

# Symposium on Dis/Ability & Debility in Appalachia: Call for Participation



Symposium Logo-  
Quilt star over disability pride flag

**Saturday, September 28, 2024**  
**Daily Schedule TBA**  
**(Estimated 8 a.m. – 6 p.m. E.T.)**

<https://AppalachianCenter.as.uky.edu/symposium-disability-debility-appalachia>

**In person location:**

Healthy Kentucky Research Building  
760 Press Avenue  
Lexington, Kentucky, 40508  
(Limited Attendance Capacity)

Online Access information will be sent to attendees prior to the event

**Contact Us:**

Phone: 859-257-4852  
Email: [AppalachiaDisability.Symposium@gmail.com](mailto:AppalachiaDisability.Symposium@gmail.com)

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Appalachia has long been considered a disabled region. It is widely understood as a “disability belt,” and anti-Appalachian systems are deeply entwined with ableist ones. However, there has been limited conversation between the fields of Appalachian and Disability Studies, and Disabled Appalachian voices have been marginalized in both areas. The Symposium on Dis/Ability and Debility in Appalachia seeks to foster an interdisciplinary and intersectional conversation on dis/ability and debility in the region, bringing together Disabled and Appalachian people, theorists, practitioners, advocates, and attendees at the many intersections of these identities.

The Symposium will be held in the Healthy Kentucky Research Building at the University of Kentucky (space limited), as well as virtually online. Lunch and a light breakfast will be provided for in-person attendees.

We ask that all participants see the “[Accessibility](#)” section of this document for further information regarding access and accommodations for disability.



[QR code for website]

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### Goals and Outcomes

1. Promoting interdisciplinary and intersectional conversations and sharing of knowledges about dis/ability and debility in Appalachia
  2. Sharing of knowledges, stories, and resources across units, disciplines, and people groups, both at UK and in the region
  3. Exploring initiatives and policy changes relating to disability and place
  4. Highlighting the most marginalized voices in these conversations
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### Keynote Address

We are excited to be hosting Dr. Sumi Colligan for our keynote presentation. She is a professor emerita of the Sociology, Anthropology, and Social Work Department at the Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts, and among the first to write about conducting ethnographic research as a disabled anthropologist, challenging Western biases in the field. She has been embedded in multiple disability worlds, both as a child and in her many forms of participation in the [Society for Disability Studies](#). Among her fieldwork experiences, she collaborated with a disabled sociologist to interview Israeli disability rights activists and co-edit a special issue on disability in Israel and Palestine for the *Disability Studies Quarterly*. Dr. Colligan has also dedicated herself to carving out

spaces for disabled anthropologists to share their perspectives on the discipline at the American Anthropological Association meetings and is currently co-editing a volume for Routledge that incorporates the work of junior and senior anthropologists reflecting on how their disabilities have shaped their encounters, methodologies, and insights in the field.



[Image of Dr. Colligan]

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## Registration and abstract submission

### Symposium Registration:

We ask that all who intend to attend complete the registration form so we can plan accordingly. Registration for attendance is online and due by 11:59 p.m. E.T. on Monday, September 9th, 2024. All presenters must also register as attendees. To register visit: <http://TinyURL.com/Disability-Appalachia-Register>. If you have any difficulty with registering via the online form, please contact us at [DisabilityAppalachia.Symposium@gmail.com](mailto:DisabilityAppalachia.Symposium@gmail.com) or call 859-257-4852.

In-person capacity is limited, so we ask that registrants only register if they intend to attend, and to please notify us if possible if they no longer can attend or need to change modality.

### Presentation Proposal Submissions:

We are also accepting abstracts for potential posters, short presentations, or artistic presentations related to disability, debility, ability, or chronic health in Appalachia from anyone interested in submitting.

Though we seek a wide range of submission topics and encourage creativity in conceptualizing a topic, some potential topics of inquiry could include: community; carework; accessible infrastructure; healthcare accessibility and alternative treatments; disability service access and formatting; black lung organizing; neurodiversity;

Crip/Mad Appalachia; criminalization and incarceration of Disability in Appalachia; environmental health; economic health inequities; and the experiences of racial, gender, and sexual minorities in Appalachia.

We hope to not only represent initiatives at the University of Kentucky, but also to have presentations from activists, advocacy organizations, researchers, practitioners and providers, and other interested parties and community members from across Appalachia.

Those who wish to present must complete both the registration form and the abstract submission form.

To be considered for inclusion as a presenter in the Symposium, please submit an abstract by 11:59 p.m. ET on Friday, August 23rd, 2024 to <http://TinyURL.com/Disability-Appalachia-Abstract>. If you have any difficulty with submitting your abstract via the online form, please contact us at [DisabilityAppalachia.Symposium@gmail.com](mailto:DisabilityAppalachia.Symposium@gmail.com) or call 859-257-4852.

### Tabling

We will have space both in person and online for organizations and community groups to “table” (advertise, answer questions, and disseminate information and resources), including physical tables at the Healthy Kentucky Research Building as well as an online tabling forum for in order to digitize the event and make it accessible for those who are unable to attend in person.

We ask that every organization that intends to table (regardless of whether they will be tabling in person or online-only) complete the tabling sign-up form at <https://TinyURL.com/Disability-Appalachia-Tabling>, and that all organization representatives also complete the conference registration form individually at <https://TinyURL.com/Disability-Appalachia-Register>.

Organizations may indicate during registration whether they intend to table online-only, or both in person and online. The online tabling forum is still a work in progress, and more information will be sent out closer to the event. However, it will include: a short (1-2 minute) organization video pitch and/or a short paragraph about the organization, contact information, file/flyer uploads, and a Q&A (Question-and-Answer) function.

Those that are tabling in person will each be provided with a six foot table and two chairs (unless otherwise indicated). We ask that organizations provide the rest of their tabling resources (such as flyers, handouts, etc) themselves.

## Submission and presentation details for potential presenters

In order to appropriately cater to the large and diverse emerging body of work pertaining to Appalachia and disability and allow for a wide range of presenters and topics to be covered, presenters should expect presentation slots to be brief. Non-poster presentations will be 5-10 minutes, plus an additional Q&A session at the end of each session.

A computer and projector will be provided for presenters. If additional technology is needed please note that on your registration. We will do our best to accommodate technology needs. Poster presentations are strongly encouraged as posters will enable a wide range of subjects and participation throughout the day.

Upon acceptance of their abstract, presenters will be asked to send the conference organizers copies of your poster, slideshow, script, and/or handouts by Wednesday September 25th at 11:59 p.m. in order to allow for conference organizers to maximize access for different conference attendees. They will also be sent recommendations to improve the accessibility of their presentations.

### Presentation formats:

1. **Poster:** Visual poster presentation that summarizes findings/information and will be displayed virtually and in person to facilitate discussion and questions from attendees. Provided presentation boards fit posters up to 40 (length) by 45 (width) inches. Presenters will be prompted to submit a copy of their poster prior to the event in order to properly provide accessibility for attendees.
2. **Short Presentation:** A brief (approximately 5-10 minute) spoken or audio-visual presentation about an idea, project, initiative, or research endeavor. For example, some presenters may present about a research or advocacy project, or their organization's work. Presenters will be prompted to submit a copy of their presentation materials prior to the event in order to properly provide accessibility for attendees.
3. **Artistic work\*:** Short films, musical performances, short plays, poetry, visual art forms (painting and other media), photography, creative writing, etc. For your submission, provide a brief summary of your work and whether you would like to provide a brief contextualizing presentation about your artwork. Presenters will be prompted to submit materials relating to their artistic work prior to the event in order to properly provide accessibility for attendees.

\* Disclaimer: As the artist, you are responsible for the handling and display of your artwork. You will be expected to follow the standard presentation guidelines for your discipline. The University of Kentucky and the Appalachian Center are not responsible for damage or theft that may occur to your artwork/ instruments/ or any additional equipment you decide to bring.

### Please have the following information ready when you register to present online:

1. Name(s), email address(es), and institutional affiliation(s) of all participants.
2. Title of your presentation.
3. Presentation Format: Poster, short presentation, or artistic work

4. Type of Presentation: Indicate whether your submission is an individual or group presentation. All participants must register for the conference.
  5. An abstract of 200-250 words for your poster, presentation, or artistic work.
  6. Types of media/ equipment needed (if any)
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## Important Dates

Friday, August 23rd, 2024 at 11:59 p.m. ET: Presenter abstracts due

Friday, September 6th, 2024 at 11:59 p.m. ET: Presenters notified of abstract acceptance

Monday, September 9th, 2024 at 11:59 p.m. ET: Registration closes for all attendees

Wednesday, September 25th at 11:59 p.m. ET: Presenter submission of any slides, posters, script, handouts, etc. to [AppalachiaDisability.Symposium@gmail.com](mailto:AppalachiaDisability.Symposium@gmail.com)

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## Accessibility

We value everyone being able to participate in this symposium. In order to be accessible to as many attendees as possible, we ask that participants refrain from using overly fragrant perfumes or body sprays, and encourage anyone who is able to consider wearing a mask or face covering to in-person programming.

This event will be hybrid with remote access to all materials, and we are working to ensure quality experience for our online attendees. There will be live-captioning/ CART (Communication Access Realtime Translation) and an American Sign Language interpreter available, as well as a sensory safe room on the second floor for those in person who need it. We will also be sending all presenters guidelines regarding content warnings, descriptions of images and visuals, and accessibility for audio- and photo-sensitivity.

Please see the [Accessibility section](#) of the Symposium website for more information about accessibility and accommodations for disability. We will continue to be updating the website as we further explore accessibility needs for the Symposium. If you have any further questions or accessibility needs - for disability or otherwise - please contact us at [DisabilityAppalachia.Symposium@gmail.com](mailto:DisabilityAppalachia.Symposium@gmail.com) or call 859-257-4852.

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## Parking

For those who are driving to attend in-person, there will be free parking in the lot at the Press Avenue entrance of the Healthy Kentucky Research Building, as pictured in the map below. Enter the parking lot from Press Avenue entrance as indicated in the map by the green arrow. The main entrance building is indicated by the red “X.” There is accessible parking in the first row in front of the building.



[Map of parking lot]

## Dining

Breakfast and lunch will be provided at the Symposium. Note any specific dietary needs (allergies, vegetarian, vegan, gluten free, etc.) when registering.

Dinner is NOT provided. Please consult our [Around Lexington](#) page of the website for information and a local restaurant guide or ask for recommendations!

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Questions?

Email [AppalachiaDisability.Symposium@gmail.com](mailto:AppalachiaDisability.Symposium@gmail.com), or call us at 859-257-4852!

Thank you to our sponsors:



We are still looking for partners and sponsors. If your organization would like to co-sponsor the Symposium, please contact us at 859-257-4852 or [AppalachiaDisability.Symposium@gmail.com](mailto:AppalachiaDisability.Symposium@gmail.com).