“Ranges of Motion: Disability, Biocertification, and the Parking Permit Paradox”

Speaker: Professor Ellen Samuels, Departments of English and of Gender and Women’s Studies and the Disability Studies Cluster, University of Wisconsin, Madison:

People with disabilities in the U.S. must provide a near-endless series of medical certifications, a process which is commonly fraught with contradictions and unstable power relationships.

By analyzing the rhetorics of disabled parking permit applications in the United States, Ellen Samuels explores a paradigmatic biocertification process to illustrate how the idea of physical disability as fixed, knowable, and describable far exceeds any material reality, and yet, paradoxically, has material effects on daily life.