

# CDCI Teaching Goals, Updates, and Plans

Below are our 5 teaching goals and updates this year. Updates with OAS mean we are working with UVM’s Office of Accessibility Services.

Goals	Spring 2026 Updates
1. Support <a href="#">Think College</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Think College has 16 students this year.</li> <li>• Research studies to share what’s working.</li> </ul>
2. Create smaller version of the <a href="#">Certificate in Disability Studies</a> .	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CDCI has 6 course graduate certificate.</li> <li>• Fall 2025 we started a 3 course “micro-certificate”</li> <li>• 1 student graduated.</li> <li>• No students enrolled this year in either certificate.</li> <li>• Now planning an undergraduate minor (OAS).</li> </ul>
3. Make teaching more accessible.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focus on universal design for learning at CDCI.</li> <li>• Supporting UVM’s plans for <a href="#">digital accessibility compliance</a> by next year (OAS)</li> </ul>
4. Design online classes in disability studies and accessibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Webinar on <a href="#">Include!</a> For K-12 teachers (2/5/26).</li> <li>• Planning classes on: Disability 101, Mental Health and Well-being, Ableism, and Bullying.</li> <li>• Winnie &amp; Audrey leading summer course for UVM staff - <i>Basic Digital Accessibility</i> (OAS).</li> <li>• Plan is to reach all UVM staff by end of next year.</li> </ul>
5. Support UVM students with disabilities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Disabled Student Union at UVM wants to create a disability identity center.</li> <li>• Helping college see how disability is part of new <a href="#">UVM strategic plan</a>.</li> </ul>

**QUESTIONS for CAC:** What questions do you have about these updates?  
What should we do differently?

# Feedback Needed for Creating a UVM Disability Studies Minor

## Why are we changing our plan?

**We teach excellent courses on disability, accessibility, and inclusion. But we are not reaching as many students as we could.**

Most of our planning for disability studies has been for graduate students. Graduate students have finished a college degree and are studying for a higher-level degree, like a master's or doctorate. We created the [Disability Studies Graduate Certificate](#) (6 courses) and new Micro-Certificate (3 courses) for graduate students.

**This year no students signed up for the graduate certificate or micro-certificate. So, we want to focus more on undergraduate students.**

Undergraduate students are usually working on their first college degree. There are many more undergraduate students than graduate students.

**Winnie already teaches two undergraduate courses on disability studies:**



### Culture of Disability

Introduction to disability studies. Students learn about disability and cultural beliefs, personal narratives, education, healthcare, social services, self-advocacy and the disability rights movement.



### Disability Studies and Media representation

Students learn how disability is in many kinds of media, such as books, art, film, and online content. Students explore ideas like ableism and bias. Learn how media shapes our understanding of disability.

**A disability studies minor would be a new program to reach even more undergraduate students.**

Undergraduates must choose a major, which is their main subject. Most of their classes are about their major. A minor is a smaller group of classes in another subject they are interested in. It lets students learn more without taking as many classes as a major. Not all students choose a minor.

**What are the federal requirements for program like this?**



## **What should be part of the minor?**

A Disability Studies Minor would let students explore issues that are related to the social experience of disability across the lifespan. The minor would be a collaboration between CDCI, OAS, and programs across UVM.

**The minor should have about 6 courses (or 18 credits).**

We are thinking there will be 3 required courses (9 credits) that all students take. These courses should give a foundation for understanding the social experience of disability. Students then choose 3 other courses from a list of approved courses that are focused on disability. Students choose the courses that match their interests and goals.

## **What are the goals and objectives for the minor?**

The goal is to provide rich interdisciplinary learning opportunities for more UVM undergraduate students.

**Students will gain knowledge and skills in 6 areas:**

1. **Accessibility:** Ensuring environments, materials, and communication are usable by all.
2. **Inclusion:** Creating spaces where disabled people are welcomed, valued, and able to participate.
3. **Communication:** Applying person-centered, respectful, and effective interaction strategies.
4. **Collaboration:** Working inter-professionally and partnering with disabled stakeholders.
5. **Advocacy:** Supporting rights, autonomy, and systemic improvements.
6. **Justice:** Addressing structural inequities, centering disability justice principles, and pursuing collective liberation.

## **The minor will use different ways to engage students.**

- Learning will be presented in a variety of formats (e.g. online, hybrid, field-based).
- Classes will emphasize research and real-world experiences.
- Student learning will be assessed using a wide range of best-practice strategies (e.g. project-based, collaborative, peer feedback, etc.).
- At the end of the program, students will create a capstone project to demonstrate what they have learned through courses and hands-on learning experiences.

## **Are there other benefits for students?**

By taking this minor with CDCI, students become “trainees” in our national network. This gives them access to learning, employment, and advocacy opportunities from our national Association of University Centers on Disabilities. This will be useful for students who want to connect with others and deepen their involvement in the field of Disability Studies.

## **Who is working on this now?**

CDCI and Office of Accessibility Services are working on this plan together.

- Winnie Looby, CDCI Academics and Disability Studies Coordinator
- Audrey Homan, OAS Digital and Web Accessibility Specialist
- Sharon Mone, OAS Director
- Jesse Suter, CDCI Director

## **Who else is needed at UVM?**

We need support from many others at UVM for the minor to be approved. We need to show that a new minor will be helpful for existing programs. Below are just a few people and programs that we need their support:

- Sefakor Komabu-Pomeyie
- Health and Society

- Social Work
- Education / Special Education
- Counseling
- Human Development and Family Studies
- UVM Disabled Student Union

## **Who's help do we need from the community?**

- Community Advisory Council
- People with disabilities and families

**QUESTIONS for CAC:** What are we missing in our current thinking?  
Are there needs or roadblocks you see?