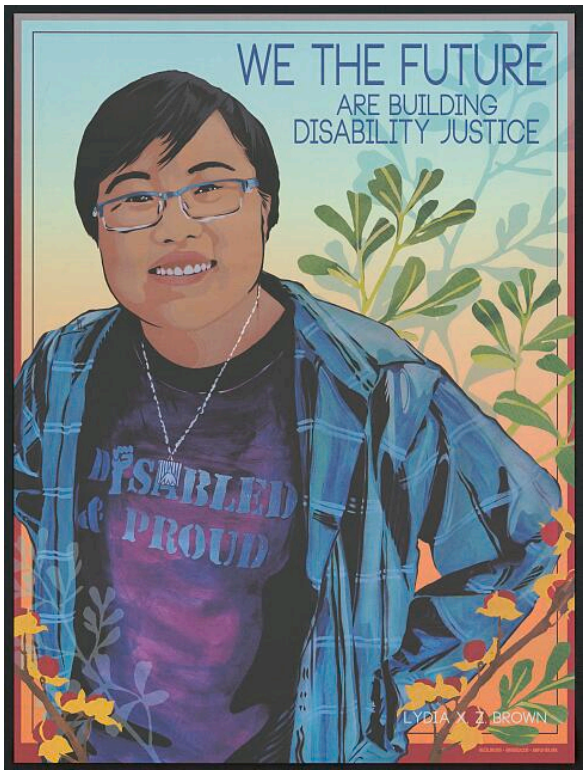
Final Project (25%)

Students will have the option of working with partners (groups of two or three) or working on their own. The following is a non-exhaustive list of possible final projects. Do you have another one in mind? Run it by me! :)

1. **Research Paper**: students interested in pursuing a traditional research paper may certainly do so.
2. **Applied Project**: students may wish to apply what they learned in class to their own professional career goals. It is likely that many students in the class will be in programs pursuing professional careers as an OT, PT, SLP, nurse, medical doctor, social worker, mental health clinician, physician assistant, or early, secondary, or special educator. That being the case, an applied project will invite them to connect the challenging approaches to disability in this class to their own future careers.
3. **Faith-Based Project**: students with a religious commitment may wish to develop a workshop or presentation for their own faith-based place of worship around the issue of disability and disability justice in their own communities.
4. **Digital Project**: students may wish to craft a video explainer on some of the pressing topics we covered in class. This would also require a written analysis and explanation of why and how you went about creating this video based on the sources and material covered in class.
5. **Something else?** Students are encouraged to be creative. Reach out to the professor to discuss possible ideas. These may include community organizing on an issue of disability justice on campus, your hometown, or in South Orange or the towns surrounding Seton Hall, writing an editorial, creating a series of social media posts (TikTok videos, Instagram reels), or lobbying your educational programs to attend more directly and critically to disability justice and the concerns of disability self-advocates in their goals and assessments.
6. **A combination of the above, or something else entirely!**

In addition to a document-based deliverable (paper, presentation, detailed workshop plan, video, etc.), students will display their final project in an accessible way and in summary fashion on an **Adobe Express Website**.

Series of due dates will be updated on Canvas: 1) Type and Idea, 2) First Draft/Summary/Outline, 3) Final Draft



We the Future
Autistic disability rights activist Lydia X. Z. Brown

Schedule of Classes and Assigned Readings

Schedule of Classes | **Unit** | **Assignment Due Date** | **No Class**

Day	Required Readings &/or Assignment
Wednesday 1/14	**In Class:** • First class dedicated to reviewing syllabus, class guidelines and expectations, assessments, course goals and objectives. • In-Class assessment and discussion regarding disability, experience with disability, views of disability, and mainstream religious perspectives on disability from their experience or knowledge.
Monday 1/19 - NO CLASS **The Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day**	
Unit/Module I: Introducing Disability Studies	
Wednesday 1/21 **Unit/Module I.1** Introducing Key Terms and Ideas in Disability Studies I	**Before Class:** • Read "Chapter 1: Disability Basics," in *Disability Ethics and Preferential Justice: A Catholic Perspective*, by Marry Jo Iozzio • "Chapter 1: So, What Is Disability, Anyway," in *Demystifying Disability: What to Know, What to Say, and How to Be an Ally*, by Emily Ladau • "Disability," in *Keywords for Disability Studies*, by Rachel Adams, Benjamin Reiss, David Serlin **In Class:** • Reviewing Keywords: In-class Activity • Watch, "Social Model of Disability," by Shape Arts • Watch, "Social Model of Disability," by WhizzKidzUK
Monday 1/26 **Unit/Module I.2** Introducing Key Terms and Ideas in Disability Studies II	**Before Class:** • Read "Chapter 2: Contributions from the United Nations and the World Health Organization," in *Disability Ethics and Preferential Justice: A Catholic Perspective*, by Marry Jo Iozzio • "Chapter 2: Understanding Disability as Part of a Whole Person," in *Demystifying Disability: What to Know, What to Say, and How to Be an Ally*, by Emily Ladau • "Ability," "Access," and "Normal," in *Keywords for Disability Studies*, by Rachel Adams, Benjamin Reiss, and David Serlin **In Class:** • Watch, "The Social Model of Disability - Autism," Differing Minds

Schedule of Classes and Assigned Readings

Schedule of Classes	Unit	Assignment Info	No Class

Day	Required Readings &/or Assignment
Unit/Module II: Classical or Mainstream Religious Approaches to Disability	
Wednesday 1/28 **Unit/Module II.1** Classical or Mainstream Religious Approaches to Disability I	**Before Class:** • Read "Chapter 4: Carnal Sins," in *The Disabled God: Toward a Liberatory Theology of Disability*, by Nancy Eisland • Read "Buddhism and Disability," in *Disability and World Religions: An Introduction*, edited by Darla Y. Schumm and Michael Stoltzfus • "Hindu Perceptions of Disability," *EP MAGAZINE* **In Class:** • Mapping Classical Religious Models: Disability = Cursed or Exceptional
Monday 2/2 **Unit/Module II.2** Classical or Mainstream Religious Approaches to Disability II	**Before Class:** • Read a pp. 17-29, 52-53 of Chapter 2 and all of Chapter 3 of *Islam and Disability: Perspectives in Theory and Jurisprudence*, by Mohammed Ghaly • "Indigenous Traditions in the Western Hemisphere and Disability," in *Disability and World Religions: An Introduction*, edited by Darla Y. Schumm and Michael Stoltzfus **In Class:** • Mapping Classical Religious Models: Disability = Cursed or Exceptional • Examples from other religious traditions, or other examples from ones we've covered
Unit/Module III: Catholic Disability Theology	
Wednesday 2/4 **Unit/Module III.1** **Catholic Disability Theology I**	**Before Class:** • Read "Chapter 3: Natural Law and the Common Good" in *Disability Ethics and Preferential Justice: A Catholic Perspective*, by Marry Jo Iozzio • Read "Chapter 4: Ableism and Accessibility," in *Demystifying Disability: What to Know, What to Say, and How to Be an Ally*, by Emily Ladau **In Class:** • Exploring individualism, common good, social/structural sin

Schedule of Classes and Assigned Readings

Schedule of Classes | **Unit** | **Assignment Due Date** | **No Class**

Day	Required Readings &/or Assignment
Monday 2/9 **Unit/Module III.2** **Catholic Disability Theology II**	**Before Class:** • Read "Chapter 4: Imago Dei, Theological Anthropology, and Catholic Social Teaching" in *Disability Ethics and Preferential Justice: A Catholic Perspective*, by Marry Jo Iozzio • Welie, J. V. M. (2015). "Persons with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities: Philosophical Reflections on Normalcy, Disability, and the Imago Dei," in *Journal of Religion & Society*. Supplement Series, 12, 13–38. **In Class:** • Exercise: What kind of God do you believe in? —> How does the human reflect this God?
Wednesday 2/11 **Unit/Module III.3** **Catholic Disability Theology III**	**Before Class:** • Read "Chapter 5: A Preferential Justice for Those Who Are Poor or Otherwise Marginalized" and "Conclusion" in *Disability Ethics and Preferential Justice: A Catholic Perspective*, by Marry Jo Iozzio • "Making Space Accessible is an Act of Love for Our Communities," in *Care Work: Dreaming Disability Justice*, by Leah Lakshmi Piepzna-Samarasinha **In Class:** • What is love? Disability Rights vs. Disability Justice • Exploring sections from "Chapter 4: Human Dignity of People with Disabilities: Influence of Physiognomy?," in *Islam and Disability: Perspectives in Theory and Jurisprudence*, by Mohammed Ghaly

Schedule of Classes and Assigned Readings

Schedule of Classes	Unit	Assignment Due Date	No Class

Day	Required Readings &/or Assignment

Monday 2/16
 	
Unit/Module III.4
 	
Catholic Disability Theology IV
	Before Class:
	• Read pp. 1-4 of the "Introduction" and "Chapter 2 - For the Beauty of Glory: Aquinas, Disability, and Resurrection," in *Disability Theology and Eschatology: Hope, Justice, and Flourishing*, ed. by Preston McDaniel Hill and Aaron Brian Davis
	• "Chapter 1: Ideology of Cure," in *Brilliant Imperfection: Grappling With Cure*, by Eli Clare
	In Class:
	• What is eschatology and salvation and what does it have to do with disability justice?
	• We might explore sections of the following:
	  • Kevin Timpe, "Defiant Afterlife: Disability and Uniting Ourselves to God," in Michelle Panchuk, and Michael Rea (eds.), *Voices from the Edge: Centring Marginalized Perspectives in Analytic Theology* (Oxford, 2020)
	  • Other chapters or sections from Part I of *Disability Theology and Eschatology: Hope, Justice, and Flourishing*, ed. by Preston McDaniel Hill and Aaron Brian Davis

Unit/Module IV: Jewish Disability Theology in Comparison	
Wednesday 2/18 **Unit/Module IV.1** **Jewish Disability Theology in Comparison I**	**Before Class:** • Read "Chapter 1: Claiming Disability" and "Chapter 2: Grappling with the Bible: Gender, Disability, and God," and "Chapter 3: Hiddenness and Visibility: Passing and Presenting as Disabled," in *Loving Our Own Bones: Disability Wisdom and the Spiritual Subversiveness of Knowing Ourselves Whole*, by Julia Watts Belser **In Class:** • Shared imaginaries: Jewish, Graeco-Roman, Christianity, Islam • "Religion and Deaf Identity", by Noah Buchholz and Darby Jared Leigh, in *Deaf Identities: Exploring New Frontiers* (ed. by Irene W. Leigh and Catherine A. O'Brien

Schedule of Classes and Assigned Readings

Schedule of Classes | **Unit** | **Assignment Due Date** | **No Class**

Day	Required Readings &/or Assignment
Monday 2/23 **Unit/Module IV.2** **Jewish Disability Theology in Comparison II**	**Before Class:** • Read "Chapter 5: Priestly Blemishes: Talking Back to the Bible's Ideal Bodies," and "Chapter 6: Moses: Portrait of a Disabled Prophet," and "Chapter 7: The Land You Cannot Enter: Longing, Loss, and Other Inaccessible Terrain" in *Loving Our Own Bones: Disability Wisdom and the Spiritual Subversiveness of Knowing Ourselves Whole*, by Julia Watts Belser **In Class:** • Exploring together Marc Shell's "Moses' Tongue," in *Common Knowledge* 12, no. 1 (2006): 150-176. https://muse.jhu.edu/article/191690 • Qur'anic Recitation for those who are deaf and/or with speech disabilities
Wednesday 2/25 **Unit/Module IV.3** **Jewish Disability Theology in Comparison III**	**Before Class:** • Read "Chapter 8: The Perils of Healing," "Chapter 9: Isaac's Blindness: The Complexity of Trust," and "Chapter 10: Jacob and the Angel: Wheels, Wings, and the Brilliance of Disability Difference," in *Loving Our Own Bones: Disability Wisdom and the Spiritual Subversiveness of Knowing Ourselves* Whole, by Julia Watts Belser **In Class:** • Selection of miracles of cure from the Gospels • "I'm Disabled, I'm Muslim, and I Am Not Your Burden," by Noor Pervez

SPRING BREAK

3/2 — 3/6

No Class M 3/2 and W 3/4

Schedule of Classes and Assigned Readings

Schedule of Classes | **Unit** | **Assignment Due Date** | **No Class**

Day	Required Readings &/or Assignment
Monday 3/9 **Unit/Module IV.4** **Jewish Disability Theology in Comparison IV**	**Before Class:** • Read "Chapter 11: The Politics of Beauty: Disability and Desire," "Chapter 12: The Radical Practice of Rest: Shabbat Values and Disability Justice," and "Chapter 13: God on Wheels: Disability Theology," in *Loving Our Own Bones: Disability Wisdom and the Spiritual Subversiveness of Knowing Ourselves Whole*, by Julia Watts Belser **In Class:** • "Moving Toward the Ugly: A Politic Beyond Desirability," by Mia Mingus
Unit/Module V: Disability Justice and the Limits of "Cure"	
Wednesday 3/11 **Unit/Module V.1** **Disability Justice and the Limits of "Cure" I**	**Before Class:** • Read "Chapter 2: Violence of Cure" and "Chapter 3: In Tandem with Cure" in *Brilliant Imperfection: Grappling with Cure*, by Eli Clare • Madeline Jarrett, "Disability, Healing, and the Problem of Miracles: Perils and Possibilities for Disabled Hope," *Concilium* 2024/3: 11-20. **In Class:** • Why everything you know about autism is wrong | Jac den Houting | TEDxMacquarieUniversity, YouTube
Monday 3/16 **Unit/Module V.2** **Disability Justice and the Limits of "Cure" II**	**Before Class:** • Read "Chapter 4: Nuances of Cure" and "Chapter 5: Structure of Cure" and "Chapter 6: How Cure Works" in *Brilliant Imperfection: Grappling with Cure*, by Eli Clare • "Unbalanced Reading: Dis/ability-Critical Approaches to Biblical Healing Narratives Illustrated by Mk 7.31-37," by Markus Schiefer Ferrari in *Concilium* 2020/5: 37-47. **In Class:** • Autistic self-advocacy on ABA (TBD)

Schedule of Classes and Assigned Readings

Schedule of Classes | **Unit** | **Assignment Due Date** | **No Class**

Day	Required Readings &/or Assignment
Wednesday 3/18 **Unit/Module V.3** **Disability Justice and the Limits of "Cure" III**	**Before Class:** • Read "Chapter 8: Moving through Cure" and "Chapter 9: Impacts of Cure" in *Brilliant Imperfection: Grappling with Cure*, by Eli Clare • "Barriers to Access, Ambiguity of Cure: A Comparative Theological and Praxis-Oriented Exploration of Disability through Gospel and Qur'anic Narratives," by Kimberly E. Oaks Takacs and Axel M. Oaks Takacs (FORTHCOMING) **In Class:** • Healing vs. Cure
Monday 3/23 **Unit/Module V.4** **Disability Justice and the Limits of "Cure" IV**	**Before Class:** • Read "Chapter 10: Promises of Cure" in *Brilliant Imperfection: Grappling with Cure*, by Eli Clare • "Indigeneity and Disability: The Teachings of our Ancestors and Being in Relation Towards Harmonious Outcomes," by Sandra Yellowhorse • "The Unselfconscious Ableism of Disability Theory and Theology," by Allison Shely in *Church Life Journal* **In Class:** • To cure or not to cure, that is the question. Or is it?
Unit/Module VI: Disability Futures and Liberation	
Wednesday 3/25 **Unit/Module VI.1** **Disability Futures and Liberation I**	**Before Class:** • Read "Care Webs: Experiments in Creating Collective Access" and "Making Space Accessible is an Act of Love for our Communities " and "Sick and Crazy Healer: A Not-So-Brief Personal History of the Healing Justice Movement," in *Care Work: Dreaming Disability Justice*, by Leah Lakshmi Piepzna-Samarasinha **In Class:** • In Unit/Module VI classes, we will read through sections, from start to finish, of "Chapter 5: Disability and Resurrection," in *The Disabled God Revisited: Trinity, Christology, and Liberation*, by Lisa D. Powell.
Friday 3/27 **Comparative, Thesis-Driven Essay: Topic Selection/Thesis Idea DUE on Canvas**	

Schedule of Classes and Assigned Readings

Schedule of Classes | **Unit** | **Assignment Due Date** | **No Class**

Day	Required Readings &/or Assignment
Monday 3/30 **Unit/Module VI.2** **Disability Futures and Liberation II**	**Before Class:** • Read "Cripping the Apocalypse: Some of My Wild Disability Justice Dreams" and "Prefigurative Politics and Radically Accessible Performance Spaces: Making the World to Come" in *Care Work: Dreaming Disability Justice*, by Leah Lakshmi Piepzna-Samarasinha **In Class:** • In Unit/Module VI classes, we will read through sections, from start to finish, of "Chapter 5: Disability and Resurrection," in *The Disabled God Revisited: Trinity, Christology, and Liberation*, by Lisa D. Powell.
Wednesday 4/1 **Unit/Module VI.3** **Disability Futures and Liberation III**	**Before Class:** • Read "Suicidal Ideation 2.0: Queer Community Leadership and Staying Alive Anyway" and "So Much Time Spent in Bed: A Letter to Gloria Anzaldúa on Chronic Illness, Coatlicue, and Creativity" and "Two or Three Things I Know for Sure bout Femmes and Suicide: A Love Letter" in *Care Work: Dreaming Disability Justice*, by Leah Lakshmi Piepzna-Samarasinha **In Class:** • In Unit/Module VI classes, we will read through sections, from start to finish, of "Chapter 5: Disability and Resurrection," in *The Disabled God Revisited: Trinity, Christology, and Liberation*, by Lisa D. Powell.

EASTER MONDAY

4/6

No class

Schedule of Classes and Assigned Readings

Schedule of Classes | **Unit** | **Assignment Due Date** | **No Class**

Day	Required Readings &/or Assignment
Wednesday 4/8 **Unit/Module VI.4** **Disability Futures and Liberation IV**	**Before Class:** • Read "For Badass Disability Justice, Working-Class and Poor-Led Models of Sustainable Hustling for Liberation" and "Protect Your Heart: Femme Leadership and Hyper-Accountability" and "Not Over It, Not Fixed, and Living a Life Worth Living: Towards an Anti-Ableist Vision of Survivorhood" in *Care Work: Dreaming Disability Justice*, by Leah Lakshmi Piepzna-Samarasinha **In Class:** • In Unit/Module VI classes, we will read through sections, from start to finish, of "Chapter 5: Disability and Resurrection," in *The Disabled God Revisited: Trinity, Christology, and Liberation*, by Lisa D. Powell.
Friday 4/10 **Comparative, Thesis-Driven Essay: First Draft DUE on Canvas (details in Canvas)**	
Unit/Module VII: Theology and Mental Health	
Monday 4/13 **Module VII.1** **Theology and Mental Health I**	**Before Class:** • Read pp. 1-10 and Chapter 1 of *Dust in the Blood: A Theology of Life with Depression*, by Jessica Coblentz **In Class:** • Reading sections of "Medical Research: If Depression Were Cancer," by Heidi Ledford
Wednesday 4/15 **Module VII.2** **Theology and Mental Health II**	**Before Class:** • Read Chapters 2 and 3 of *Dust in the Blood: A Theology of Life with Depression*, by Jessica Coblentz **In Class:** • Theodicy: What is it? What are popular responses to suffering?
Friday 4/17 **Creative Art Assignment Due**	The **Creative Art Assignment: Thematic Reflection** is due today, by the end of the day. You will have to submit your Adobe Express Website URL to Canvas.

Schedule of Classes and Assigned Readings

Schedule of Classes | **In-Class Test** | **Assignment Due Date** | **No Class**

Day	Required Readings &/or Assignment
Monday 4/20 **Module VII.3** **Theology and Mental Health III**	**Before Class:** • Read Chapter 4 of *Dust in the Blood: A Theology of Life with Depression*, by Jessica Coblentz **In Class:** • Antitheodicy: when, how, why make meaning of suffering?
Tuesday 4/21 **Final Project: Type and Idea DUE**	
Wednesday 4/22 **Module VII.4** **Theology and Mental Health IV**	**Before Class:** • Read Chapter 5 of *Dust in the Blood: A Theology of Life with Depression*, by Jessica Coblentz **In Class:** •
Friday 4/24 **Comparative, Thesis-Driven Essay: Final Draft DUE on Canvas (details in Canvas)**	
Monday 4/27 **Module VII.5** **Theology and Mental Health V**	**Before Class:** • Read Chapter 6 of *Dust in the Blood: A Theology of Life with Depression*, by Jessica Coblentz **In Class:** •
Wednesday 4/29 **Module VII.6** **Theology and Mental Health VI**	**Before Class:** • Read Chapter 7 of *Dust in the Blood: A Theology of Life with Depression*, by Jessica Coblentz **In Class:** •
Monday 5/4 **Module VII.7** **Theology and Mental Health VII**	**Before Class:** • Read Chapter 8 and Conclusion of *Dust in the Blood: A Theology of Life with Depression*, by Jessica Coblentz **In Class:** •

Schedule of Classes and Assigned Readings

Schedule of Classes	In-Class Test	Assignment Due Date	No Class

Day	Required Readings &/or Assignment
Tuesday 5/5 **Final Project: First Draft/Summary/Outline DUE**	
Wednesday 5/6 **2:30 - 4:30 PM**	The final exam period for this class is scheduled for Wednesday, May 6, 2:30 – 4:30 PM. We will meet at this time in our regularly scheduled classroom, though there is no final exam. We will use this period to share and discuss final projects, lingering questions, and reflections about the class. It is a required meeting. Come to class ready to discuss progress on your final project.
Monday 5/11 **Final Project: Final Draft DUE**	