

A qualitative assessment of intersectionality in academic ableism

Kris Shiflet

Dept. of Psychology, Illinois Tech

Psyc 504: Individual and Cultural Differences

Nikki Blackstone

December 1, 2025

PROPERTY OF KRIS SHIFLET - DO NOT FEED TO AI, DO NOT DISTRIBUTE WITHOUT PERMISSION

Table of Contents

Introduction.....	3
Literature Review.....	4
History and Context	4
Theoretical Basis	6
Positionality	8
Methods.....	9
Participants.....	10
Data Collection.....	10
Data Analysis	11
Tying the Analyses Together.....	12
Anticipated Results and Discussion.....	13
Results	13
Implications	15
Limitations	15
Conclusion	16
References.....	17
Appendix A.....	20
Tenets of DisCrit	20
Appendix B	21
Questions for Semistructured Interviews	21

Introduction

Despite the passage of multiple disability rights acts in the late 20th century, including provisions on education (Equip for Equality, 2021), research on disabled people within academia has been limited. Much of the research regarding disabled people in education focuses on the K-12 levels (Mireles, 2022), examining “special education” programs, testing children with disabilities, and analyzing learning outcomes for disabled children. The sudden drop off in research when it comes to disabled students in higher education speaks to the systemic and societal biases which work to keep those with disabilities out of American universities (Brown & Ramlackhan, 2022; Dolmage, 2017).

Research on disabled individuals, in general, is largely shaped by the medical model (Brown & Ramlackhan, 2022; Dolmage, 2017), even as activists in the disabled community continue to call for a shift to models not rooted in eugenics, such as the social model (Abes & Wallace, 2018). One should not find it surprising, then, that there is also a dearth of research in this space that also studies intersectionality in the context of ableism in academia (Abes & Wallace, 2018). Research on how multiply-marginalized¹ folks experience and deal with ableism is slim, and dramatically sparser in the context of academia (Abes & Wallace, 2018; Mireles, 2022).

This gap in research exists to the detriment of people with disabilities, especially those with multiple marginalized identities. Thus, there is a need to add to the slowly expanding focus on intersectionality within ableist academia and how the systems and structures in place differentially impact a variety of disabled peoples. The study proposed here is qualitative and endeavors to examine what barriers disabled people face in academia, how multiply-

¹ “Students holding two or more historically marginalized identities may experience compounding forms of oppression, referred to as multiply-marginalized [...]” (Iverson, Gill, Bates, & McQuillan, 2024, p. 3).

marginalized folks are differentially impacted by those barriers, whether existing systems meant to support disabled people in academia consider intersectionality, and what can be done to make academia a truly welcoming place for disabled students.

Literature Review

History and Context

Higher education in the United States is inextricably linked with eugenics and settler colonialism (Dolmage, 2017), making it an institution of ableism and other forms of oppression from its inception. A detailed summary of the problematic past and present of academia is beyond the scope of this work, but I will attempt to provide a brief discussion of how eugenics shaped, and continues to shape, higher education.

In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, academia provided eugenics with both funding and legitimization, allowing eugenicists to conduct experiments on disabled individuals (Dolmage, 2017; Nielsen, 2013). This often happened through partnership with asylums and “schools for the feeble-minded” (Dolmage, 2017). This research and experimentation on disabled people, often people of color, has led to modern constructs of ability and disability, with American academics having, as Jay Dolmage notes, “delineated and disciplined the border between able and disabled” (p. 14). Higher education has always been designed for a specific group of elites: white, able-bodied, wealthy, and willing to maintain the current structure of power (Dolmage, 2017; Mireles, 2022).

Even now, college remains a far-off dream for many, especially those who are disabled. Approximately 50 percent of disabled students graduate from high school. Of that small graduation rate, only 25 percent of those graduates go onto higher education. Even further, less than one-third of those who enrolled in a four-year program even complete it (Brown, Silny, &

Brown, 2021). This attrition rate is even higher for disabled students of color (Abes & Wallace, 2020).

While the eugenics school of thought has been loudly disparaged and seen as morally and ethically wrong (Nielsen, 2013), the treatment of disabled students and staff in academia, and disabled people in general, is still based on eugenic notions of disability (Dolmage, 2017; Nielsen, 2013). A primary example of this lies in the treatment of disability as individualized, medicalized, pathologized, and a deficit (Brown & Ramlackhan, 2022; Dali & Charbonneau, 2024; Dolmage, 2017; Mireles, 2022). This medicalization of disability allows universities and their disability resource centers to dictate who is and is not appropriately disabled by requiring specific diagnoses that are then aligned with a prescribed list of acceptable accommodations (Dali & Charbonneau, 2024; Dolmage, 2017; Mireles, 2022). Often, disabled academics' own input about their condition(s) is ignored, and disability resource office employees are seen by themselves and the institution as more knowledgeable than the individuals actually living with the disabilities (Dali & Charbonneau, 2024; Mireles, 2022).

The ableism of the academy acts as a tool of eugenics to keep the disabled, non-normative, "other" out of higher education, a space reserved for able-bodied, white, elites, as stated previously (Dolmage, 2017; Mireles, 2022). We can see this in the lack of acceptance and inclusion for disabled people within academia, both at a systemic and interpersonal level, the understaffed and underfunded disability resource offices, and the lack of accessible infrastructure on university campuses (Brown & Ramlackhan, 2022; Dali & Charbonneau, 2024). This "othering" of the disabled academic can lead to a variety of negative outcomes from poor mental health (Dali & Charbonneau, 2024), to even dropping out of higher education (Brown, Silny, & Brown, 2021).

As stated previously, the eugenic underpinnings of academia are designed to maintain a population of white, able-bodied, educated elites (Dolmage, 2017). Because of this, the exclusion and lack of respect for autonomy is especially prescient for disabled students of color (Abes & Wallace, 2018; Mireles, 2022). Students of color, regardless of disability, are forced to navigate racialized perceptions of intelligence, productivity, and academic capability (Abes & Wallace, 2018; Annamma, Connor, & Ferri, 2013; Mireles, 2022). This leads to students of color being labeled as unintelligent, often with the consequence of needlessly placing them in special education programs and, further, preventing them from pursuing higher education (Annamma, Connor, & Ferri, 2013; Mireles, 2022). In this sense, racialization can be conceptualized as a disabling force (Annamma & Handy, 2021; Annamma, Connor, & Ferri, 2013; Mireles, 2022).

The dual processes of ableism and racism in academia mean that disabled students of color are dismissed and not believed when they share they are disabled, are viewed as unintelligent, are assumed to be violent, and perceived as lazy (Abes & Wallace, 2018; Abes & Wallace, 2020; Mireles, 2022). Because of this, it is more difficult for disabled students of color to receive accommodations compared to their white counterparts, and self-advocacy is often seen as being aggressive or threatening (Abes & Wallace, 2018; Mireles, 2022). There are even documented cases in which university faculty provide accommodations to white disabled students without requiring an official request from the campus disability resource office, but students of color in the same classes are required to jump through hoops for accommodations, which are often denied in the end (Abes & Wallace, 2018; Mireles, 2022).

Theoretical Basis

The fundamental theoretical underpinning of this study is intersectionality (Crenshaw, 1991). Coined by Kimberle Crenshaw, a Black woman researcher and scholar, intersectionality

refers to “the various ways in which race and gender interact to shape the multiple dimensions of Black women’s [...] experiences” (p. 1244). Intersectionality provided a term to a phenomenon that had long since been discussed by scholars of color and activists, and it has also been expanded upon since Crenshaw’s seminal article to include other identities such as immigration status, LGBTQ+ identities, and disability (Annamma, Connor, & Ferri, 2013; Delgado & Stefancic, 2017; McRuer, 2006; Mireles, 2022). As Abes & Wallace (2018) put it, using an intersectional approach to studying ableism “exposes how intersecting forms of oppression [...] shape ableism” (p. 547). As this study aims to compare how multiply-marginalized disabled folks are treated in academia, intersectionality provides the pivotal framework for such a discussion.

Of particular interest in this study is Disability Critical Race Studies (DisCrit) (Annamma, Connor, & Ferri, 2013) and Crip Theory (McRuer, 2006). DisCrit was coined by Subini Ancy Annamma and colleagues (2013) as a new theoretical framework which combines aspects of Critical Race Theory (refer to Delgado & Stefancic, 2017) and disability studies to incorporate “a dual analysis of race and ability” (p. 1). DisCrit also emphasizes the importance of class, gender, and sexuality, providing space for analysis outside of the domain of race (Annamma, Connor, & Ferri, 2013), which is crucial for this study which aims to investigate a broad array of intersecting identities among disabled students. There are seven tenets of DisCrit, each of which emphasize the importance of multidimensional identities, structural forces, awareness of privilege, centering marginalized voices, and, crucially, the concept of “whiteness and Ability as Property” (Annamma, Connor, & Ferri, 2013, p. 11). See Appendix A for the complete tenets of DisCrit.

Danielle Mireles (2022) used DisCrit to develop a framework of “racist ableism” in a counternarrative study conducted with Black and Brown college students. The counternarratives in this study highlighted the ways in which racist ableism led to Black and Brown students’ disabilities being ignored, challenged, and stigmatized in unique ways, as well as highlighted the need for race-conscious policies and practices in university disability centers (Mireles, 2022). Thus, use of DisCrit in research on academia is already established as useful.

Using intersectionality and DisCrit in this study will allow for a nuanced approach to understanding and synthesizing narratives from diverse participants. They will be used for thoughtful reading and dissection of participant narratives, allowing researchers to identify the intersectional ableist forces at work, whether participants explicitly label things as such or not. With these theories as the qualitative basis for the research, this study will explore the following research questions:

RQ1: What barriers do disabled people face in academia?

RQ2: How are multiply-marginalized folks differentially impacted by these barriers compared to their counterparts primarily oppressed by ableism?

RQ3: Is intersectionality considered appropriately in the existing systems designed to support disabled students?

RQ4: What can be done to make universities truly inclusive for disabled students of diverse backgrounds?

Positionality

The researcher is a white, nonbinary/trans, queer person with multiple disabilities. Their interest in intersectional disability research has been around since before they developed most of their disabilities, largely inspired by their past activist work with LGBTQ+ youth of color and

from watching a close relative navigate disability. The current research topic of intersectional ableism in academia is, however, largely inspired by the researcher's experiences as a disabled person in academia.

Methods

The proposed study will utilize the practice of ethnography, which is "grounded in a commitment to the first-hand experience and exploration of a particular social or cultural setting on the basis of (though not exclusively by) participant observation" (Atkinson, Coffey, Delamont, Lofland, & Loland, 2001, p. 4). Ethnography is a form of qualitative research where the research materials are inseparable from the context in which they exist. Whatever the data collection techniques, the practice of ethnographic research is rooted in first-hand exploration of subjects *within* contexts (Atkinson, Coffey, Delamont, Lofland, & Loland, 2001). It was birthed from a critique of existing qualitative methods which were seen as either too subjective, lacking focus on diversity, or disconnected from their context (Atkinson, Coffey, Delamont, Lofland, & Loland, 2001). Thus, ethnography is an ideal method for this research which aims to study diverse marginalized peoples in a specific context (e.g., academia).

This study will also utilize a naturalistic, rather than a positivist paradigm. This is a necessity for research in a social justice realm, as the naturalistic holds that there overlapping versions of reality, including realities perceived differently by marginalized groups (Creswell, 2007; Rubin & Rubin, 2012). In addition, a positivist slant requires neutral-objectivity on the part of the researcher (Rubin & Rubin, 2012), which bars the researcher from acknowledging and discussing their positionality to the research. In ethnographic research, the researcher is also, in part, a participant, making the objectivity required of positivist research impossible (Atkinson, Coffey, Delamont, Lofland, & Loland, 2001). This is why the feminist, critical, and

postmodernist slants live within the naturalistic, rather than the positivist, realm (Rubin & Rubin, 2012).

Participants

Qualitative research, unlike quantitative research, has smaller sample size demands, and it is historically difficult to amass a decent sample of disabled participants. Compounded with just how difficult it is for disabled people of color to get into academia (Brown & Ramlackhan, 2022; Dolmage, 2017; Mireles, 2022), sample sizes for qualitative research on intersectional ableism has generally used sample sizes of 10 to 20 people (e.g., Abes & Wallace, 2018; Mireles, 2022). Due to these constraints and precedents, this study will aim to recruit a purposeful sample of 15 disabled students in higher education. A diverse sample is the goal, with a variety of demographic backgrounds, including socioeconomic status, race, ethnicity, disability type, gender, and sexuality.

Data Collection

Semi-structured, 90-minute interviews will comprise the primary research method. These interviews are common in ethnography and in research of intersectional ableism in academia (Abes & Wallace, 2018; Atkinson, Coffey, Delamont, Lofland, & Loland, 2001; Dali & Charbonneau, 2024; Karpicz, 2020; Mireles, 2022). The interview and research questions will be sent to participants ahead of time, and responses will be recorded and transcribed verbatim. The questions for the semi-structured interviews were constructed while considering both the research questions for this study and the tenets of DisCrit. Since the goal of this study is to understand the thoughts and experiences of disabled students, follow-up questions and conversation will be organic. See Appendix B for a list of interview questions.

Student observation will be used alongside the semi-structured interviews, allowing the researcher to engage directly with the students and with the university itself. The goal of observation is to see firsthand what tools and systems disabled students use, how they interact with their environment, how the environment interacts with the person, as well as for the researcher to get a sense of the barriers and strong points of the school. This allows the researcher to potentially notice or experience something the research participant was unable to articulate or even experience, thus providing further data for the study.

Finally, interviews and observation will be accompanied by reviewing the formal rules and procedures put into place by university disability resource offices. Accessing the formal policies and procedures will allow the researcher to understand contextual factors which constrain or aid students with disabilities. Gaps between what students say and experience and what the university offers are a key point of information about potential discrimination, unequal enforcement, and systemic versus interpersonal ableism.

Data Analysis

Interview transcripts will be analyzed using a categorical content approach (Lieblich, Tuval-Mashiach, & Zilber, 1998) focused on similarities and differences between the thoughts, feelings, and experiences of the participants. This form of narrative analysis allows the researcher to analyze the content of the interview holistically within itself, as well as to compare content across interviews (Abes & Wallace, 2018; Lieblich, Tuval-Mashiach, & Zilber, 1998). Using a lens of intersectionality and DisCrit, the researcher will focus on how intersectional ableism shapes the experiences of participants, even if participants do “not explicitly discuss systemic intersections” (Abes & Wallace, 2018, p. 550). With the research questions guiding

analysis, the researcher will look for barriers for disabled students, differential impact based on intersectional identities, the integrity of support systems, and what disabled students desire.

The observation of students will be analyzed with a narrative lens (Creswell, 2007). The goal with the narrative analysis for the observation is to tell a story of a “day in the life” of a disabled student, specifically noting the barriers they face, the support they receive, and their responses to those. A narrative/story-telling methodology is common for ethnography and can be used to highlight similarities and differences in the lived experiences of individuals within cultural groups (Creswell, 2007). The first and third research questions will largely guide the analysis of observational data, providing a more objective perspective to the question of barriers and supports that disabled students have access to, as well as whether those supports are truly of use to them. A secondary narrative will be crafted from the researcher’s experience following and observing the participant, but it will be shorter and act as a supplement to the rest of the data. This supplement will assess what was potentially missed by participants during the interview, such as actions taken so often (i.e., using a secondary route to navigate) they become habit and not thought of during the interview.

Regarding the analysis of policy and procedure documentation from university disability offices, they will be analyzed in their context, with their content compared to their implementation and the reactions of the participants of the study, as assessed through the interviews and observation. Specifically, the researcher will look for differential enforcement of guidelines across different groups, whether there is a communication gap between the rules and what the students know, whether the university follows its own guidelines, and what aspects of the university’s system are liked and disliked by the participants.

Tying the Analyses Together

Once analyses are complete, they will be presented in several ways. First, through participant vignettes. These vignettes will detail participant names (likely pseudonyms for anonymity), disability type(s), degree(s) being pursued, and the “day in the life” narrative with its focus on barriers, supports, and reactions. These vignettes will be shared with each participant for accuracy and to make sure they are respected in the final text. Second, synthesized answers to each of the four research questions. This will be done through discussion of participant responses and experiences, comparing and contrasting between persons and between data types, and selection of direct quotes and examples. Finally, the researcher will create a sketch of an ideal future. This will be a call to action with actions universities can take to make academia more inclusive of diverse disabled students, as well as highlight the dreams and aspirations shared by participants through the interviews. This sketch will be shared with participants for feedback along with the vignettes.

Anticipated Results and Discussion

Results

The results of this study will highlight the day-to-day experiences, thoughts, and feelings of disabled students in higher education. Broadly speaking, the researcher anticipates participants expressing a collective sense of anxiety surrounding their disability and their academic and professional futures, as well as distrust for their university’s formalized systems (Abes & Wallace, 2018; Dali & Charbonneau, 2024; Karpicz, 2020).

The expected barriers for disabled students include physical access barriers, interpersonal discrimination from faculty, staff, and peers, convoluted and hostile accommodation systems, and exhaustion from the overworking culture of academia (Abes & Wallace, 2018; Brown & Ramlackhan, 2022; Dali & Charbonneau, 2024). The researcher anticipates fear of disclosure or

self-advocacy as a result of these barriers (Karpicz, 2020), especially for multiply-marginalized disabled students (Abes & Wallace, 2018, 2020; Mireles, 2022).

It is also expected that racialized disabled students will have unique experiences navigating academia, disability resource offices, and interpersonal relationships due to racialized norms of intelligence and ability (Dolmage, 2017; Mireles, 2022). The effects of this unique dynamic might lead to dismissal of concerns, exacerbated ableist discrimination, and even higher rates of dropping out for racialized disabled students (Abes & Wallace, 2018; Brown, Silny, & Brown, 2021; Dali & Charbonneau, 2024; Mireles, 2022).

It is anticipated that disability accommodation systems and disability offices at universities will not be properly equipped to deal with intersectionality. Specifically, offices will be underfunded, staffed by individuals without cross-cultural competence, and requiring expensive diagnoses (Brown & Ramlackhan, 2022; Brown, Silny, & Brown, 2021; Dali & Charbonneau, 2024; Dolmage, 2017). For racialized disabled students, experiences of racial discrimination are expected to lead to distrust and avoidance of formal systems whenever possible (Abes & Wallace, 2018; Mireles, 2022).

However, the researcher anticipates some positive results for this study. These positive results include description of systems which genuinely work, the ways in which faculty facilitate inclusion, the development of self-advocacy, and the interpersonal connections that disabled students make on campus (Abes & Wallace, 2018, 2020; Dali & Charbonneau, 2024; Karpicz, 2020). The researcher also hopes to find positivity in the sketch of an inclusive academic environment. This sketch would be both hopeful and pragmatic, providing specific actions that universities could take to meet the needs and desires of their diverse disabled student populations.

Implications

The results of this study will be important as they will provide unique contributions to the growing research on academic ableism and intersectional ableism. The sketch of the future and the plan of action for universities would need further research and study to identify how to implement the steps, as well as to determine whether and how they would work. Practically, universities would attempt to adopt more inclusive practices and policies, including listening to multiply-marginalized students and working with them beyond the minimum legal requirements. The sketch in the results would provide a blueprint for activists and academics to use when working with universities on disability inclusion. It is the researcher's hope, as well, that disabled academics reading this study will also ponder their experiences and what can be done to make things better in academia.

Limitations

A crucial limitation of this study is that it would take place in a specific geographic location, which limits the generalizability of the results to universities outside of the specific region. While qualitative interviews and analysis of policy documents can occur regardless of geographic location, it is not possible for the researcher to observe participants who are too far away. Future research should attempt replication in different geographic regions. This will allow the community to assess geographic and cultural differences in academic ableism.

Another limitation that is recurring in qualitative research of academic ableism is that 90-minute (or even multi-hour) interviews can often just scratch the surface of a topic. While the questions in this study are targeted at eliciting useful responses, future research should attempt to spend more time on each individual question. Richer narratives can be achieved through case

studies or autoethnographies, which focus on specific individuals over a period of time, this also allows for analysis of temporality which is missing in this study.

The primary ethical concern with this study is the risk of mental and emotional harm incurred by asking participants to discuss sensitive aspects of their identity. Especially for participants with trauma, there is a chance that discussion of discrimination could elicit trauma responses. It is the job of the researcher to know how to handle such events, as well as know when to stop the interview to prevent further harm.

Conclusion

Intersectional ableism in academia is pervasive and harmful, but a steadily growing field of research is working to combat it. This study will work to center the voices of marginalized students and give them the space to think about an ideal environment beyond the ADA. This study will add to the field of academic ableism by providing further perspectives of multiply-marginalized disabled students, validating existing theory, mapping out a plan of action for universities, and sketching a brighter future for disabled students in academia.

References

- Abes, E., & Wallace, M. (2018). "People see me, but they don't see me": An intersectional study of college students with physical disabilities. *Journal of College Student Development*, 59(5), 545-562. doi:10.1353/csd.2018.0052
- Abes, E., & Wallace, M. (2020). Using Crip Theory to reimagine Student Development Theory as disability justice. *Journal of College Student Development*, 61(5), 574-592. doi:10.1353/csd.2020.0056
- Annamma, S. A., & Handy, T. (2021). Sharpening justice through DisCrit: A contrapuntal analysis of education. *Educational Researcher*, 50(1), 41-50. doi:10.3102/0013189X20953838
- Annamma, S. A., Connor, D., & Ferri, B. (2013). Dis/ability critical race studies (DisCrit): Theorizing at the intersections of race and dis/ability. *Race Ethnicity and Education*, 16(1), 1-31. doi:10.1080/13613324.2012.730511
- Atkinson, P., Coffey, A., Delamont, S., Lofland, J., & Loland, L. (2001). Editorial Introduction. In P. Atkinson, A. Coffey, S. Delamont, J. Lofland, & L. Loland, *Handbook of Ethnography* (pp. 1-7). Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications Inc.
- Brown, N., & Ramlackhan, K. (2022). Exploring experiences of ableism in academia: A constructivist inquiry. *Higher Education*, 83, 1225-1239. doi:10.1007/s10734-021-00739-y
- Brown, R., Silny, M., & Brown, J. (2021). Ableism in the academy? A systematic review and meta-analysis of experiences of students with disabilities in U.S. higher education. In W. Pearson Jr, & V. Reddy, *Social Justice and Education in the 21st Century* (pp. 293-307). Springer. doi:10.1007/978-3-030-65417-7_15

Crenshaw, K. (1991). Mapping the margins: Intersectionality, identity politics, and violence against women of color. *Stanford Law Review*, 43(6), 1241-1299. doi:10.2307/1229039

Creswell, J. (2007). *Qualitative inquiry & research design: Choosing among five approaches* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications Inc.

Dali, K., & Charbonneau, D. (2024). Academic ableism and the experiences of disabled and neurodiverse Ph.D. students in LIS programs. *Education for Information*, 40(3), 233-266. doi:10.3233/efi-240001

Delgado, R., & Stefancic, J. (2017). *Critical Race Theory: An introduction* (3rd ed.). New York: New York University Press.

Dolmage, J. T. (2017). *Academic ableism: Disability and higher education*. University of Michigan Press. doi:10.3998/mpub.9708722

Equip for Equality. (2021, May). *Legal brief: The ADA & higher education*. Retrieved from Great Lakes ADA Center: https://www.adagreatlakes.org/Publications/Legal_Briefs/Brief_45_ADA_and_Higher_Educ.pdf

Iverson, D., Gill, E., Bates, D., & McQuillan, M. (2024, August 7). *Building inclusive schools for multiply-marginalized students*. Retrieved from Stanford Public Scholarship Collaborative: https://publicscholarship.stanford.edu/sites/default/files/uploads/scholarships/Building%20Inclusive%20Schools%20for%20Multiply-Marginalized%20Students_0.pdf

Karpicz, J. R. (2020). "Just my being here is self-advocacy": Exploring self-advocacy experiences of disabled graduate students of color. *Journal Committed to Social Change on Race and Ethnicity*, 6(1), 138-163.

Lieblich, A., Tuval-Mashiach, R., & Zilber, T. (1998). Categorical-content perspective. In A.

Lieblich, R. Tuval-Mashiach, & T. Zilber, *Narrative research: Reading, analysis, and interpretation* (Vol. 47, pp. 112-140). Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications Inc.

McRuer, R. (2006). *Crip Theory: Cultural signs of queerness and disability*. New York: New York University Press.

Mireles, D. (2022). Theorizing racist ableism in higher education. *Teachers College Record*, 124(7), 17-50. doi:10.1177/01614681221111428

Nielsen, K. (2013). *A disability history of the United States*. Boston: Beacon Press.

Rubin, H., & Rubin, I. (2012). *Qualitative interviewing: The art of hearing data* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications Inc.

Appendix A

Tenets of DisCrit

1. DisCrit focuses on ways that the forces of racism and ableism circulate interdependently, often in neutralized and invisible ways, to uphold notions of normalcy.
2. DisCrit values multidimensional identities and troubles singular notions of identity such as race or dis/ability *or* class *or* gender *or* sexuality, and so on.
3. DisCrit emphasizes the social constructions of race and ability and yet recognizes the material and psychological impacts of being labeled as raced or dis/abled, which sets one outside of the western cultural norms.
4. DisCrit privileges voices of marginalized populations, traditionally not acknowledged within research.
5. DisCrit considers legal and historical aspects of dis/ability and race and how both have been used separately and together to deny the rights of some citizens.
6. DisCrit recognizes whiteness and Ability as Property and that gains for people labeled with dis/abilities have largely been made as the result of interest convergence of white, middle-class citizens.
7. DisCrit requires activism and supports all forms of resistance.

Note. These are taken verbatim from Annamma, Connor, & Ferri, 2013. Please refer to the article for an in-depth discussion of each of the seven tenets.

Appendix B

Questions for Semistructured Interviews

1. How would you describe yourself? Race, gender, disability, class and any other aspects of your identity that you feel are important.
2. How have the various facets of your identity shaped your experiences getting into and navigating college? What intersections are most influential?
3. Do you feel like your university adequately acknowledges, accepts, and includes the various facets of your identity? What cultural or systemic factors contribute to your sense of, or lack of, belonging?
4. What structures exist within your university that are designed to help students with disabilities? Are they adequate? What could be better? What is done right?
5. Do you believe your experiences at your school differ from those of other disabled students? Do you believe that different facets of your identity contribute to this differential treatment, if there is any?
6. Consider what an ideal life in college would be like. What systems are in place that make it ideal? Who is there? How do people act? What do you do? Where do you go? What else would you need for an ideal college life?
7. Is there anything else you want to share that you believe is important for us to know?